

2. What cost, if any, has there been for you in being interested in Jesus, “liking” Him, or “following” Him?

Why have you been willing to pay this cost? Has it been worth it? Explain.

3. What might be the next step for you in becoming a more faithful follower of Jesus. What areas of your life do you need God’s help in working on?

PRAYER

Spend time praying for each other, asking God to help each other in doing what it takes to be a follower of Jesus.



YouthTRAIN



INTRODUCTION

The first step in fulfilling Jesus’ “Mission Mandate” is to be His follower. In this session we look at what this actually means.

GETTING STARTED

What people, teams, bands or organisations do you “follow” on facebook—or, if you don’t have facebook, which do you think you’d follow if you did? They might be a celebrity, a sportsperson, a singer/group, an actor... etc. Explain why you would “follow” them.

If you were to really “follow them” and do what they did, what would be the cost? What sacrifices would you have to make?

DISCUSS

1. In this session we're talking about what it means to "follow" Jesus. What do you think is the difference between "liking" Jesus and being His follower?
2. If you were to write up a list of things that describe a follower of Jesus, what would you include on it?
3. There is a saying that "you become like the people you follow or spend time with." How true do you think this is? Explain.
4. If you had to write an assignment on "The Cost of Following Jesus", what would you include on it?

BIBLE STUDY

Read Mark 8:34-38

"Then, calling the crowd to join his disciples, he said, "If any of you wants to be my follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross, and follow me. If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake and for the sake of the Good News, you will save it. And what do you benefit if you gain the whole world but lose your own soul? Is anything worth more than your soul? If anyone is ashamed of me and my message in these adulterous and sinful days, the Son of Man will be ashamed of that person when he returns in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

Explain or give examples of what you think the following phrases mean:

- "...give up your own way..."
- "...take up your cross..."
- "...follow me."

Now try to explain what you think these three sentences mean:

- *"If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake and for the sake of the Good News, you will save it. "*
- *"What do you benefit if you gain the whole world but lose your own soul?"*
- *"If anyone is ashamed of me and my message in these adulterous and sinful days, the Son of Man will be ashamed of that person when he returns in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."*

GETTING PERSONAL

1. Which of the following best describes you? Explain your answer.
 - Someone interested in Jesus—if He had a profile page I might actually read some posts.
 - Someone who likes Jesus - I'm interested in what He has to say.
 - A follower—I hear what He has to say and I try to live by it.
 - Something else, or somewhere between the three descriptions above.

GETTING PERSONAL

1. What does it mean to you to “love your neighbour”? Who is God challenging you to show love to—someone who is hard to love. It may be a family member or someone you know through school, or socially. What specific and practical things could you do?
2. How loving is our youth group and our LIFE Group? Is it evident to new people that we love each other? Is it evident that we reach out to them and accept them into our group? How could we improve?

PRAYER

Spend time praying for each other, showing care and support for any needs people share.



YouthTRAIN



INTRODUCTION

The second step in fulfilling Jesus’ “Mission Mandate” is to love our neighbour, which is not just the people we like, but the people we find it hard to like.

GETTING STARTED

Imagine you had to write an assignment titled “Profile of my most annoying person”! Don’t mention any names, but describe the sort of person you would write about. What traits do they have that you find so annoying? Why do these things annoy you so much?

Someone once said, “Who we find annoying says more about us than it does about them.” What do you think they meant? What do you learn about yourself from people you have difficulty getting along with?

DISCUSS

1. How would answer someone who says to you:
“You have no idea how annoying that person is! They are impossible to love!”

“OK, I get that I’m supposed to love them, but how?”

“I could try to be nice to them but really, I’d just be pretending and God doesn’t want me to pretend to care when I don’t.”

“Why should I love them—they don’t love me!”
2. What do you think the saying “love conquers hate” means? Is it true and if so how?

BIBLE STUDY

Read Luke 10:25-37.

²⁵ *One day an expert in religious law stood up to test Jesus by asking him this question: “Teacher, what should I do to inherit eternal life?”*

²⁶ *Jesus replied, “What does the law of Moses say? How do you read it?”*

²⁷ *The man answered, “‘You must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your strength, and all your mind.’ And, ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’”*

²⁸ *“Right!” Jesus told him. “Do this and you will live!”*

²⁹ *The man wanted to justify his actions, so he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbour?”*

³⁰ *Jesus replied with a story: “A Jewish man was travelling from Jerusalem down to Jericho, and he was attacked by bandits. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him up, and left him half dead beside the road.*

³¹ *“By chance a priest came along. But when he saw the man lying there, he crossed to the other side of the road and passed him by. ³² A Temple assistant walked over and looked at him lying there, but he also passed by on the other side.*

³³ *“Then a despised Samaritan came along, and when he saw the man, he felt compassion for him. ³⁴ Going over to him, the Samaritan soothed his wounds with olive oil and wine and bandaged them. Then he put the man on his own donkey and took him to an inn, where he took care of him. ³⁵ The next day he handed the innkeeper two silver coins, telling him, ‘Take care of this man. If his bill runs higher than this, I’ll pay you the next time I’m here.’*

³⁶ *“Now which of these three would you say was a neighbour to the man who was attacked by bandits?” Jesus asked.*

³⁷ *The man replied, “The one who showed him mercy.”*

Then Jesus said, “Yes, now go and do the same.”

1. What made this story so shocking to the expert in religious law and to those who were listening? (Hint: The man who was attacked, was a Jew, as was the temple assistant and the priest. Jewish people hated Samaritans.)
2. What was the point Jesus was making regarding loving our neighbour.
3. What is it so important that we as Christians love our neighbour?

GETTING PERSONAL

1. Refer back to your list of servant-like and unservant-like attitudes. What's an attitude you want to change in order to better serve other people?
2. What is something practical you could personally do to serve someone at home or at school?
3. How into serving is our youth group and our small group? Is there more we could do to serve others?

PRAYER

Spend time praying about ways you can individually and as a group, serve other people.



YouthTRAIN



INTRODUCTION

The third step in fulfilling Jesus' "Mission Mandate" is to serve one another, both within the church and outside the church in the community.

GETTING STARTED

Imagine you could hire a servant, free of charge, to do one thing for you every day or every week. What would you get them to do and why?

If you had to take on one extra chore a week or a day at home—something someone else usually does, what would you choose and why?

DISCUSS

1. Suppose someone was to walk into our youth group and say any of the following. How would we answer them in each instance?

“If you were serious about following Jesus you’d be looking for ways to serve your parents—not expecting them to do everything for you just because they are your parents.”

“How many people at school could guess you were a Christian because you do more to serve other people there than anyone else?”

“Christians are good at sitting round talking, reading the Bible and being nice to each other. They are not very good at actually doing anything in their community.”

2. What words would you use to describe the attitude of a servant?

Contrast these with words that describe someone who does nothing to serve others

3. Thinking about that extra chore you mentioned earlier... what’s stopping you doing it?

BIBLE STUDY

Read Luke 10:25-37.

²⁰ Then the mother of James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to Jesus with her sons. She knelt respectfully to ask a favour. ²¹ “What is your request?” he asked.

She replied, “In your Kingdom, please let my two sons sit in places of honour next to you, one on your right and the other on your left.”

²² But Jesus answered by saying to them, “You don’t know what you are asking! Are you able to drink from the bitter cup of suffering I am about to drink?” “Oh yes,” they replied, “we are able!”

²³ Jesus told them, “You will indeed drink from my bitter cup. But I have no right to say who will sit on my right or my left. My Father has prepared those places for the ones he has chosen.”

²⁴ When the ten other disciples heard what James and John had asked, they were indignant. ²⁵ But Jesus called them together and said, “You know that the rulers in this world lord it over their people, and officials flaunt their authority over those under them. ²⁶ But among you it will be different. Whoever wants to be a leader among you must be your servant, ²⁷ and whoever wants to be first among you must become your slave. ²⁸ For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

1. How is the way Jesus sees leading and serving different from how most people see it?
2. What ultimate act of service was Jesus referring to when he talked about His “cup of suffering”?
3. If someone was to ask you, “Why should we as Christians look for ways to serve one another?”, how would you use this passage to answer them?

BIBLE STUDY (continued)

1. What things was Jesus telling His followers to do in this passage?
2. Why do you think they had to wait to be filled with the Holy Spirit before leaving Jerusalem?
3. How do you think the Holy Spirit helps us to talk about our beliefs with other people.

GETTING PERSONAL

1. What would it take for you to be better at sharing your beliefs with other people?
2. Who do you know who might just come to youth group if you were brave enough to invite them?
3. Concerning our LIFE Group Invite Nights, what could we do next term that would make it easier for us to invite friends and have them come?

PRAYER

Spend time praying for each other that you might each be more effective in sharing with others what you believe and inviting them to events.



YouthTRAIN



INTRODUCTION

The fourth step in fulfilling Jesus' "Mission Mandate" is to either directly or indirectly be used by Him to help other people learn about Him.

GETTING STARTED

When was the last time you told someone about one of the following?

- A really good movie
- A really good TV programme
- A really good song
- A really good joke
- A really good facebook link

Why did you tell them? Why not just keep it to yourself?

DISCUSS

1. What are the things that make you hesitant (if you are hesitant) about telling other people you're a follower of Jesus or even letting them know you go to youth group or church?
 - I'm afraid they'll mock me for my beliefs*
 - I'm not perfect—I'm afraid they will accuse me of being a hypocrite.*
 - I'm afraid they'll ask me questions about God or the Bible which I can't answer*
2. What stops you inviting people to our youth group? Are any of the following true? Are there other reasons?
 - All the people I know at school already go to a youth group*
 - I've tried—they're not interested*
 - I'm afraid they'll think these activities are boring*
 - I like having my youth groups friends and my other friends—I don't really want them to be the same people.*
 - If my other friends started coming to youth group, they'd see I was serious about Jesus—and that might ruin our friendship.*
 - I like our LIFE Group as it is. I'm not sure I want too many new people coming.*
 - My friends aren't always that nice—they swear a lot etc. They might embarrass me with their behaviour if I invite them along.*
3. There are many ways God can use us to reach out and share with others. Which of the following come easiest to you?
 - The direct approach: I find it easy to just tell other people the facts about Jesus and how they can become a Christian.*
 - The intellectual approach: I like getting into healthy debates with people about God, the Bible and faith.*

- The friendship approach: I find I make lots of friends easily and can talk naturally about my beliefs when appropriate.*
- The personal approach: I like to share with other people personal stories about answered prayer and what Jesus has done for me.*
- The invitational approach: I like finding people to invite along to youth group and church events.*
- The serving approach: I like to share my beliefs through the way I serve other people and show kindness.*

BIBLE STUDY

Read Acts 1:3-11.

³ *During the forty days after he suffered and died, he appeared to the apostles from time to time, and he proved to them in many ways that he was actually alive. And he talked to them about the Kingdom of God.*

⁴ *Once when he was eating with them, he commanded them, "Do not leave Jerusalem until the Father sends you the gift he promised, as I told you before.*

⁵ *John baptized with water, but in just a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."*

⁶ *So when the apostles were with Jesus, they kept asking him, "Lord, has the time come for you to free Israel and restore our kingdom?"*

⁷ *He replied, "The Father alone has the authority to set those dates and times, and they are not for you to know. ⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."*

⁹ *After saying this, he was taken up into a cloud while they were watching, and they could no longer see him. ¹⁰ As they strained to see him rising into heaven, two white-robed men suddenly stood among them. ¹¹ "Men of Galilee," they said, "why are you standing here staring into heaven? Jesus has been taken from you into heaven, but someday he will return from heaven in the same way you saw him go!"*