

SHARING JESUS WITH OTHERS

Lesson 2: Living Like a Follower of Jesus

This includes:

1. Leader Preparation
2. Lesson Guide

1. LEADER PREPARATION

LESSON OVERVIEW

The decision to follow Jesus is the biggest choice we'll ever make in life. And once we make that decision, we're also called to share Jesus with others. This lesson will help students understand that if they are going to share Jesus with others, they also need to lead a life that reflects Christ and points people toward him.

LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. WHAT: For people to see how Jesus has changed your life, you have to live that change.
2. WHY: As teenagers begin to live a changed life, sharing Jesus becomes more authentic and natural.
3. HOW: Students will be encouraged to examine their own lives and determine how they can begin leading or continue leading the kind of life that points people toward Jesus.

PRIMARY SCRIPTURE

Ephesians 5:1-17

SECONDARY SCRIPTURES

Colossians 3:12-17 and 1 John 1:5-7

TEACHING PREP

The short overview below is designed to help you prepare for your lesson. While you may not want to convey this information word-for-word with your teenagers, you'll definitely want to refer to it as you lead.

Read Ephesians 5:1-17.

This passage teaches students that it's important to live a life that reflects their relationship with Christ.



LEADER
TIP



It's not enough to simply share Jesus with others; they must also be aware of the life that they're living. Are they pointing people toward Jesus, or are they making choices that can push others away from God?

This passage calls us to a higher standard of living. Not only are we to avoid even a hint of evil, we are called to expose it and stand apart from it. It's important for students to understand that God is not necessarily calling us to be the whistle blowers for every sin we see around us, but that God is calling us to examine our own lives so that we can share Jesus with others without even a hint of hypocrisy. That does not mean we must be perfect Christians; we still will struggle with sin. But we can lead consistent lives that honor God and point people toward Christ.

THE BEFORE & AFTER [OPTIONAL]

Text Message Questions

We've provided a couple of different text message questions to send out to your students prior to your meeting. Feel free to use one or both of the questions below. As with the rest of the curriculum, edit these questions to fit the needs of your ministry.

- How has your life changed since you started following Jesus? I'm eager to hear your answer when we all meet tonight.
- How is your life pointing other people toward Jesus? Come out tonight for some great conversation.

Parent Email

We've provided you with an email below that you can send to your parents following the lesson. Our hope is to encourage parents to continue the conversation at home. Feel free to edit and customize the email to fit your ministry needs.

Dear parents,

We're continuing our three-lesson study on sharing Jesus with others. The first lesson focused on why we share Jesus with others and what God's Word has to say about it. This week's lesson focused on living like a follower of Jesus.



We talked about God's desire for us to lead lives that imitate and reflect Christ, and how this is one of the most powerful ways to share Jesus with friends and point friends to Jesus.

As you go throughout the week, help reinforce this teaching in your teenager's life by asking the following questions as you have the opportunity:

- How is the idea of imitating a famous person similar to the goal of imitating Jesus? How is it different?
- How do we recognize the best time to share our faith with a friend? How do we know it's the right opportunity, not an awkward time or an ineffective time to share?
- How can you make the most of every opportunity to be like Jesus?

Have a blessed week!



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2. LESSON GUIDE

GETTING THINGS STARTED [OPTIONAL]

Bring in an assortment of old magazines or newspapers for the opening activity (or have students use smartphones to find photos). You'll also need paper and pens or pencils.

Welcome your students and invite them into your meeting area. Open in prayer, and then lead students in this activity:

Have students form groups of three or four, and give each group a few magazines or newspapers, along with paper and pens or pencils. Have groups find two or three celebrities, leaders, or public figures that might be worthy of imitating. Have groups discuss and take notes on what it would take to truly imitate those individuals—clothing, speech patterns, circle of friends, lifestyle, and so on. After each group has completed their work, bring everyone back together and have students share their findings.

ASK:

- *Why would people want to imitate the individuals you discussed?*
- *What information would you still need to gather if you were going to do this for real? What do you still not know about some of these individuals, and where could you find that information?*
- *How is the idea of imitating a famous person similar to the goal of imitating Jesus? How is it different?*

SAY SOMETHING LIKE: *This week we're talking about what it means to live like a follower of Jesus. We spend a lot of time in our lives imitating and emulating other people, but Jesus is our best role model and our highest standard. When we become followers of Christ, we are making a commitment that includes leading a life like Jesus. And when we live that way, we will point other people toward Christ—a powerful way to share Jesus with others.*



TEACHING POINTS



LEADER
TIP

The goal of the Teaching Points is to help students capture the essence of each lesson with more discussion and less lecture-style teaching. The main points we have chosen are (1) A changed life reflects Jesus, (2) Fight hard to resist temptations, (3) Choose consistency over hypocrisy, and (4) Make the most of every opportunity.



LEADER
TIP

Remember: All throughout these lessons, it's up to you to choose (1) how many questions you use, and (2) the wording of the main points—keep ours, or change the wording to make it clearer for your audience.

Read Ephesians 5:1-17 together as a group. Consider dividing verses among your students so everyone has a chance to read.

SAY SOMETHING LIKE: *Let's dig into this passage of Scripture and see how we can live like followers of Jesus.*

1. A changed life reflects Jesus

ASK:

- *What are some specific ways your life reflects Jesus?*
- *According to verse 1, why is it important to imitate Jesus? What are some other reasons you can think of?*
- *Look at verse 2. What does this kind of lifestyle look like?*
- *What are some sacrificial ways you can serve other people in your life?*

SAY SOMETHING LIKE: *As followers of Christ, we are called to not only follow Christ, but also to imitate him in everything that we do. We look for ways to serve other people. We gladly make sacrifices that will bless people and show them what true love is. We celebrate when other people begin following Jesus. Your changed life may be the most powerful message your friends ever see or hear about why it's worth following Jesus.*



2. Fight hard to resist temptations

ASK:

- *Verses 3-17 are filled with lots of “don’t” statements. Why are those kinds of statements and instructions important as we follow Jesus?*
- *When do you find it difficult to obey the words of verses 6 and 7?*
- *Look at verse 15. What are some ways that you can be careful about your choices and can fight to resist sinful temptations?*

SAY SOMETHING LIKE: *It can be tough to resist temptations. By their definition, they are desirable things that seem appealing, but most often lead us into trouble. If we are to follow Jesus and share him with others, we must do everything we can to avoid sin and temptation. But it's important to remember though that we are all sinners, and that if we've placed our trust in Jesus, God has forgiven us through Christ. We're not better than anyone else; we're just relying on God's strength to live by the standards that God has established.*

3. Choose consistency over hypocrisy

ASK:

- *What's the difference between being a consistent Christian and a perfect Christian? Which one is attainable, and why?*
- *Read 1 John 1:5-7. What is hypocrisy, and why it is so dangerous for a follower of Jesus?*
- *Think about a time you dealt with someone who was being hypocritical. How did it make you feel when you found out they weren't being truthful?*

SAY SOMETHING LIKE: *God knows that we aren't perfect, but he does call us to lead a consistent life that honors him. A hypocrite says you should do one thing—or claims to live a certain way—but then lives his or her life totally differently. If you want to be effective in sharing Christ with others, be honest and avoid hypocrisy. That means doing everything you can to avoid sin. When you make a mistake, accept God's forgiveness, get back up, and try to not make the same mistake again. That's not hypocrisy—that's called growing in your faith. Hypocrisy is when you say you're following Jesus, but then behave in a way that makes people think you know nothing about him.*



4. Make the most of every opportunity

ASK:

- *Tell us about a time you missed some kind of great opportunity—what did you learn from that experience?*
- *Our verses from Ephesians 5 say to “make the most of every opportunity” and “don’t act thoughtlessly.” Why does God have a sense of urgency in this? Why does God care so much about how you live?*
- *How do we recognize the best time to share our faith with a friend? How do we know it’s the right opportunity, not an awkward time or an ineffective time to share?*

SAY SOMETHING LIKE: *Though you may sometimes think life seems to go forever, life moves pretty fast. Ephesians 5 shows us that God really cares about how we live our lives and about whether we are making the most out of every opportunity that we have. We are called to live wisely and to understand what God wants us to do. When we’re living a life that reveals our relationship with God, then we’re going to be more effective in sharing Jesus with others.*

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION [OPTIONAL]

Ask students to form groups of two or three for these questions.

ASK:

- *Read Colossians 3:12-17. How can the lifestyle described in these verses point people toward Jesus?*
- *What are some roadblocks that might stop you from living the way God wants you to live?*
- *When do you find yourself most vulnerable to temptations?*

Bring everyone back together, and ask for volunteers to share answers to the previous questions, as time permits.



APPLICATION

ASK:

- *Think through the different groups of people you're around each week. How can you imitate Jesus in each of those settings? If you're already doing pretty well, how can you continue growing in this?*
- *What is one specific way that you can encourage others to live like Jesus this week?*
- *Is there a certain time of day that you can set aside time to specifically pray for those you want to share Christ with?*
- *How can you encourage others to pray for opportunities to share Christ?*
- *Is there a sin in your life that you haven't addressed but you want to confess it and change your attitude? If so, go to someone you trust and confess that sin and make a plan to avoid that temptation in the future.*

SUMMARY

End your lesson here. Provide your teenagers with a quick summary or take-home challenge based on (1) the content of this lesson, (2) the dialogue that took place during the lesson, (3) your understanding of the issues and struggles your teenagers are facing, and (4) the big picture of your youth ministry and what your leadership team wants accomplished with the teaching and discussion time.



LEADER
TIP

FOR KEEPS [MEMORY VERSE]

Encourage and/or challenge your teenagers to memorize the verse below.



LEADER
TIP

Imitate God, therefore, in everything you do, because you are his dear children (Ephesians 5:1).

