

ACTIVATE: Discipleship

Lesson 1: The Call To Follow

What we want students to learn: That students would understand that the call to follow after God, and to identify as “His,” is at the core of what it means to be a Christian.

What we want them to do with what they’ve learned: To consider how this call has looked in their life so far.

Scripture Focus: Psalm 128:1, Deuteronomy 26:16-19, Ephesians 2:13-18

Overview: When we think of discipleship, we think of the New Testament. We think of the twelve men Jesus chose to follow Him. And, of course, we're correct in that thinking. The Greek word from which we get the word "disciple" isn't a word unique to the Bible. It was a word used in Greek culture meaning "a learner," someone kind of like an apprentice. But Jesus gave the word a new, richer meaning. Jesus introduced the concept of "following." He didn't just want learners. Jesus wanted followers, people who would devote their lives to living as He lived. But, the cool thing is that the foundation for following after God isn't a New Testament creation. Discipleship finds its roots in the heart of the Old Testament. This lesson will help your students see that the call to follow after God is intertwined with God's character, and is at the core of what it means to be a Christian.

Lesson 2: Nothing Less Than Following

What we want students to learn: That your students would understand how Christ defined discipleship not as learning, but as following

What we want them to do with what they’ve learned: To evaluate how this impacts the very nature of their identity as Christians.

Scripture Focus: Matthew 4:18-22, Luke 9:23, John 12:23-26

Overview: Your students have a lot of examples of nominal Christians in their lives, those people who are Christians only in name but not in how they live. But this type of faith is never really given as an option. The kind of faith Jesus gives as an example is a faith of action, a faith that follows. In this lesson, your students will begin to see that Jesus desires a discipleship relationship with His children. He wants followers, people who will surrender the leadership of their lives to Him, putting Christ above all else. Your students will be challenged to take this definition and place it next to their lives, examining how their current relationship with Christ looks when compared to the example Jesus gives.

Lesson 3: Winning by Losing

What we want students to learn: That your students would understand the true nature of sacrificing to follow after Christ.

What we want them to do with what they've learned: To begin to accurately see perceived "losses" as gains.

Scripture Focus: Luke 9:57-62, Philippians 3:7-14

Overview: Anytime we talk about sacrifice or surrender, we find ourselves running headfirst into our sin nature. When we talk to teenagers about having to sacrifice to follow Christ, we feel a little knot in our stomach. "What if we scare them off?" The problem with this kind of thinking is that it contributes to the brand of weak faith that plagues our culture. The truth is that following Christ does require sacrifice and surrender. But here's the deal: if we embrace Jesus' definition of discipleship, we find that following Jesus is the most fulfilling thing we can do. It's what we were made to do! When we see discipleship for what it is, those things we think we might lose become victories. We often find they are what kept us from following in the first place. This lesson will help your students begin to see their life in this way, challenging them to put Christ first in their lives.