

DISCOVERING CHRIST

Lesson 4 — What Does Jesus Ask of Me?

The Big Question: What does it mean to truly follow Jesus?

Purpose of This Study:

We have spent three studies discovering some remarkable truths:

Who is Jesus? He is the Son of God, the Messiah, Creator, and Lord.

Why did Jesus come? He came to seek and save the lost.

Why do I need Him? Because sin has separated me from God, and I cannot save myself.

Now comes a very personal question: **If I believe these things about Jesus, what does He ask me to do?** Jesus never invited people merely to admire Him. He called people to **follow Him**.

1. DISCUSSION STARTER

“The Fine Print”

Let's begin with a situation from ordinary life: **Have you ever agreed to something because it sounded really good at first, only to discover later that there was more involved than you realized?**

Maybe it was a purchase, a job, a trip, a commitment, a project, or something else.

Why do we sometimes pay more attention to the benefits of something than to the commitment it requires?

Transition

We often do something similar with Christianity. We hear about God's love, forgiveness, heaven, peace, and eternal life—and all of those things are wonderfully true.

But Jesus also talked about what it means to **follow Him**. He never hid the cost of discipleship. So in this study we're going to ask: **What does Jesus actually ask of someone who wants to follow Him?**

2. JESUS CALLS US TO FOLLOW HIM

Listen especially for what Jesus says immediately after Peter identifies Him as the Messiah.

Read: Luke 9:18–26

Discussion Questions

1. What question does Jesus ask His disciples in verse 20?
2. What is Peter's answer?
3. What does Jesus begin teaching them immediately after Peter's confession?
4. Why do you think Jesus connects His identity with the cost of following Him?
5. Look at verse 23. What three things does Jesus say a person must do to follow Him?
6. What do you think Jesus means by “**deny themselves**”? The phrase “**deny themselves**” is important. **Does Jesus mean that a person should hate himself or herself? Or is He talking about something else?**
7. What does it mean to “**take up their cross daily**”?
8. What does it mean to “**follow me**”?
9. According to verse 24, what does a person gain by trying to save his own life?
10. What does a person gain by losing his life for Jesus?
11. According to verses 25–26, what is more valuable than gaining the whole world?

Key Thought: Jesus doesn't call us merely to add Christianity to our lives. He calls us to give our lives to Him.

3. JESUS MUST BE LORD

Read: Matthew 7:21–27

According to Jesus, is simply calling Him “Lord” enough?

Discussion Questions

1. What do the people in verse 21 call Jesus?
2. What does Jesus say they must do in addition to calling Him Lord?
3. What is striking about verses 22–23?
4. Does Jesus seem to be saying that religious activity automatically means someone knows Him?
5. What does Jesus say distinguishes the wise person from the foolish person?
6. What does the wise person do with Jesus' words?
7. What happens to the person who hears but does not put Jesus' words into practice?
8. Why do you think Jesus ends the teaching with this illustration?
9. Is there a difference in Knowing about Jesus and Actually following Him?
Explain that in light of Jesus' teaching that Someone can: call Jesus Lord, know religious things, participate in religious activity, and yet fail to surrender his or her life to Him.

What do you think Jesus means when He says, “the one who does the will of my Father”?

4. LOVE FOR JESUS PRODUCES OBEDIENCE

Read: John 14:15–24

Discussion Questions

1. What connection does Jesus make between love and obedience?
2. Does Jesus present obedience as a way of earning His love?
3. Or is obedience presented as an expression of love?
4. According to verse 21, who does Jesus say loves Him?
5. What does Jesus say happens when someone loves Him?
6. According to verse 23, what will those who love Jesus do?
7. Why do you think Jesus connects loving Him with keeping His word?
8. What does this teach us about the difference between **emotionally appreciating Jesus** and **actually following Jesus**?

Important Distinction

We don't obey Jesus so that He will love us.

We obey Jesus because He has first loved us.

Christian obedience is not: **“If I do enough good things, God will save me.”**

Rather: **“Because God has loved me and Jesus has given Himself for me, I want to trust and follow Him.”**

5. COUNTING THE COST

Read: Luke 14:25–33

Discussion Questions

1. What does Jesus say in verse 26 that initially sounds very difficult?
2. Does Jesus literally command us to hate our families?
3. Compare this passage with Matthew 10:37. What helps us understand what Jesus means?
4. What does Jesus mean by placing Him above every other relationship?
5. What does Jesus say about carrying our cross?
6. What two illustrations does Jesus use in verses 28–32?
7. Why would someone calculate the cost before building a tower?
8. What point is Jesus making about following Him?
9. What does verse 33 say about giving up everything?

Ok, while you study this let me share some insight just in case you think Jesus taught you to hate your parents or family. Jesus is not teaching us to despise our families. He is using deliberately strong language to emphasize **supreme allegiance**. Jesus must occupy first place.

Understanding that - What are some things that can compete with Jesus for first place in a person's life?

Why would Jesus want first place rather than simply a place somewhere in our lives?

6. JESUS WANTS OUR WHOLE HEART

Read: Mark 12:28–34

Discussion Questions

1. What question does the teacher ask Jesus?
2. What does Jesus identify as the greatest commandment?
3. What does it mean to love God with **all** your heart?
4. What does it mean to love God with **all** your soul?
5. What does it mean to love God with **all** your mind?
6. What does it mean to love God with **all** your strength?
7. What is the second commandment?
8. Why do you think Jesus puts love for God and love for others together?
9. Can someone genuinely follow Jesus while refusing to love other people?

Key Thought

Following Jesus is not simply about changing our religious beliefs.

It involves:

Heart

Soul

Mind

Strength

Relationships

Priorities

Behavior

In other words: **Jesus wants all of you, including your life.**

7. WHAT DOES FOLLOWING JESUS LOOK LIKE?

Read: John 15:1–14

Jesus now gives us the picture of a vine and branches.

Discussion Questions

1. What does Jesus call Himself?
2. What does He call His followers?

3. What happens to a branch that remains connected to the vine?
4. What does Jesus mean by “**remain in me**”?
5. What does Jesus say happens when we remain in Him?
6. According to verse 8, what brings glory to the Father?
7. What does verse 10 say about remaining in Jesus' love?
8. How does verse 12 summarize the life Jesus wants His followers to live?
9. What does this passage suggest about the difference between merely making a decision about Jesus and developing a continuing relationship with Jesus?

Key Thought: Christianity is not simply an event. It is a **life of remaining in Christ**.

8. WHAT DOES JESUS ASK OF ME?

Based on everything we've read in this study, what does Jesus actually ask of someone who wants to follow Him?

Does Jesus sound like someone asking us merely to agree with certain facts about Him?

What is He asking for?

9. JESUS IS BOTH SAVIOR AND LORD

Acts 2:36

Questions

1. What two titles does Peter give Jesus?
2. What does **Lord** mean?
3. Why is it significant that Jesus is both **Messiah** and **Lord**?
4. If Jesus is Lord, what does that imply about His authority?
5. Can we accept Jesus as Savior while deliberately rejecting Him as Lord?

Important Clarification

Jesus does not save us merely so that we can continue living as though He isn't Lord. Salvation brings us into a relationship with the One who is Lord. Our obedience does not purchase salvation. But genuine faith in Jesus produces a willingness to follow Him.

10. A PERSONAL LOOK IN THE MIRROR

- 1. What do you think is the hardest thing about truly surrendering one's life to Jesus?**
 - 2. Why might someone want the blessings of Christianity without wanting the demands of discipleship?**
 - 3. What are some things that can keep a person from putting Jesus first?**
 - 4. What do you think Jesus means when He asks a person to “deny himself”?**
 - 5. If Jesus is truly Lord, what area of life should He have authority over?**
 - 6. If you decided today that Jesus would truly be Lord of your life, what would have to change?**
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13. CLOSING THOUGHT

We've spent four studies asking some very basic but very important questions.

Who is Jesus? He is the Son of God.

Why did He come? He came to seek and save the lost.

Why do I need Him? Because sin has separated me from God, and I cannot save myself.

What does He ask of me? He asks me to follow Him.

Not simply to admire Him.

Not simply to believe that He existed.

Not simply to call Him Lord.

He asks me to give Him my life.

What does it really mean to believe in Jesus? If Jesus is Lord, what does it mean to truly believe in Him?

LESSON 4 AT A GLANCE

Main Truth

Jesus calls us not merely to believe facts about Him but to surrender our lives to Him as Lord and follow Him in obedient faith.

Key Text Luke 9:23

The Progression So Far

Lesson 1 — Who Is Jesus? Jesus is the Son of God, Messiah, Creator and Lord.

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Lesson 2 — Why Did Jesus Come? Jesus came to seek and save the lost.

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Lesson 3 — Why Do I Need Jesus? Everyone has sinned and needs a Savior.

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Lesson 4 — What Does Jesus Ask of Me? Jesus calls me to believe, surrender, obey, and follow Him as Lord.

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Lesson 5 — What Does It Mean to Believe?