

discipleship essentials

Essentials for Christian Living
Leader's Guide

WHO IS JESUS?

LESSON 7: WHAT JESUS ASKS OF US

INTRODUCTION

This lesson is part of a Disciple Essentials module titled *Who is Jesus?* This series of seven lessons introduces the person and work of Jesus from a Christian perspective, considering His identity, work, teachings and death. Because Jesus is central to the Christian faith and religion, it is vital for the disciple to know Jesus, and for those exploring Christianity to know what makes Jesus Christ unique, and worthy of our discipleship and devotion. You may have participants from a variety of cultural and religious backgrounds who have differing ideas about who Jesus is and what He taught. This series will be an excellent foundation for their future studies in discipleship.

INTENDED AUDIENCE

The intended audience for these lessons is new Christians, those who would like a refresher on the basics of Christianity, as well as those preparing to teach these Christian practices and beliefs. Also, those with an interest in Christian thought will find value in these lessons as they pertain to daily living and choices.

The Leader's Guide is intended to help you as a leader in your preparation. These lesson outlines may be used in conjunction with other Discipleship Essentials materials found online at www.discipleshipessentials.org.

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LESSON 7: WHAT JESUS ASKS OF US

PURPOSE

The other lessons in this series have focused on what Jesus did and said during His time on earth. This lesson will help us respond to all that we've learned by looking at what Jesus Christ asks of us today.

LEADER'S NOTES

This lesson completes our series on Jesus. If you have taught this material to your participants over some time, they will now have a clear understanding of what the Bible says about Jesus. If they are believers, they will have a firm foundation on who Jesus is. If they are learning about Christianity, this lesson poses a personal question. It is time, if they have not already done so, for them to respond. Who do they believe Jesus to be, and will they repent and believe? This lesson walks participants through the decisions they must make if they want to become a Christian. There is much material here, so focus on what your participants need to know most. Some of this will be a review of previous lessons. Encourage participants to think about the step of faith God is asking them to take.

INTRODUCTION

Select two or three of the following questions to ask the group.

- ❖ How do you decide who is trustworthy in your life?
- ❖ What does a person have to do to be a follower of Jesus Christ?
- ❖ Think about the people around you – your friends, family, co-workers, neighbours. Who do they say Jesus is? What information do they base this on?
- ❖ What does a person need to know before they can put their faith in Jesus Christ?

STUDY

Instruct the group on the following points.

TEACH

- ❖ **What Jesus Asks of Us:** What is written in the Bible about Jesus – the man who lived 2000 years ago in Nazareth – was written so that we would know what Jesus said and did, and then believe the good news Jesus came to bring ([John 20:31](#)).
 - This good news is that there is forgiveness for our sins, and a way for each of us to have peace with God. This good news tells us there is a purpose to our lives, there is hope, there is joy, and there can be eternal life.



- All of the deepest problems we experience can be solved in one man – Jesus Christ. But this good news isn't so much a statement, but a question. It requires a response from us. Each one of us must look at what Jesus asks of us, and answer for ourselves.
 - What we believe about Jesus has eternal consequences. It is the most important thing in our life!
- ❖ **We Must Admit Our Sin:** Jesus gave much of His time to people who were known as sinners. It was the religious authorities of His day that Jesus was harsh with. These religious people required outward signs and the law to be dutifully kept, but there was no love for God in them – only a desire to appear better than everyone else.
- **Jesus Came to Save Sinners:** Jesus tells us that He came to save the lost (Luke 19:10). He said: "I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance" (Luke 5:32). And in Matthew 9:12 Jesus tells us He came not for those who think they are healthy, but for the sick. Before we can accept the cure Jesus offers us, we must admit we have the disease (sin).
 - **Disciples Admit their Sin:** After Simon Peter saw Jesus perform a great miracle, he knew Jesus was a man of God. He immediately responded by saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord" (Luke 5:7-10).
 - **The Pharisee and the Tax Collector:** Jesus taught a parable about righteousness in which one man thought himself perfect, and another who knew he was a sinner and begged for mercy (Luke 18:9-14). Jesus said it was the man who admitted his sin and humbled himself who was forgiven.
 - The Bible says all of us are sinners (Romans 3:23) whether we admit it or not. We are excellent at deceiving ourselves. Jesus requires that we recognize our need for Him to forgive our sins.
- ❖ **We Must Know Who He Is:** In the Gospels, there were two kinds of people– those who knew who Jesus was and those who didn't. Many who had heard Him preach and saw His miracles professed that He was the Son of God, the promised Messiah. This included some priests and people of faith, many sinners and ordinary people, and even some non-Jews who knew that Jesus was divine.
- **Jesus tells us who He is:** Jesus tells us plainly in the Bible who He is and what He is able to do for us. Jesus asks us to believe what He says and believe that He is the Son of God.
 - I am the bread of life, whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst (John 6:35).
 - I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the light of life (John 8:12).
 - I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture (John 10:9).



- o I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep (John 10:11).
- o I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live (John 11:25).
- o I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me (John 14:6).
- o I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser (John 15:1).
- **Jesus is God:** Jesus tells us that He and God the Father are one (John 10:30). He came to earth in a human body (Philippians 2:5-7). Jesus said He alone knows the Father (Matthew 11:27) and will one day sit at the right hand of the mighty God (Luke 22:69). Jesus claimed to be able to forgive sins, grant eternal life, and that He had existed with God before all things and shared in His glory (John 17:5). All these are claims that Jesus made, and only could be true of God.
- **Jesus asked, "Who Do you Say that I am?"** Jesus asked His disciples what people were saying about Him (Luke 9:18-20); they responded that people thought He was a prophet. When Jesus asked them, Peter answered, "The Christ of God."
- Jesus asks this of each of us – we must decide: Is Jesus the Son of God, the Word of God, the Saviour?
- ❖ **We Must Repent and Believe:** Jesus asked people to do two things while on earth – repent and believe. His message was one of forgiveness, but He required that people turn from their sin and not doubt Him.
 - Repenting means to regret our sin so deeply that we don't go back to it. It involves agreeing with God about our sinfulness and choosing a new path. Jesus repeatedly asks people to repent (Matthew 4:17, Luke 13:3). This included many sinners to whom He gave the command to "sin no more" (John 8:11, John 5:14).
 - People had to believe the words of God that Jesus spoke, believe that Jesus was who He said He was, and trust Him for their salvation. Jesus over and over invited people to believe (Mark 5:36, Mark 16:16, John 3:36).
 - **Do you Believe?** Jesus told His friend, Martha, that He was the resurrection and the life, and through Him there is eternal life. Then He asked her, "Do you believe this?" She responded, "Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God" (John 11:24-27). Jesus asks us the same question – will you repent and believe?
- ❖ **We Must Follow Him:** Jesus' invitation to His disciples was to leave their ordinary lives and follow Him. Jesus invites us to do the same – but following Jesus is far more than simply stating we believe. Jesus calls us who are weighed down with the cares and troubles of life to come to Him and He will give us rest (Matthew 11:28-30). Choosing to follow Jesus will change our life forever!
 - **We Follow in Obedience:** Jesus lived His life on earth without sin (1 Peter 2:22, John 8:29) and obeyed God in all things. We must strive to be obedient also. Jesus said He



did not come to take away the Law, but rather that we might know it fully and have help accomplishing it. Jesus tells us that if we love Him, we will obey Him (John 14:23).

- **We Follow in Love:** When asked what the greatest commandment is, Jesus replied, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And the second is like it: You shall love your neighbour as yourself” (Matthew 22:36-39). To truly follow Jesus, we must love as He did. This means putting God first in all things and helping those who need us. Sometimes it is difficult; however, the foremost characteristic of a Christian should be love.
- **We Follow in Selfless Commitment:** Jesus gave up His life for us, and suffered because He loves us. This was the ultimate act of love: Jesus told us, “Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends” (John 15:13). To follow Him, we must be ready to do the same. Jesus said to His disciples, “Whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me” (Matthew 10:38). Following Jesus means laying aside our own plans and desires and taking up the cause of God instead. It might mean following Jesus even to death, but more often it means other personal sacrifice. Jesus promises us life in return – and life that can never be taken away (Matthew 10:39)
- ❖ **We Must Go and Make Disciples:** Jesus’ final command to His friends was this: “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:18-19).
 - **Preach the Gospel:** Jesus asks us to find those who have not heard the Good News and to tell them (Acts 1:8, Mark 16:14-16). We are to be witnesses of what God has done in our own lives. We don’t have to worry about using fancy speech or persuasive arguments – God asks us to tell the truth (1 Corinthians 1:17). The goal is for more disciples to join the Kingdom of God as followers of Jesus.
 - **Labour at the Harvest:** Jesus said that this world is like a ripe harvest of people who are ready to come to God by repenting and believing, but the workers to reap the harvest are few (Matthew 9:37-38). We should work hard at the tasks God tells us to do, especially making more disciples.
- ❖ **God is With Us:** The essential things that Jesus asks of us are impossible to do without faith and the help of God. Thankfully, God does not leave us alone to try and accomplish His commands.
 - **Jesus equips us:** Jesus promises, “I am with you always” (Matthew 28:20). Jesus will equip us to accomplish what He asks of us (Hebrews 13:20-21).
 - **Promises the Holy Spirit:** Jesus promises that the Holy Spirit will be with us forever (John 14:16-17). This Spirit comes inside of us when we believe in Jesus as our Saviour and we are born again. This Spirit teaches us what we need to know, helps us to understand God’s Word, assures us we belong to God, and works in us so that we are more like Jesus.



DISCUSSION

- ❖ Which thing that Jesus asks of us is most difficult for you?
- ❖ Why does Jesus, who loves us, ask us to do certain things? What good comes to us when we follow the commands of Jesus?
- ❖ What can you do this week to follow Jesus? What is one step that you need to take? Is there something in your life you need to remove? Is there something you need to add?
- ❖ How can you share with someone this week who Jesus is to you?
- ❖ Are you willing to do what Jesus asks of you and become His disciple? How would this change your life?

PRAYER

Close your session in a time of prayer. Pray that each participant would consider carefully who Jesus is, and what that means for their life. Pray that they would see clearly what they must do to obey all that Jesus asks of them, and that they would not be afraid to follow Him wherever He leads. Thank God for the gift of the Holy Spirit and God's Word who both guide us and teach us in righteousness. Thank God for what He has done for us through His Son, Jesus Christ.