



Jesus Teaches About Commitment

Mark 8:31-38

Socially, third- and fourth-graders are eager to be part of a group. Being accepted makes them feel successful and secure, and they may be tempted to stretch their ethics a little to accomplish that goal. Help them see that cliques may come and go, but Jesus is the truest friend they'll ever have. Use this lesson to show kids that following Jesus means putting him first in their lives and that the result will be everlasting security.




► **Bible Point**
Commit to follow Jesus.

Key Verse

"I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile" (Romans 1:16).


Weaving Faith Into Life

Children will take a step to sacrifice something to spend time with Jesus.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started	Mirror Motions <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Pair up to imitate each other's motions.		
2 Bible Exploration	Go With Jesus! <i>(about 15 min.)</i> Examine what things are important to them and what they need to follow Jesus.	Bibles, CD player, Bible Truth Sleuth, pens, several pairs of scissors Teacher Pack: CD, "Door to Heaven" sheet 	Tear out the Lesson 1 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book.
	Key Verse Groups <i>(about 15 min.)</i> Break into groups to explore the Key Verse in a different way.	Bibles, CD player, poster board, markers, pens, paper, copies of the lyrics page (at the end of this lesson) Teacher Pack: CD	

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
<p>3</p> <p>Weaving Faith Into Life</p>	<p>Committed to Jesus <i>(about 20 min.)</i> Role-play situations in which they can be committed to Jesus.</p>	<p>pens, paper Teacher Pack: “Don’t Be Ashamed” cards</p> 	
<p>4</p> <p>Lasting Impressions</p>	<p>Daily Challenges <i>(about 5 min.)</i> Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God’s Word.</p>	Bible Truth Sleuth, pens	
	<p>Weaving Faith at Home <i>(about 2 min.)</i> Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.</p>	Bible Truth Sleuth	Tear out the letter to parents from the back of each Bible Truth Sleuth student book.

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



1 GETTING STARTED

Mirror Motions

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went.

Have kids find partners, and have them choose one person to be the Motion Maker and one to be the Imitator. The Motion Maker will pantomime motions, and the Imitator must try to copy him or her. Have kids do this four times. The first time, the original mimes can give verbal clues to their partners to help them know what to do. They could say, "Now we'll brush our teeth" or "Now let's comb our hair." Then have kids switch roles. After both have been the Motion Maker and have used verbal clues, have the pairs mirror their partners' motions without verbal cues.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- What was it like to try to follow the motions of your partner?
- Tell about someone you like to try to imitate.
- How was following your partner's motions like or unlike following Jesus?

Say: **You did a great job following your partner. The Bible tells us to follow Jesus and not be ashamed. So this week we'll learn how to ► COMMIT TO FOLLOW JESUS.**

Go With Jesus! Supplies

Bibles
CD player
Bible Truth Sleuth
pens
several pairs of scissors
Teacher Pack
CD: " 'Tis So Sweet to
Trust in Jesus" (track 2)
"Door to Heaven" sheet

Go With Jesus! Easy Prep

Tear out the Lesson 1
pages from each Bible
Truth Sleuth student
book.

2 BIBLE EXPLORATION

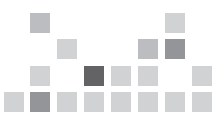
Go With Jesus!

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Make sure kids all have Bibles, and ask a willing child to read aloud Mark 8:31-38. Then distribute pens and this week's Bible Truth Sleuth pages, and have kids turn to the "Take Up Your Cross" activity.

Say: **On your Bible Truth Sleuth page, there are two keys. On the bottom key, write down several things that you want, need, hope to get, or think are cool.**

Encourage kids to write on both sides of the key. As kids write, punch out the key shape from the "Door to Heaven" sheet. Set it aside for later.



Ask:

- What are some things you listed on your key?
- Why are those things important to you?

Say: Jesus tells us in our Bible passage that following him takes commitment. Jesus said, “If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.” Jesus also asked, “What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit (or give up) his soul?”

Ask:

- What does it mean to deny ourselves?
- How does denying ourselves show that we’re committed to Jesus?
- What does it take to follow Jesus?
- What are some things that are important to God?

Say: Now on the top key, write things that God likes and values. When you’re done, cut out the two keys.

Play “ ’Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus” (track 2 on the CD) while the kids cut. Have them cut out each key very carefully so that the correct key will fit into the opening of the “Door to Heaven” sheet.

Have kids try to fit their world keys into the keyhole of the “Door to Heaven” sheet. They’ll quickly notice that the key will not fit.

Say: **Let’s get rid of those keys.** Have kids bring their world keys and lay them in a pile. **When we deny ourselves, take up our crosses, and follow Jesus the way Jesus said in the Bible, that means we’re choosing to focus on Jesus and put him first in our lives.**

We can’t allow our things to be more important than Jesus. Holding on to them makes it difficult to follow Jesus, and if we don’t follow Jesus, we won’t be able to open the door to heaven. Jesus is the only way to open that door. So let’s pick up the other key and see if that one fits.

Let all kids try their keys before you continue.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- How does focusing on Jesus open the door to heaven?
- How are God’s priorities different from ours?
- What kinds of things might you have to give up to follow Jesus?

Say: **Following Jesus takes commitment. And when we’re willing to lay down our things that seem important and take up the cross, we take the first step in doing our part to ► COMMIT TO FOLLOW JESUS.** That doesn’t mean that God will never give you the things you like or want. It means that Jesus needs to be more important to you than those things. Let’s see what our Key Verse says about following Jesus.





Key Verse Groups Supplies

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Bibles
CD player
poster board
markers
pens
paper
copies of the lyrics page
(at the end of this
lesson)

Teacher Pack
CD: “ ’Tis So Sweet to
Trust in Jesus” (track 2)

Key Verse Groups

What You’ll Do ■■■■■■

Have kids get into four groups, and give each group a Bible. To ensure kids have fun in their groups, you may want to place kids who like music in Group 1, kids who like to draw in Group 2, kids who like drama in Group 3, and kids who are problem solvers in Group 4. If you aren’t sure which kids to put into which group, just ask them what their interests are.

Have kids open their Bibles to the Key Verse, Romans 1:16, and ask for a child in each group to read the verse aloud quietly to the group: “I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.”

Say: **Following Jesus takes commitment. We might have to give something up, make choices that are hard to make, or do some things we don’t feel like we’re ready to do. But the Bible tells us to not be ashamed of the gospel. That means we can take those steps to ► COMMIT TO FOLLOW JESUS.**

Each group is going to give us a new spin on the Key Verse. Group 1 will turn the verse into a song; Group 2 will make a poster; Group 3 will mime the verse; and Group 4 will make a list of ways they can show they’re not ashamed of the gospel.

Quietly play “ ’Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus” (track 2 on the CD) while kids work. When they’ve finished, have groups take turns reading the original Key Verse and then sharing their new interpretations of the verse.

Talk With Kids ■■■■


Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- What do you think being “not ashamed of the gospel” means?
- Tell about a time you were not ashamed of the gospel.
- How does being “not ashamed of the gospel” show your commitment to Jesus?

Say: **As we ► COMMIT TO FOLLOW JESUS, he wants us to trust him—even though he’s told us it will be hard and will take some sacrifices. Let’s sing a song as a commitment of trust to Jesus.**

Pass out copies of the lyrics, and play “ ’Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus” (track 2 on the CD). Lead the children in singing the song.

 **’Tis so sweet to trust in Jesus,
Just to take him at his word,
Just to rest upon his promise,
Just to know, “Thus saith the Lord.”**



(Chorus)

**Jesus, Jesus, how I trust him!
How I've proved him o'er and o'er!
Jesus, Jesus, precious Jesus!
O, for grace to trust him more!**

**I'm so glad I learned to trust him,
Precious Jesus, Savior, friend.
And I know that he is with me;
He'll be with me to the end.**

(Repeat chorus.)

" 'Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus" by Louisa M.R. Stead.



3

**WEAVING FAITH
INTO LIFE**

Committed to Jesus

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **Let's do some role-plays about kids facing difficult situations. We'll look at ways they can show they're not ashamed of Jesus.**

Have kids form three groups, and give each group paper, a pen, and a "Don't Be Ashamed" card. Have groups appoint one person to write answers to the questions found on their cards, and then ask the groups to read the scenarios on their cards and answer the two questions that follow. Encourage kids to be as thorough in their responses as possible. After groups have written responses to their questions, have them work for a few minutes to prepare their role-plays. When the groups are ready, have them perform their role-plays.

After all the groups have presented their role-plays, gather the children and have them sit down.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- Which of these scenarios did you think was most difficult? Why?
- When have you had a similar experience?
- In these situations, what did it take to follow Jesus?
- How can you show a full commitment to following Jesus?

Committed to Jesus Supplies

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- pens
 - paper
 - Teacher Pack**
 - "Don't Be Ashamed"
 - cards





Daily Challenges Supplies

Bible Truth Sleuth
pens

Weaving Faith at Home Supplies

Bible Truth Sleuth

Weaving Faith at Home Easy Prep

Tear out the letter to
parents from the back
of each Bible Truth
Sleuth student book.

Say: **Sometimes following Jesus means giving up something else we want. That's what Jesus meant when he said we need to deny ourselves. Following Jesus, even when it's hard, takes commitment. Let's look at some ways we can ► COMMIT TO FOLLOW JESUS.**

4 LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **Let's think about how we can ► COMMIT TO FOLLOW JESUS this week.**

Have kids find this week's Daily Challenges on their Bible Truth Sleuth pages and choose one to do this week. They can choose one or more of these three options:

- **Give up a favorite activity to spend time with Jesus this week. A good way to spend time with Jesus is to read about him in one of the Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John.**
- **Donate a favorite toy to someone.**
- **Talk to someone you don't usually talk to about Jesus.**

Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell the kids what you chose. Kids will be more inclined to follow through when they see you doing the same.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What's a practical way you're going to do your Daily Challenge? Include a time, a place, and other ideas.**

Say: **Following Jesus takes commitment, and following through on your Daily Challenges will, too. Let's ► COMMIT TO FOLLOW JESUS this week as we complete our Daily Challenges.**

Weaving Faith at Home

Send the letter to parents home with your kids or give it to parents when they pick up their children. This is a great way to show families they're important to your church and to support their role as spiritual leaders to their children.

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about following Jesus. Kids can also do the activities in the "HomeConnect" section of their Bible Truth Sleuth pages with their families.

Talk to your Director about emailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church's families. Available at group.com/digital.

Close in prayer. Thank God for committing to us, and ask him to help us better commit to him. As you close the prayer, have each child say, "I'm not ashamed to follow you, Jesus."



**Lyrics** ■■■■**'Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus**

'Tis so sweet to trust in Jesus,
Just to take him at his word,
Just to rest upon his promise,
Just to know, "Thus saith the Lord."

(Chorus)

Jesus, Jesus, how I trust him!
How I've proved him o'er and o'er!
Jesus, Jesus, precious Jesus!
O, for grace to trust him more!

I'm so glad I learned to trust him,
Precious Jesus, Savior, friend.
And I know that he is with me;
He'll be with me to the end.

(Repeat chorus.)

"'Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus" by Louisa M.R. Stead.

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