



Jesus Teaches About Commitment

Mark 8:31-38

Kids this age are looking for someone trustworthy to follow. They're beginning to look to role models other than their parents for moral training and life perspectives. These nonparent mentors shape the future of kids at this age. As you teach this lesson, remember that Jesus is the perfect role model for them. Help preteens learn who Jesus is and how he wants them to live now, and they'll carry that knowledge with them into their adolescent years.



► **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

Preteens will choose to follow Jesus, even if it's difficult.

LESSON	WHAT KIDS DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started	Decision Line <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Practice making decisions that require personal commitment.	masking tape	Run a line of masking tape from one side of the room to the other.
2 Bible Exploration	A Hard Teaching <i>(about 20 min.)</i> Read Mark 8:31-38 and discuss what it takes to follow Jesus.	Bibles, pens, Bible Buzz, CD player Teacher Pack: CD	Tear out the Lesson 1 pages from each Bible Buzz student book.

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



LESSON	WHAT KIDS DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
3 Weaving Faith Into Life	It's an Adventure! <i>(about 15 min.)</i> Learn the Key Verse and design a map to follow Jesus.	Bible Buzz, colored markers	
	Even When It's Hard <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Identify areas in which they have trouble following Jesus.	pens, markers Teacher Pack: "So What? Buttons" activity sheet 	Punch out the "So What? Buttons" from the sheet.
4 Lasting Impressions	Daily Challenges <i>(about 5 min.)</i> Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	Bible Buzz	
	Weaving Faith at Home <i>(about 2 min.)</i> Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.	Bible Buzz	Tear out the letter to parents from the back of each Bible Buzz student book.

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



Decision Line Supplies

masking tape

Decision Line Easy Prep

Run a line of masking tape from one side of the room to the other.

1 GETTING STARTED

Decision Line

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

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

Stand at one end of the masking-tape line you prepared before your meeting, and ask kids to stand on the line in single file, facing you.

Say: **This is a decision line. I'll ask you a question and give you two possible answers; then you'll step either to the left or to the right. You must step one direction or the other—you can't stay on the line. I'll ask you to close your eyes when considering your answer and stepping off the line, so you're not influenced by what other people do. You can open your eyes once you take your step. Ready?**

Have kids stand back on the line after each question.

1. You want to listen to music, and there are only two stations on the radio. If you'd rather listen to the country station, step left. If you'd rather listen to the rock station, step right.
2. The ice-cream store has just two flavors left. If you'd prefer a chocolate cone, step left. If you'd prefer a vanilla cone, step right.
3. You can either go to the amusement park with your friends and get a C on your test tomorrow, or stay home and study and get an A on the test. If you're heading to the amusement park, step left. If you're going to study all evening, step right.
4. It's Friday evening and you don't have anything special planned. If you call up a friend to get together, step right. If you get your homework done so you don't have to worry about it for the rest of the weekend, step left.
5. Two friends walk up to you and they each have an extra ticket to a sporting event. If you'd go to the football game, step left. If you'd go to the basketball game, step right.
6. Your teacher takes you aside and says that the principal wants to see you but doesn't give you any clue why. If you're nervous, step to the left. If you're excited, step to the right.
7. Listen to this statement: Christians usually have an easier time in life because God takes care of them. If you agree, step left. If you disagree, step right.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- Which decision was hardest for you to make?
- Were you frustrated or relieved about not being able to see what everyone else was deciding when you made your decision? Explain.
- Tell about a time you made a decision that you wish you could unmake.

Say: **Today we'll talk about what commitment to Jesus means. It starts with making a decision, but commitment is more than that. Commitment means you act on what you've decided. You can't stay on the line when it comes to commitment—you have to take a step and stand firm. Let's look at how some followers learned that they can ► COMMIT TO FOLLOW JESUS.**



2 BIBLE
EXPLORATION

A Hard Teaching

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Distribute this week's Bible Buzz pages and pens. Have kids form trios, and give each trio a Bible. Position trios so they can have discussions without distracting each other.

Say: **Today we're going to read about a rough day the disciples had with Jesus. First he tells them he's going to die, and then he tells them what will be required of them. Read the verses as a group, and then write down any thoughts, observations, and questions you have on the lines provided in the "What a Day!" section of your Bible Buzz page.**

Have trio members take turns reading one verse of Mark 8:31-38 aloud. Then give kids five minutes to complete the journaling activity.

When five minutes have passed, ask trios to compare notes and discuss how this passage affected them.

Say: **In Mark 8:34-38, we see that commitment may mean sacrifice—even death. We often think of the cross as a nice symbol of Jesus' love. But that's not what it meant to the people Jesus was talking to. Let's listen to a brief audio segment about what the cross really meant to Jesus' listeners.**

Play the "Take Up Your Cross" segment (track 2 on the CD).

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- How did this information about the cross help you think differently about what Jesus meant when he said "take up your cross"?
- What's one way Jesus asks you to deny yourself?
- Do you think obeying Jesus always means giving something up? Why or why not?
- Why is following Jesus so costly?

A Hard Teaching Supplies

- Bibles
pens
Bible Buzz
CD player
Teacher Pack
CD: "Take Up Your Cross" (track 2)

A Hard Teaching Easy Prep

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





It's an Adventure! Supplies

Bible Buzz
colored markers

Say: **When we ► COMMIT TO FOLLOW JESUS**, it might mean sacrifice. Peter didn't understand that, and he didn't understand what Jesus was here on earth to do—to suffer and be a sacrifice for our sins. And Jesus' sharp words communicated how Jesus felt: No one, not even his friend Peter, could keep Jesus from doing God's will.

3 WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

It's an Adventure!

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Have kids find the "Following Jesus Adventure Map" section on their Bible Buzz pages, and distribute colored markers.

Say: **Following Jesus is an adventure! We don't know everything he'll take us through, but we know the final destination is heaven. And we can start our journey here today by creating a Following Jesus Adventure Map. For the first two boxes, draw pictures of places he's already taken you. It might be a missions trip or here to church to meet new friends and learn more about him.**

For the last box, think of someplace you'd like him to take you. Maybe it's to another country to help people and teach them about Jesus. Or maybe it's an even bigger adventure than that!

When eight minutes have passed, ask willing kids to show their creations and explain what they drew.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Have kids find the Key Verse, Romans 1:16, on their Bible Buzz pages: "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."

Have a willing preteen read the Key Verse aloud, and then lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **In what ways can not being ashamed of the gospel be an adventure?**
- **Think about the adventures on your map. Did you feel ashamed or confident about God's power during those times? Why?**
- **Why does everyone's adventure look different?**
- **How can you work toward your third box becoming a reality?**

Say: **Following Jesus is an adventure! Sometimes that adventure takes us to unexpected places—like it did for the disciples when Jesus told them what would**

happen to him. And though we don't know exactly where he'll take us, we do know that if we ► **COMMIT TO FOLLOW JESUS**, eternal life with him will be waiting for us!

Even When It's Hard

What You'll Do

Give each preteen a "So What? Button." Also distribute pens and markers to the kids.

Say: **We can ► COMMIT TO FOLLOW JESUS, but the hardest thing about commitment is actually changing our behavior the way Jesus wants us to. Knowing that Jesus wants us to be honest is one thing; telling the truth is another. Knowing Jesus wants us to treat our sisters or brothers with kindness is one thing; doing it is another.**

Think about one area in your life in which it's tough for you to follow what you know Jesus wants you to do. Pause.

Say: **Now make a button that will help you remember to do what you find hard to do. For example, if you have trouble treating your sister with love at home, maybe you could draw a sketch of your sister and write "Treat With Kindness" under the sketch. You have four minutes to create a "So What? Button." Allow four minutes.**

Talk With Kids

After kids have created their buttons, lead them in this discussion.

Ask:

- Why is it hard to always follow what Jesus wants?
- How does doing hard things show we're following Jesus?
- How will you accomplish your hard task?

Say: **When we ► COMMIT TO FOLLOW JESUS, we're also committing to doing what Jesus wants us to. The disciples had to learn about that commitment when Jesus told them what would happen to him. Maybe commitment for you means doing the thing you drew on your button. Obeying Jesus even when it's hard is one way we deny ourselves and follow Jesus.**



Even When It's Hard Supplies

pens
markers

Teacher Pack
"So What? Buttons"
activity sheet

Even When It's Hard Easy Prep

Punch out the "So What? Buttons" from the sheet.



Daily Challenges Supplies

Bible Buzz

Weaving Faith at Home Supplies

Bible Buzz

Weaving Faith at Home Easy Prep

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

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 Buzz pages and choose one to do this week. They can choose one or more of these three options:

- **Treat a family member or friend with love when it's difficult to love that person.**
- **Do you have a friend who doesn't believe in Jesus? Talk to that friend about what you believe, and stand up for Jesus.**
- **Make a plan to give something up, such as playing video games or watching a TV show, to spend more time with 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 on their commitments when they see you doing the same.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

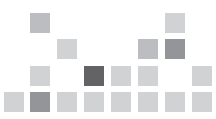
- **What's a practical way you're going to do your Daily Challenge? Include a time, place, and other ideas.**

Say: **The disciples didn't know what true commitment to Jesus would mean—they didn't even want to believe it when he said he had to die. Jesus wants our commitment, too. Let's ► COMMIT TO FOLLOW JESUS by following through with 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 committing to Jesus. Kids can also do the activities in the "HomeConnect" section of their Bible Buzz pages with their families.



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

Take a couple of minutes to pray, giving kids a chance to silently pray over the commitments they've made today.



