



UNCERTAINTY: Bible Lessons for Families

Lesson: Following Jesus
Project Supervisor: Nick Diliberto
Graphic Design: Kate Forkel

Created by Ministry to Youth
MinistrytoYouth.com

Series Overview

Uncertainty: A 6-pack of Bible lessons helping families wrestle with the COVID-19 pandemic and other uncertain times.

UNCERTAINTY: FOLLOWING JESUS

BIBLE: Luke 9:23-27; John 10:10

MAIN IDEAS: No matter what you've done, where you grew up, or what is going on in your life right now, you can follow Jesus.

- Following Jesus is a commitment.
- Following Jesus is worth it.
- When you give your life up, you will actually find it in Him.

SUPPLIES

For Family Activity:

- Items for an obstacle course (pillows, chairs, toys, etc.)

For Object Lesson:

- A large pair of shoes (these shoes belong to a person in the family who has the biggest family)

FAMILY ACTIVITY

Before your time together, set up a basic obstacle course for everyone in the family to walk through. You can make it as easy or as hard as you would like.

Choose one person to lead everyone through the obstacle course. If you would like, you can give everyone a chance to lead.

Today, we're talking about following Jesus.

So, I thought the perfect example of what it looks like to follow Jesus is an obstacle course. For the next few minutes, we are going to see how well we can go through it.

After everyone has finished the obstacle course, say... Our obstacle course had challenges. Sometimes following Jesus has challenges too, but that doesn't mean we should ever give up.

There is always a way to keep going, no matter how hard it may seem, because God is with us.

TEACH

With so much uncertainty around us, where do you go for guidance and direction?

Friends? Social Media? YouTube? The news? Somewhere else?

Instead of looking to friends and the media, we can go to Jesus. Especially in these uncertain times.

What does it mean to follow Jesus? Think about that for a moment.

What does that really mean, and how can we follow Him in our everyday lives?

Let's take a look at what Jesus Himself expected of those who would "follow" Him.

Read Luke 9:23-27 (The Message).

Then he told them what they could expect for themselves: "Anyone who intends to come with me has to let me lead. You're not in the driver's seat—I am.

Don't run from suffering; embrace it. Follow me, and I'll show you how. Self-help is no help at all. Self-sacrifice is the way, my way, to finding yourself, your true self. What good would it do to get everything you want and lose you, the real you?

If any of you is embarrassed with me and the way I'm leading you, know that the Son of Man will be far more embarrassed with you when he arrives in all his splendor in company with the Father and the holy angels.

This isn't, you realize, pie in the sky by and by. Some who have taken their stand right here are going to see it happen, see with their own eyes the kingdom of God."

There are a few things we can learn from these verses:

First, anyone can follow Jesus!

Have you ever felt unworthy to follow Jesus?

You might feel like the things you've done, the decisions you've made, or the circumstances in your life keep you from following Jesus with all of your heart.

Is following Jesus only for those who have it all together – people that can be perfect all the time?

No! When Jesus says that anyone can follow Him - He meant it!

His disciples were a ragtag bunch of fishermen, tax collectors, women (who were not treated that great in those days), and even thieves.

They had terrible tempers.

They didn't always understand what Jesus was saying.

They didn't always do what Jesus asked them to do.

But they believed in Him and committed to following Him.

No matter what you've done, or what is going on in your life right now, you can follow Jesus.

All you need is faith and commitment.

Second, following Jesus is a commitment.

What is commitment, and what are some examples of things you commit to?

When you commit, you are "binding or pledging yourself" to something. You agree to stick with it no matter what.

However, it's easy to believe that commitment isn't all that important.

Think about the commitment you make to play sports or whatever activity you're involved in. You show up to every practice, even when you don't feel like giving 110%. That's real commitment!

Or think about your commitment to entertainment.

I know that might sound kind of crazy, but stay with me here for a moment.

Think of your favorite binge-worthy TV show on Netflix or Disney Plus. A new season comes out, and you binge-watch all of the episodes right away. You might even lose some sleep in the process. That's commitment!

Just think about your overall commitment to Fortnite or another video game that you really love. Think of the time you spend in a day, week, month, or year. That's commitment!

Now, imagine taking an equal amount of time, energy, and commitment to following Jesus. How could that change your life? What would be different? Think about that for a moment.

Jesus says that following Him is a commitment.

It's a day-by-day journey.

And it is giving over control of your life to Him.

What is the most you have ever given up for a friendship? Think about that.

Right here, Jesus is asking for everything.

Anyone can follow Him, but they must commit to Him.

It means letting Him lead your whole life so that no one should have to guess who you are following.

Third, following Jesus is worth it!

Jesus said that following Him would take commitment and surrender, but He also promised that it would be worth it.

He promised that if you give your life up to Him, you will find a better life under His leadership.

Share a time when you had to give something up, and in return, got something back that was much greater.

The way of Jesus is so often filled with things that seem so opposite but are true.

For example...

Jesus says that when you give your life up, you will actually find it in Him.

And Jesus didn't come to give average life. He came "so they can have real and eternal life, more and better life than they ever dreamed of." (John 10:10 MSG)

Are you ready to follow Jesus?

Anyone can do it!

If you trust in Him and give your whole life to Him, He will lead you in a way that is better than you could ever dream of.

Especially in these uncertain times, we need to follow Jesus.

The first followers of Jesus followed him into the unknown. Although they had their ideas of where Jesus was leading them, they didn't really know what to expect.

They didn't know where it was all going. They just trusted that Jesus would lead them.

The same is true for us today. We don't know what the next few months will look like. We're more aware of that now than ever before. The COVID-19 pandemic might get worse, or it might get better.

The quarantine might last for months...or it might last for weeks. We don't know. But what we do know is that we can follow Jesus. He will lead and guide us.

OBJECT LESSON

Have a pair of large shoes on hand to use for this object lesson. Choose the smallest person in the family to put the big shoes on and try to walk around.

I asked _____ (*name of child*) to put these shoes on... and they are a little too big.

Pretend like the shoes represent walking with Jesus.

Sometimes following Jesus can feel like wearing these big shoes.

You might feel like you aren't enough – you don't have enough faith, you don't know enough about God, you still make mistakes and trip and fall...

But through it all, even though you aren't perfect, Jesus is still walking with you.

The shoes never left _____'s feet – just like Jesus will never leave you.

Pray together and then end the lesson.

Take a few minutes to discuss the following questions.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Who are some of your favorite people or things to follow and keep up with?
- Do you find it easy or hard to commit to something for a long period of time?
- What does it mean for you to follow Jesus?
- What could help you stay strong in your commitment to follow Jesus?

FAMILY CHALLENGE

Take a few minutes to brainstorm ideas of something you can commit to as a family.

Here are a few suggestions (or come up with your own):

- Getting involved in a ministry/outreach at church

- Helping an elderly family member or friend of your family
- Starting a new outdoor activity together

Talk about how you can go all-in as a family and what that will require – how much time will it take? will it cost money? when can you start?