

**Lesson 3 - Follow the Footsteps of Jesus in Teaching**  
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**Introduction:** Jesus placed a very high value on teaching.

- A. He emphasized this essential priority when he rebuked Martha over her concern about serving. **(Lk 10:38-42)**
  - 1. When God's word is taught and received an eternal work is being accomplished which "will not be taken away."
  - 2. When we analyze the ministry of Christ we will see that teaching is the heart of His ministry. **(Jn 4:34-38)**
- B. Jesus knew that without teaching no man could be drawn to God. **(Jn 6:44-45)**
  - 1. The miracles of Christ and later those of the apostles served to point men to Jesus and his apostles so that they might then be taught. **(Mk 16:17-20)**
  - 2. Jesus knew that for His work to be effective that many must follow in His footsteps in teaching as to harvest souls for Him. **(Mt 9:35-38)**
  - 3. Will you be one of these? Will Jesus' prayer be answered in you?

**I. The footsteps of Jesus exposed men's hearts**

- A. Mary received a chilling prophecy from Simeon. **(Lk 2:34-35)**
  - 1. Look at the pain and opposition because "the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed."
  - 2. When a man starts opening other's hearts he is in dangerous territory.
- B. Jesus knew what was in the hearts of men. He wanted them to see too.
  - 1. He would not commit to those who just looked like supporters. **(Jn 2:24-25)**
  - 2. Most men will hate and oppose those who show them their hearts. **(Jn 3:19-20; 15:18-23)**
- C. The work of exposing hearts is where the great work of God is done!
  - 1. For the many who hate it, there will be the few who respond.
  - 2. The exposing of a heart is like heart surgery. It will hurt! Some were "cut" and obeyed while others were "cut" and attacked! **(Acts 2:36-37; 7:54-55)**
- D. Jesus often received harsh responses when he opened the heart.
  - 1. Why did the Pharisees hate him? **(Mt 15:12-13; Lk 4:28-29)**
  - 2. Jesus knew men's thoughts and tried to get them to see themselves! **(Lk 5:22; 6:8; 11:17)**
  - 3. How many times did men try to test Jesus only to be tested themselves and have their hearts revealed! **(Lk 10:24-29, 36-37)**
  - 4. Personal evangelism is dangerous business! (Ex. Approach in teaching Jehovah's Witnesses, 7<sup>th</sup> day groups)
  - 5. Every man needs the opportunity to have his heart exposed so that he can make a choice. God is pleased with this. **(2 Cor 2:14-17)**
    - a. If our goal is any different than this then we too will be guilty of "peddling the word of God."
    - b. Learning to open hearts with God's word takes time and effort.

***Class Discussion:***

1. Why is teaching so important?
2. How did Jesus express His desire to teach and have others teach?
3. Why do most people hate the teaching of God's word?
4. As a teacher of God's word what should be your goal in teaching?
5. What two possible results from your teaching will glorify God?
6. Why do men try "short-cuts" in their teaching the gospel? What "results" do they get?

***II. The footsteps of Jesus chose men to train as teachers***

- A. Jesus chose men who walked in these same steps.
1. Where did many of Jesus' disciples meet Him? (**Jn 1:29-39**)
  2. John had already prepared these men and Jesus would develop them to become pillars in the church.
  3. Notice the wisdom in Jesus' approach. As He taught the lost He also taught a select group of men to become future teachers.
  4. This same wisdom is needed in the church today. (**2 Tim 2:2**)
- B. Jesus gave most of His time to those who were interested and seeking rather than chasing after the uninterested.
1. When the call came to "follow" how many of these men said no? (**Jn 1:16-20**)
  2. You will never do this work until you too become "fit for the kingdom."  
(**Lk 9:57-62**)

***III. The footsteps of Jesus came from one full of mercy and longsuffering***

- A. God's word makes it very clear that our God is merciful and longsuffering!
1. God made this clear in the giving of the 10 commandments. (**Ex. 34:4-7**)
  2. Moses used this certain character of God in his prayer to Him. (**Num 14:17-19**)
  3. Even though the Old Testament clearly shows that God is longsuffering, we gain an even greater insight into this characteristic of God when we see Christ.
  4. You can best see these qualities as Jesus worked to teach others.
- B. Jesus was merciful and longsuffering with His disciples.
1. Was Jesus' patience tried by His disciples? Consider just one chapter of Luke!
    - a. Notice the reaction of Jesus when His disciples were unable to cast out a demon. "...how long shall I be with you?" (**Lk 9:40-41**)
    - b. They were unwilling to hear Jesus when He spoke about His death. This was common! (**Lk 9:44-45**)
    - c. His disciples competed with one another over "who would be the greatest." (**Lk 9:46-48**)
    - d. They showed competitiveness with the disciples of John. (**Lk 9:49-50**) (Maybe they thought John's disciples wanted to "get attention for themselves!")
    - e. Some even wanted to call down fire from heaven! (**Lk 9:54-56**)

“God's love for poor sinners is very wonderful, but God's patience with ill-natured saints is a deeper mystery.” - Henry Drummond

2. If it were you or I we likely would have left citing concerns about "the direction of the work!" Jesus, however, knew the fruits of longsuffering.
- C. Jesus showed longsuffering with John the Baptist. **(Mt 11:3-6)**
  1. How could John the Baptist have doubts and express them publicly?
  2. How would you have responded? Anger? Defensiveness?
  3. Listen carefully to Jesus' response. **(Mt 11:7-11)**
- D. Jesus showed longsuffering with His enemies. **(1 Pt 2:21-23)**
  1. What could Jesus have done? **(Mt 26:52-54)**
  2. What did Jesus express towards His enemies? **(Lk 23:34)** Do we?
- E. We cannot be teachers without these qualities! **(2 Tim 2:24-26)**

***Class discussion:***

1. What important steps did Jesus take to accomplish the goal of spreading the gospel to the whole world? Are there any lessons for us in this example?
2. How did Jesus choose men to be His apostles? What did they have in common?
3. What qualities must be found in the heart of a teacher if he will accomplish this great work of God?
4. List some occasions in the life of Christ where his students were “slow.” How did Jesus respond? How would some men have responded?
5. Do you have the heart to teach? If not, how can you develop these qualities?

***IV. The footsteps of Jesus teach us how to best teach others***

- A. We need wisdom in how to best teach another. **(Col 4:2-6)**
  1. We must keep our goal in sight. Our goal is to lead a person to the truth!
  2. It is very easy to say something that can be taken wrong or is unwise. Because we have this goal clearly defined, we are willing to make sacrifices to avoid unnecessary conflicts. **(1 Cor 9:18-23)**
- B. Jesus knew where to start teaching.
  1. It is far better to learn enough about the person and start where they are!
  2. Study how our Lord often did this and led the person to the truth. **(Jn 4:6-26)**
  3. We cannot read hearts. We need to listen and learn about the one we will teach. This is why association on a social basis is very helpful.
- C. If we are to be good teachers we too must be teachable. **(Prov 18:13; Acts 17:11)**
  1. We must show them how a disciple of Jesus listen to and submits to Him.
  2. Some have what they view as “success” in evangelism but in fact have instilled their own ungodly attitudes in the “convert.” Jesus warned about this kind of “evangelism.” **(Mt 23:15)**
  3. We need to remember what our goal is.

***Class Discussion:***

1. Why is wisdom needed in our efforts to teach others?
2. Why did the apostles use different approaches with different groups (such as Jews and Gentiles) in their teaching efforts.
3. Where can we find this wisdom to become better teachers?

***Conclusion:*** Are you willing to follow the footsteps of Jesus?

- A. The territory is indeed dangerous but you can know who will be “with you.”  
**(Mt 28:18-20)**
- B. There are times that you are filled with fear, frustration, and discouragement. Please remember that God will accomplish his work.
  1. Consider the fears of Paul and the great joy that followed. **(Acts 18:9-11)**
  2. You will never regret following our Lord’s footsteps!

## **They Must See the Need**

**Bill Hall**

An acquaintance of mine, hearing recently of a family that had suffered considerable misfortune, went to the home to investigate. He found a father suffering from multiple sclerosis. The mother had just been involved in a serious automobile accident. A son, injured in the accident, was in the hospital. Moved by the misfortunes of the good family, he wrote out a small check, and gave it to the mother. Tears welled up in her eyes as she thanked him and expressed how kind everyone had been. She was so grateful.

The same man went that week to see a young couple who were not Christians. He offered to study the scriptures with them, specifically suggesting the book of Acts. He was trying to give this couple something far greater than a small check. He wanted to bring them to the salvation of their souls, to an eternal home in heaven, to an escape from the fires of hell. The young couple thanked him, but said they were not interested in studying at this time.

Before we criticize the young couple, we need to analyze **why** the difference; viz, the first family recognized their need for what was being offered, while the second didn't. That young couple probably never realized what they were in reality refusing. If they ever awaken to their need, they will accept the gospel with a joy and excitement that will even surpass that of the first family mentioned.

We approach different types of people in our work for the Lord. Some know they are lost and are seeking help. Others do not know they are lost, but are interested in the Bible, and will agree to study the scriptures. They can be brought to understand their lost condition through study. But still others are unconcerned, have no interest in Bible study, and really don't want to be bothered. These require a completely different kind of approach, a great amount of patience, and much prayer. We must not give up on these. In time many can be brought to see their lost condition and repent.

The 3,000 who were baptized on Pentecost had no concern for learning about Jesus when the day began. The same could be said of the jailer of Philippi. Saul's only interest as he started out for Damascus was to imprison and persecute Christians. He would have hardly agreed to a study at that time. The woman of Samaria had little concern for her soul as she went to Jacob's well for water; but oh! the skill with which the Master Teacher brought her to see her sinful condition! Each of these demonstrated a complete change in attitude **as soon as he saw his lost condition.**

This complete change in attitude on the part of so many unconcerned, even belligerent, ones of the first century gives us hope for the unconcerned of our age. In fact, maybe some day, with the Lord's help, we can report the obedience of the young couple mentioned above.