



LIFE & MINISTRY OF JESUS

Unit 7 • Following & Opposition

UNIT DESCRIPTION

We'll learn in this unit about Jesus' statements and the events that increasingly polarized the people of His day. People were strengthened in their commitment to follow Him or oppose Him. "The widening rift between belief and unbelief, which had become clearly apparent at the time of the feeding of the five thousand and was accentuated at the Feast of Tabernacles (Jn. 7), at this point became an open breach. Not only had many of Jesus' disciples abandoned his cause (Jn. 6:66), but the religious authorities also were becoming actively hostile (7:32). The last five or six months of Jesus' life were filled with controversy and with attempts on the part of the priests and scribes to trap him by his words or his actions. Jesus, however, being fully aware of their designs, maintained his usual ministry and became bolder in his resistance."^[1] As Jesus continued in His boldness, the division increased between the two camps. Those in opposition were committed to His destruction which culminated at the cross.

[1] Frank E. Gaebelien, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, Vol. 9, The Zondervan Corporation, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1981, p. 100.



WHO NEEDS A DOCTOR?!

Life & Ministry of Jesus • U7#1 1st-3rd Grade • Jan.21, 2024

Concept

Christ's forgiveness and help is available to those who acknowledge their sin and their need for Him.

Goal

Students will learn that all people are sinners and need Christ's forgiveness. They will be encouraged to remember His love and acceptance, to get to know Him and to learn to depend on Him. They will be encouraged to grow in honesty about their sin and thankfulness for His forgiveness.

Passage

Luke 5:27-32

Key Verse: "It is not those who are healthy that need a physician but those who are sick... for I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners."

Luke 5:31-32

Planning Ahead

Lesson Supplies	Craft Supplies
<p>Learning Activity #3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 large candy bars • 2 <i>scarves</i> • 2 <i>hats</i> • 2 <i>pair of gloves</i> • 2 <i>plastic knives</i> • 2 <i>plastic forks</i> • 1 <i>pair of dice</i> • Miniature candy bars, 1/student 	<p>Activity Stations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scrap paper & pencils • 6 <i>envelopes</i> • <i>Hangman words, 1 sheet</i>

*TEACHERS PLEASE NOTE

For clarity, the italicized areas in the Planning Ahead section indicate supplies that are in—and should be returned to—your classroom SHARED SUPPLY bag.

Background Information/Teacher Helps

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In the gospel accounts we often see Jesus going head to head with the Pharisees. He seemed to deliberately provoke this group of men. In this week's passage "we have an account of the kind of controversy Jesus constantly raised. This controversy came out of his penetrating knowledge of human nature and his unceasing opposition to anything which threatened true humanity." [1]

"As my class in Chicago read the Gospels and watched movies about Jesus' life, we noticed a striking pattern: the more unsavory the characters, the more at ease they seemed to feel around Jesus. People like these found Jesus appealing: a Samaritan social outcast, a military officer of the tyrant Herod, a quisling tax collector, a recent hostess to seven demons.

"In contrast, Jesus got a chilly response from more respectable types. Pious Pharisees thought him uncouth and worldly, a rich young ruler walked away shaking his head, and even the open-minded Nicodemus sought a meeting under the cover of darkness." [2]

The stage for the controversy with the Pharisees is set when Matthew is called to be a disciple of Christ. Matthew was a rich man but gave up all he had to follow Christ. Matthew threw what is probably a farewell dinner for his friends. "What a collection of rascals must have been there that day! All the tax collectors of the city, all the sinners, all the despised social outcasts were sitting there. As the scribes of the Pharisees passed by, they saw that right in the midst of it all, among the beer bottles and the poker chips, sat Jesus. And they were absolutely scandalized!... 'Why does he do things like that? Doesn't he know who these people are? Why does he allow himself to be seen in the company of such men?' " [3]

The final polarizing event here is Jesus' explanation that "He comes to call not the righteous but sinners" (Matt. 9:13). Jesus made it clear that He knew Matthew was a sinner. It was no mistake that He and his group were dining with sinners. It was intentional. What's more, Jesus made it clear that he was rejecting the "righteous" who felt no need of His ministry. And, thus it is that salvation is offered to all, but received only by repentant sinners. And as repentant sinners, our life of effectiveness for Christ will be characterized by the extent to which we maintain a humble, repentant attitude.

[1] Ray Stedman, "The Scandal Maker," Series: "The Servant Who Rules", Discovery Publishing, Palo Alto, CA, October 20, 1974.

[2] Philip Yancey, *The Jesus I Never Knew*, © 1995 by Philip Yancey, Zondervan Publishing House, p. 147.

[3] Ray Stedman, "The Scandal Maker," Series: "The Servant Who Rules," Discovery Publishing, Palo Alto, CA, October 20, 1974.

Incorporation Lg. Group

Activity Stations

- **Game – Hangman**

- **Instructions:** Have students work in groups of five on white board or paper, guessing the characters from today's teaching. Give each group an envelope with slips of paper saying, "Jesus, Matthew, sinners, Disciples, and Pharisees." On their turn, each student chooses a word from the envelope, then draws a line for each letter beside a gallows. Players take turns guessing letters in the word. As correct letters are guessed they are written on the correct line. A head, a neck, a body, arms, and legs are added to the hang man for each incorrect letter guessed. If the word is not guessed by the time the body is complete, the word is revealed and the next student chooses another word and continues. Hangman participants may write their findings on the white board to inform the rest of the class what characters we will hear from today.

Introduction Lg. Group

Have you ever been annoyed with someone who thought they were right and refused to listen to why they were wrong?! (*Describe scenarios or ask students for examples*)

That was how the Pharisees were in Jesus' day. Jesus told them they had some problems that needed to be addressed, but they didn't see their problems AND refused to listen and then turned around and accused Him of being the one with the problem!

Transition

Let's read about Jesus, the Pharisees and a man called Matthew.

Lesson Lg. Group

I am going to read Luke 5:27-31.

Does anyone know why the Pharisees complained to Jesus about associating with tax collectors? (Allow time for response.) Matthew and his friends were Jews but were not welcome in Jewish society because they worked for the Roman government and because they made their living by collecting taxes. They collected a whole lot more money than people owed and kept the extra for themselves. In other words, they stole from their own people for their own greedy selves. What a rip-off! Because they were so dishonest, the Jews considered them scum and hated them.

(Review the main points of the story.) Note that it was Jesus, not the disciples, who responded, "It is not those who are healthy that need a physician, but those who are sick... for I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners" (Luke 5:31-32). This is our key verse for today. So what does the Pharisees' complaint have to do with sickness and the need for physicians, you ask? Why did Jesus respond this way?

Transition

Let's gather with the other class to see the skit about some people who needed a physician. Think through what this might have to do with the Pharisees and Matthew and their need for Jesus.

Learning Activity#1 Lg. Group

Drama – “WHO Needs a Doctor?!” skit presented by the Drama Team

Transition

Although it was very obvious that the fellow in the skit was sick and needed a doctor, he refused to admit it. In the same way, it was obvious to Jesus that the Pharisees were sinful and needed God's forgiveness, but they refused to admit their need. Let's return to our classroom to talk more about this.

Learning Activity#2 Sm. Group

Instructions: Give each student a “What's Your Attitude?” handout. As you look at the passage and go through the following discussion, record the attitudes some of which are suggested in the following chart.

Matthew's Attitude	Pharisees' Attitude
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Got up & left everything behind• Followed Jesus• Joyful & loving - threw a party to celebrate that Jesus accepted him	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Didn't want or accept Jesus' forgiveness• Didn't follow Jesus• Bitter & hateful - rejected Jesus & everyone who followed Him

Let's look back at Luke 5:27-32. Who thought they were righteous or perfect and didn't need Jesus? (Talk about the Pharisees, their view of God and their view of other people) They were like the guy in the skit who obviously needed a doctor, but wouldn't admit it.

What does this passage tell you about Matthew? He knew he was a sinner and he needed forgiveness so he left everything behind to follow Jesus. Jesus told the Pharisees, “. . . It is not those who are healthy who need a doctor, but those who are sick... for I didn't come to invite the righteous, but sinners” (Luke 5:31-32).

- What kind of people were at Matthew's party? Why did Jesus hang out with these people when the religious leaders thought they were bad people and not worth their time? What does “righteous” mean? Did Jesus mean that some people are innocent and not sinners? If not, what did He mean that He didn't come to invite the righteous, but sinners? Jesus told the Pharisees that just like people who are sick need a doctor, people who sin need Jesus. So, which of these people needed Jesus?

Learning Activity# 2 Continued

The Bible says that everyone sins and needs Christ. Because no one is perfect, everyone needs Jesus. The Pharisees were too proud to admit they needed Jesus' forgiveness. There are still people today who reject Jesus because they are proud. If you want to be forgiven you must tell Him you know you sin and you want to be forgiven. He will forgive you and then you can get to know Him better and better for the rest of your life. And after you die you will be with Him forever in heaven. If you already are a Christian it is important to know that you need Him every day. You need to know how much He loves and accepts you. As you get to know Him, learn to depend on Him and thank Him for His forgiveness you will be like Matthew who knew He needed Jesus, was honest about his sin and thanked Jesus for forgiving him.

Remember the key verse, (Luke 5:31-32). Jesus came to save everyone, but only those who were honest about their sin were willing to receive His love and forgiveness. The Pharisees didn't believe they were sinful.

- Do you ever have the attitude of the Pharisees - that some people are bad and not worth your time? Why do you think you have that attitude? How do you change that attitude?
- Do we stop sinning once we start a relationship with God? (No.) Why might it be hard for us to be honest when we sin?

Mission Prayer: Talk about and pray for Oasis Giving campaign.

Let's pray and thank God that He loves us so much that Jesus died on the cross to pay for our sin. If you have received God's forgiveness, thank Him for His love and ask Him to help you be honest when you sin so that you will know Him and depend on Him more and more.

All parties have games so let's spend some time playing a game that shows us something about impossible rules.

Game – The Chocolate Bar Game [1]

Goal: To experience the silliness of impossible, irrelevant rules and admit they can't do it.

Instructions: Divide class into 2 groups. Give each group a wrapped chocolate candy bar, a hat, a scarf, a pair of gloves, a knife, a fork and one die. Have each group form a circle and place everything except the die in the middle. Pass the die around taking turns rolling one time. As soon as someone rolls a six, they rush to the middle of the circle, put on the hat, scarf and gloves, and use only the knife and fork (no fingers) to unwrap and eat as much of the chocolate bar as they can. In the meantime, the die is still being passed around the circle as quickly as possible, with each participant attempting to roll a six.

Transition

Learning Activity# 3 Lg. Group

Learning Activity#3 Continued

As soon as another player rolls a six, it is his turn to go into the center, put on the hat, scarf and gloves and attack the chocolate bar with the knife and fork. The game is over when the chocolate bar has been completely eaten or it has gone on long enough.

[1] Ideas, Volume 29-32, 1989, Youth Specialties, p. 31.

Debrief

The Pharisees were focused on rules that were impossible to follow like this game! All they needed to do was admit they couldn't follow the rules. But they kept playing the game! What Jesus wants to do is take care of the rules for us and give us forgiveness like the candy bar if we ask for it! Pass out candy bars to students who ask.

Review

Review main points and key verse (Luke 5:31-32).