

Sunday morning
teaching plan

Date:
31st August

Vicky Bees Series

TITLE:	Be sympathetic, do not be proud
THEME:	What does living a Christian life look like?
AIM:	What is there in my life I might need to change to be more Christ-like?

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Being a Christian should set us apart from other people. We should be recognisable by the way we choose to live. Our attitudes, reactions and responses should be filled with love, compassion, patience, generosity, kindness... all the fruit of the Spirit. St Peter tells us to live in harmony with each other, BE sympathetic and DO NOT repay evil with evil. St Paul says we must NOT be proud but BE WILLING to associate with people of low standing. In a world where image and status are so important to many people this could be a challenge for many Christians.

WARM UP

Watch 5 minute video on the bystander effect — discuss what the group think about it.

Have they ever experienced it? <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wy6eUTLzcU4>

What has this to do with living a Christian life?

MAIN TEACHING

Activity 1—What is the Christian life

1. How can you recognise a Christian person? Are there behaviours or attitudes that mark them out? (discuss in pairs or groups and then feedback ideas)
2. Read the following passages: 1 Peter 3:8-9, Romans 12:14-16
3. What are the different behaviours and attitudes a Christian should display?
4. How do these make you feel? Are they easy or difficult? Why?
5. Can you think of some “real life” examples of how living out these teachings would be difficult?

Key teaching point: A Christian should be recognisable not by the cross around their neck or their neatly bound leather Bible but by the way they live! Empathy, compassion, generosity, grace and mercy should be obvious character traits. Use Galatians 5:22-23 to explain the fruit of the Spirit. Living in the way both Peter and Paul teach is not easy, it requires determination, intention and effort. It is not easy to show compassion to those who irritate us, harm us and even hate us. Life at school or college is full of opportunities to show compassion for our school mates but it can be difficult when in a crowd to do so. Refer back to the bystander effect. As Christians we should be known for our willingness to help others.

Activity 2 Making sacrifices

Play “What would you sacrifice!” - YPs get a choice of things they have to choose to sacrifice.

Need to explain why they chose to sacrifice something and keep the other (see separate sheet for ideas).

1. Read John 14:15-17
2. What does obedience to Jesus look like?
3. Who does Jesus promise to send to us as a help and support?
4. Will it cost you to follow Jesus?

Key teaching point:

Jesus sacrificed everything by dying on the cross to remove your sin. He gave up heaven and the worship of angels to be born in poverty, live a lowly life and ultimately be executed for you! If you believe in Him, trust Him and are a Christian, He calls you to sacrifice too... to obey His commands with the help of the Holy Spirit.

There are times we have to make difficult choices in order to be obedient to Jesus. Choices that others may think are weird or wrong. Being obedient to Jesus will involve sacrifices and hard choices.

Activity 3—Is it worth it?

Look up the following verses:

Proverbs 3:2 Psalm 119:2-3 1 Kings 2:3 1 John 2:17 John 14:21 James 1:25 Matthew 7:21

What are the benefits of obedience to God?

Key teaching point:

It is important to remember that we are not saved by our obedience to Jesus’ commands, but that our obedience is a response to our salvation. Once we begin our Christian walk, and become more obedient to Jesus’ teachings we will discover that God responds with blessing, joy and life. This does not mean we will have it easy or avoid pain etc. but it does mean God is on our side! His Holy Spirit is transforming us and making us ready for life with Jesus in eternity. Our future is secure, we will receive an eternal inheritance and be with Jesus, either when we die or He returns to collect us!

TAKEAWAY

Discussion : What can I choose to do, that will cost me (a sacrifice of time, effort etc.) that will be obedient to Jesus’ teaching to “love your neighbour.”

Think about family life, school setting, local community, church....

EXTRA INFORMATION