



Ripple
Effect

MODULE 3 | **The Real Jesus**

Leader's Guide

Session 8

The costs and benefits of following Jesus

Key idea: *Jesus is the servant king who offers new life to everyone who follows him. Following Jesus also involves costly discipleship while we wait for him to return as king, saviour and judge.*

Key encouragement: *Following Jesus involves suffering before glory, but it is worth it.*

Practical challenge: *When inviting people to follow Jesus, and talking with people about Jesus, be honest with them about both the costs and the benefits.*

Session goals:

- *Discuss the costs and benefits of following Jesus while we wait for him to return.*
- *Pray for each other and each other's friends.*
- *Review RE3.*

Session Introduction

Watch the introduction video for Session 8.

Jesus is the servant king who offers true life to everyone who follows him. But following Jesus means costly discipleship while we wait for Jesus to return. We need to be open and honest with people about this. Following Jesus is wonderful, and the benefits far outweigh the costs, but the costs are real.

Share

Choose one of the following to share about.

- Share stories of evangelistic opportunities God gave you this week. These might be conversations you are grateful for or ones that didn't go as you hoped. They might be interesting conversations with potential or clear answers to our prayers.
- How did inviting someone to read Luke's Gospel with you go? Who will you see or speak with this week that you would also like to invite?

Pray

Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. He told them, "This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high."

Luke 24:45-49 (NIV)

- | Use this passage and the sharing time to guide your prayers for yourself, each other, and your friends.

Train

Luke's Gospel

This is where you hand over to the group member who is leading the discussion on Luke 9:18-27. Invite everyone in the group to make life easier for the facilitator by offering answers, asking questions, and helping the discussion move forward. Everyone is going to take a turn at this, so invite people to make it a positive experience for everyone.

After Peter recognises that Jesus is God's promised king, Jesus teaches his disciples about what the future holds for Jesus and Jesus' followers.

1. Read Luke 9:18-27 and discuss the three questions:
 - a. Jesus: What do we learn about Jesus in this story?
 - *What does Jesus promise his disciples? Try putting it in your own words.*
 - *Why might he be telling them this?*
 - *Who is Jesus?*
 - b. People: What do we learn about the people who met Jesus?
 - *What might Jesus' disciples be thinking and feeling as this conversation unfolds?*
 - *How much do they understand about who Jesus is and what following Jesus looks like?*
 - *What would they have understood by 'take up your cross daily?'*
 - *What will their life be like before Jesus returns? After Jesus returns?*
 - *Would questions might they have had about what Jesus said?*

- c. Me: What is my response to Jesus and this story?
 - *What encourages me about Jesus and his words here? What is daunting?*
 - *Am I willing to be Jesus' disciple? Why? Why not?*
 - *What are the costs of following Jesus?*
 - *What are the benefits?*

2. Review your discussion.

Thank your group member for leading the discussion as you start the review section. Give them helpful encouragement and feedback in this section. We want all group members to have a positive experience at leading discussion so that they are willing to read Luke's Gospel with a non-Christian friend or family member.

- a. Think back to each of the three questions: Jesus. People. Me. What comments or additional questions helped keep discussion focused on Jesus, moving forward and going deeper?
- b. What aspects of the passage would you like to have discussed, or to have discussed more fully, if you had your time again?

Skill: Recognising the costs of following Jesus

When inviting people to follow Jesus we need to be honest with them about both the costs and the benefits of being a Christian. The costs of following Jesus may not be the first thing we talk about, but they do need to be discussed.

1. Think of one of the people you are praying for.
 - a. What costs might they face if they become a Christian?
 - *How might becoming a Christian change their relationship with their family and friends?*
 - *What might self-sacrificial love for Jesus and others look like for them?*
 - *How might it affect their work, financial decisions and how they use their time?*
 - *What heart attitudes, desires and ambitions might it challenge?*
 - b. When and how could you talk with them about the costs of following Jesus?
 - *How aware of these costs are they?*

- *Ask candid questions: How do you think your life might change when you become Christian? How do you feel about this?*
 - *What fears have they expressed about becoming Christian?*
 - *What costs do they see you, their Christian friend, bearing? Are these the real costs from your perspective?*
2. What encourages you to keep following Jesus when it feels costly?
- *What costs have you borne for following Jesus? Why do you stay Christian given these costs?*
 - *What are the joys and blessings of being Christian? Why do they outweigh the costs?*
 - *Experiencing Jesus drawing near to us as we bear costs for him. He is our example and comfort. Jesus understands how costly our discipleship is. He walks with us through it and promises us glory with him when he returns.*
3. In Ripple Effect we focus on the joy and privilege of evangelism, but it can also be costly.
- a. When does evangelism feel costly?
- *Distance in or loss of relationships, or the fear of it.*
 - *Time and effort of loving people self-sacrificially.*
 - *Grief of a loved one rejecting Jesus.*
 - *Danger of it in some countries.*
- b. What encourages you to persevere with evangelism when you feel the costs?
- *Love for those around us. When Jesus returns we will join him in glory but not everyone will. Rejecting Jesus is serious. We must speak about him to others if we love them.*
 - *Love for Jesus. Jesus loved us and suffered for us. He deserves our worship. We should honour him and not be ashamed of him. So should everyone else.*
 - *What joys do you experience that keep you going?*

Keep learning at
ripple-effect.net.au