CORNERSTONECONNECTIONS
JUNE12 2021

Scripture Story: Mark 3:13-19; Luke 6:12-31; Matthew 5-7.
Commentary: *The Desire of Ages,* chapters 30, 31.

Jesus calling



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keytext

"One of those days Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray, and spent the night praying to God. When morning came, he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them, whom he also designated apostles."

(Luke 6:12, 13, NIV)

flashlight

"In training His disciples, Jesus chose to withdraw from the confusion of the city to the quiet of the fields and hills, as more in harmony with the lessons of self-abnegation He desired to teach them. And during His ministry He loved to gather the people about Him under the blue heavens, on some grassy hillside, or on the beach beside the lake. Here, surrounded by the works of His own creation, He could turn the thoughts of His hearers from the artificial to the natural. In the growth and development of nature were revealed the principles of His kingdom" (*The Desire of Ages,* p. 291).

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what do you think?

If you were going to launch a new mission initiative, calling people into God's kingdom, what kind of advertisement would you create to get people interested? Create a commercial campaign by supplying the information below.

Campaign slogan (short catchy phrase):

_____

Music: _____

_____

Budget (How much money are you prepared to spend on your campaign?):

_____

INTO THE STORY

"He went down with them and stood on a level place. A large crowd of his disciples was there and a great number of people from all over Judea, from Jerusalem, and from the coastal region around Tyre and Sidon, who had come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases. Those troubled by impure spirits were cured, and the people all tried to touch him, because power was coming from him and healing them all.

"Looking at his disciples, he said:

"'Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.

"'Blessed are you who hunger now, for you will be satisfied.

"'Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh.

"'Blessed are you when people hate you, when they exclude you and insult you and reject your name as evil, because of the Son of Man.

"'Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, because great is your reward in heaven. For that is how their ancestors treated the prophets. But woe to you who are rich, for you have already received your comfort.

"'Woe to you who are well fed now, for you will go hungry. Woe to you who laugh now, for you will mourn and weep. Woe to you when everyone speaks well of you, for that is how their ancestors treated the false prophets.

"'But to you who are listening I say: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. If someone slaps you on one cheek, turn to them the other also. If someone takes your coat, do not withhold your shirt from them. Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back. Do to others as you would have them do to you.'"

(Luke 6:17-31, NIV)



did you know?

Many people believe that all of Jesus' disciples were with Him from the very beginning of His public ministry, but that's not true. Five were, but most were not (John 1:40-49). The other seven were chosen about midway through the three and a half years that Jesus ministered publicly on earth. As Luke notes in Luke 6, Jesus already had a great following by the time the complete "posse" of disciples was chosen.

Jesus demonstrated the power of His ministry by healing the sick, casting out demons, and reaching out to the poor and forgotten. This led people to follow Him. From these people He selected some of His disciples, and then He shared the foundation principles of His kingdom with the 12 and all who wanted to hear about His new kingdom.

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OUT OF THE STORY

These verses are some of the most quoted from the Sermon on the Mount. But there's much more to Jesus' message. Read the rest of Luke 6 to get the full message.

What parts of Jesus' sermon are new to you? *Place an X* by parts of the sermon that you have never read or heard about before.

_____

_____

_____

Why do you think Jesus took time to share these principles with His followers?

_____

_____

_____

What is the core message of the Beatitudes—the Blesseds? What do these statements tell us about the kind of society in which Jesus ministered?

_____

_____

_____

Underline portions of Jesus' statements that most people would consider "radical."

What would the world be like if all people lived by the principles of the kingdom of heaven as outlined by Jesus?

_____

_____

Can we live up to the principles shared in the Sermon on the Mount without Jesus?

_____

punch lines

"Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven" **(Matthew 6:1, NIV).**

"And now, O Israel, what does the Lord your God ask of you but to fear the Lord your God, to walk in obedience to him, to love him, to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul" **(Deuteronomy 10:12, NIV).**

"Humility is the fear of the Lord; its wages are riches and honor and life" **(Proverbs 22:4, NIV).**

"Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers" **(Galatians 6:9, 10, NIV).**

further insight

"He who called the fisherman of Galilee is still calling men to His service. And He is just as willing to manifest His power through us as through the first disciples."—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages,* p. 297.

"God takes men as they are, with the human elements in their character, and trains them for His service. . . . Through the knowledge and practice of the truth, through the grace of Christ, they may become transformed into His image."—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages,* p. 294.

connectingtolife

Sabbath

Read 1 Peter 4:10; Romans 12:6-8.

God bestows upon all members of His church in every age spiritual gifts that each member is to employ in loving ministry for the common good of the church and of humanity. Given by the agency of the Holy Spirit, who apportions to each member as He wills, the gifts provide all abilities and ministries needed by the church to fulfill its divinely ordained functions. . . . When members employ these spiritual gifts as faithful stewards of God's varied grace, the church is protected from the destructive influence of false doctrine, grows with a growth that is from God, and is built up in faith and love" (Fundamental Belief 17, Spiritual Gifts and Ministries).

Sunday

Read Luke 6:37, 38; Matthew 6:25-27.

After reading the *Into the Story* section, explore the passage using the *Out of the Story* prompts. What are some of the other topics that Jesus addressed in His sermon? For instance, what did Jesus say about judging others (Luke 6:37)?

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_____

What important principle about giving did Jesus share with the crowd (Luke 6:38)?

_____

_____

What did Jesus say about worrying (Matthew 6:25-27)?

_____

_____

That's a whole lot to pack into one sermon. Why did Jesus feel that He had to speak on so many different issues?

_____

_____

Monday

Read Luke 6:12, 13.

There's a powerful nugget hidden in Sabbath's *Key Text*. Read the text again and see if you can find it.

What did Jesus do before He chose the men who would become His disciples?

_____

Jesus spent an entire night in prayer to be sure that He was selecting the right people for the task of sharing the good news of salvation with a dying world. Jesus knew when He chose the 12 disciples that He would be crucified and that they would carry on the work in His absence.

Explain in your own words how you think the disciples did after Jesus died. Did Jesus choose the right people to build His new movement?

_____

_____

Tuesday

Read Psalm 19:1, 2.

This week's *Flashlight* quote highlighted the role that nature played in the ministry of Jesus. What do you think the psalmist David meant when he wrote the two verses in the reading for today?

What do you love about nature? Take a few moments to write a few sentences explaining what nature says to you about God.

_____

_____

Wednesday

Read Galatians 6:9, 10.

Let this week's *Punch Lines* really sink in. Zero in on Galatians 6:9, 10. One of the central messages in Jesus' sermon was the call to change the way in which humans treat each other. The apostle Paul tells us that by doing so, we will reap a great harvest one day when Jesus comes. But think about this for a moment. Are there benefits to be gained right here and now on earth by treating people with love and care, and by doing good to all people?

Share some tangible benefits we can receive now by doing good.

_____

_____

Thursday

When Jesus chose His disciples, He knew their gifts, talents, and weaknesses. Read again about each of the disciples listed below. What were some of their weaknesses, blind spots, areas in which they needed to make changes?

Peter (John 18:10; 25-27): _____
James and John (Mark 3:17): _____
Thomas (John 20:25-27): _____
Judas (John 12: 5, 6): _____

If Jesus was willing to entrust the message of salvation to guys like these, why wouldn't He do the same with you? You will make a great disciple of Jesus if you give your life totally to Him.

Friday

Read Matthew 5:1, 2.

Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, and he began to teach them" (Matthew 5:1, 2, NIV). That's how Matthew describes the beginning of Jesus' sermon on the mountainside.

Jesus' life on earth was always intertwined with the lives of others. He always saw the needs of people. Do you tend to "see" people and their needs, or are you more concerned with your own needs?

this week's reading*

The Desire of Ages (or *Humble Hero*), chapters 30, 31.

A special adaptation of *The Desire of Ages,* entitled *Humble Hero,* has been created just for you by the White Estate and the Pacific Press Publishing Association. Get more info about it at: www.cornerstoneconnections.net. By following this plan you will read at least one book of the Conflict of the Ages Series each year.

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