

# FOLLOWING JESUS: LIFE OF CHRIST (4)

## The Year of Passion

Sample Lesson



Matthew 14:22-33





This sample lesson is from the Level 2 course **Following Jesus: The Life of Christ (4): Year of Passion.**

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This course is the fourth of a series of six books on the Life of Christ called "Following Jesus", based on the Gospel according to St. Matthew. It combines lessons for home study with group discussion. The lessons are arranged in blocks; each block being a week's work. After each block there is a group meeting, which should be led by a Group Leader, who follows the companion Group Leader's Guide.

Book 4 deals with the doctrine of humanity, sin, death; concepts about the human body and the spirit, including: human relations, sex, marriage, family, possessions and ambition. It also introduces some principles of pastoral psychology and authority in matters of faith. It looks at the history of the division of the kingdom, the time of Nehemiah and the formation of the Samaritan people, the Assyrian and Babylonian empires, the period between the testaments and the Roman Emperors and introduces Josephus.

## The Method

The course uses a very simple method. It is specially aimed at ordinary people with a basic school education but is useful for all types of people. All our GOLD Project courses are designed to help you learn by means of:

**Home Study**  
plus  
**Group Meetings**  
and  
**Practical Application**

## Home Study

**Each course** is made up of **10 Blocks** of two or three **lessons** each that you need to complete on your own at home. These lessons require you to read and interact with the course material as well as with your Bible.

Each lesson is **programmed** to help you check your progress as you work through. To get the maximum benefit it is important that you use the course in the way it was intended:

1. Read the section numbered 1 (often referred to by the technical term 'frame' 1).
2. Make the response required, if there is one.
3. Check that your answer corresponds with the feedback given in the 'feedback' section at the end.
4. Proceed to section 2.

Note that the **course** is programmed—**you** are **not** being programmed! The aim of programming is that:

1. you can check frequently that you have understood the material presented;
2. you are stimulated to active and critical thinking;
3. you reinforce what you learn and are better able to remember it.

At the end of each lesson, we encourage you to spend some time in reflection on how what you have learnt applies to you in the situation where God has placed you.

## Group Meeting

Regular group meetings take place where you will have the opportunity to discuss points of interest that have arisen and think through with others how your learning may be applied. The group meetings give the opportunity for you to clarify ideas and to share your own thoughts and to listen to the ideas of others. The process of learning from the Bible in a group is an essential part of the programme. It is here that you are able to think through areas of application and to pray and support each other in your studies.

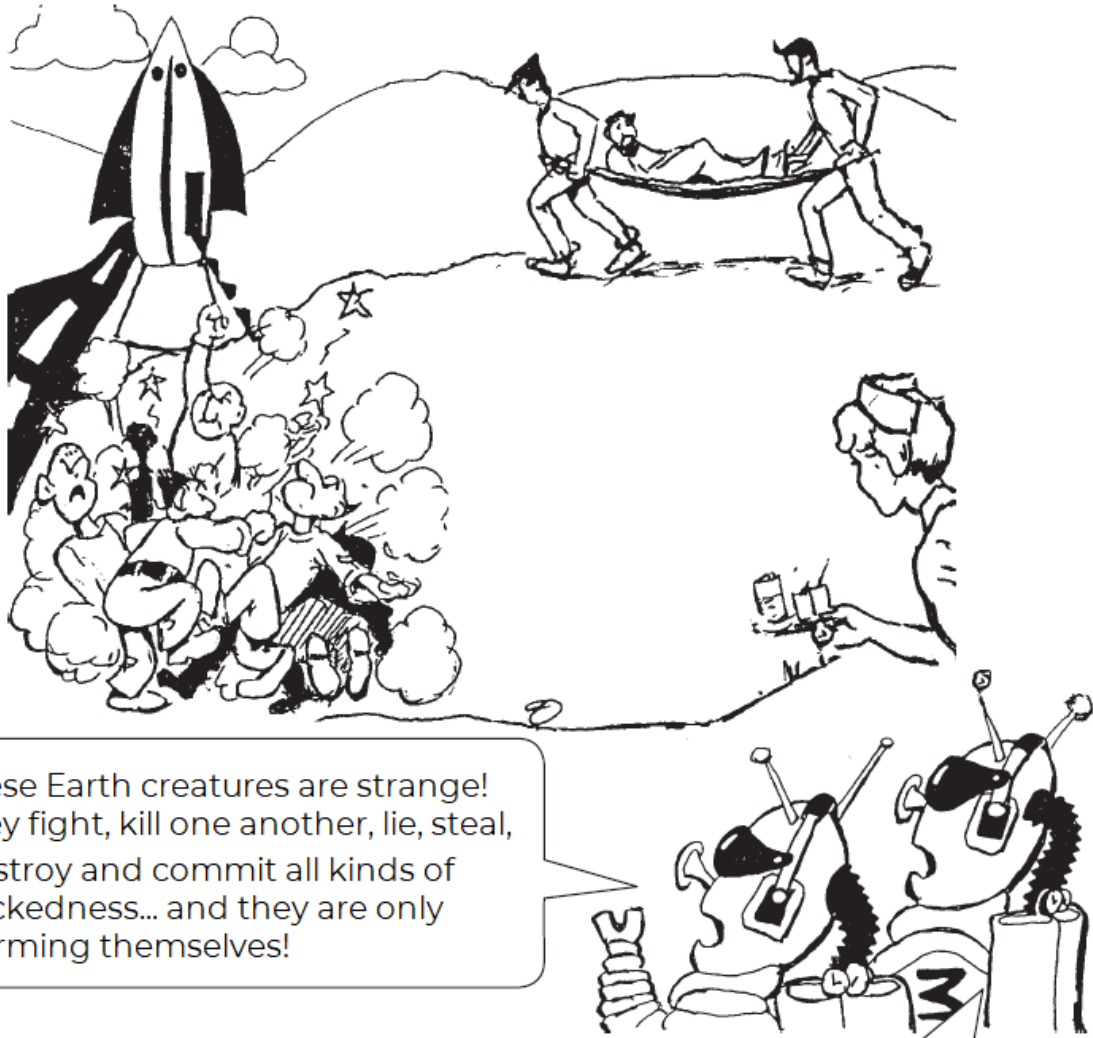
## Practical Application

During each group meeting, you will discuss what practical application task you will try and complete before you next meet. You will have an opportunity to review the practical application each time you meet.'

Additional instructions are provided in these boxes. Please pause to read them thoroughly. Now it's time to get started!

## Block 3 Lesson 1

Man and Woman in the Image of God (Matthew 15:1-20)



These Earth creatures are strange! They fight, kill one another, lie, steal, destroy and commit all kinds of wickedness... and they are only harming themselves!

That is true, but they are also capable of great love; they sacrifice themselves to help others, they are generous and they can create many good things.



These imaginary Martians are right. Humans are a total contradiction. In the next two lessons we shall try to understand why people behave in such strange and conflicting ways.

<b>Preparing for this lesson:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take a moment to pray</li> <li>• Remember to keep a notebook handy to note down any questions or issues for discussion.</li> </ul>
<b>Objectives</b>	<p>At the end of this lesson you will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. State how human beings are like the rest of creation and how they are like God;</li> <li>2. List some unique qualities that distinguish humans from God;</li> <li>3. Explain how being made in the image of God should make a difference to the way we treat other people;</li> <li>4. State what responsibility human beings were given over the earth;</li> <li>5. State the subject that forms the main theme of Matthew 15:1-20.</li> </ol>

1. Begin today's lesson by completing the following analysis of



**Matthew 15:1-20.**

a) The Pharisees' question.      Matthew 15: \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

b) Jesus' answer

1) to the Pharisees.      Matthew 15: \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

2) to the multitude.      Matthew 15: \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

3) to the disciples.      Matthew 15: \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

2. In each of his answers (read verses 8-9, 11, 18-20) Jesus referred to the same subject, the defilement of the \_\_\_\_\_ of men and women.



So, from this episode, we learn something of Jesus' teaching about Humans. But first:

## Preliminary Study: The Creation of Man and Woman

- 3.** To begin our study in the Old Testament, turn in your Bible to Genesis and keep it open here. **Read Genesis 1:27.**



Who created man and woman? \_\_\_\_\_

- 4.** According to **Genesis 1:31**, what was the world like at the time?

It was \_\_\_\_\_.

- 5.** On the basis of Genesis 1:31, man and woman were created by God at that time and were also \_\_\_\_\_.

- 6.** There is more! Look back at **verse 27**. In whose image were man and woman created?

In the image of \_\_\_\_\_.

- 7.** All that God created was good, but what part of his creation did God make in his own image? \_\_\_\_\_

- 8.** Think how humans were when they were first created.

a) In what way were they like the rest of creation?

They, too, were \_\_\_\_\_.

b) In what way were they like God? They were created in his \_\_\_\_\_.

- 9.** What does the Bible really mean when it says that humans were created in the image of God? We have already learned that God has many attributes (Book 2, Lesson 5B). Here are some of God's attributes:

- *God is omniscient.*
- *God is omnipresent.*
- *God is omnipotent.*
- *God is infinite.*

Do we share these attributes with God? \_\_\_\_\_

**10.** The above are exclusively divine attributes, so in no way can humans share these with God. This is not what is meant by the phrase, "the image of God". God has other things which he could share with humans when he made us in "his image". From the list below, tick those things which we received from God when he made us in his image.

- a) The ability to communicate with God.
- b) Advance knowledge of the future.
- c) The ability to love others.
- d) To be everywhere.
- e) To be capable of distinguishing between right and wrong.
- f) The ability to reason.
- g) Artistic ability to appreciate beautiful things..
- h) To be capable of creating another galaxy.
- i) The ability to communicate our thoughts to others in words, phrases and logical sentences.
- j) The breath of life from God himself (his Spirit) by which man and woman became unique spiritual beings (souls), see Genesis 2:7.

**11.** Many people today say that humans are no more than very intelligent animals. It is true that some animals show one or more of the characteristics in our list in Frame 10. For example, animals show affection among themselves or towards people who treat them kindly.

How many animals, however, have ALL the qualities ticked in Frame 10, that show the image of God in humans? \_\_\_\_\_.



Be sure to review the entire list in Frame 10 before answering.

- a) All animals.     b) Domestic animals.     c) No animals.

**12.** From the characteristics you ticked in Frame 10, give three that uniquely separate humans from the rest of the animal world, and show that they were made in the image of God.

Write their letters here. \_\_\_\_\_

**13.** Notice especially that God did not breathe his Spirit into animals, nor do they have the unique God-given characteristics that you should have noted in Frame 12.

So we can say that, unlike humans, no animal is created in the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_.



14. So which is the most correct? Humans are

- a) just highly intelligent animals.
- b) just comparatively intelligent animals.
- c) beings created on a different level from animals.

15. So, when they were created, humans resembled

- a) the rest of creation, in that they, too, were \_\_\_\_\_.
- b) God, in that they were created in his \_\_\_\_\_.

16. Having been created in God's image puts human beings on a completely different and superior level from animals and therefore our life is of greater value. Read **Genesis 9:6**, where God shows why it is so terrible to shed the blood of another person.



Why is it so terrible a thing to murder another person?

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17. Now read **James 3:9**. It is wrong to curse people because in doing so we are talking against beings which have been made in God's



\_\_\_\_\_.

18. The same idea is behind both Genesis 9:6 and James 3:9. To speak or act against people who are made in God's image is like acting or speaking against God himself. If someone destroys a photograph of a Prime Minister or President of a country, who is he really rejecting?

- a) The person photographed.
- b) The person who took the photograph.
- c) The owner of the photograph.

19. Although the photographer and the owner of the photograph may also feel hurt, the real intention is against the person in the photograph. Being made in the image of God is as if we are a "photograph" of God himself.

- a) So, to act or speak against people created in the image of God, is the same as acting or speaking against G\_\_\_\_\_ himself.
- b) On the other hand, to respect the image of God in people is the same as respecting \_\_\_\_\_ himself.

20 We should always treat people created in the image of God with \_\_\_\_\_.

21. In the list below, tick those who show respect for the image of God in people.

- a) The person who makes fun of poor people.
- b) One who laughs at the sincere beliefs of others.
- c) The person who helps a blind person cross a busy street.
- d) Someone who shows care for a neighbour's welfare.
- e) The man who takes advantage of another's weakness, selling him wine or drugs.
- f) The policeman who treats offenders with brutality.
- g) The public official who unnecessarily makes things difficult for people.
- h) The educated person who treats as equals those who have not had the opportunity of a better education.

22. Why should people be treated with dignity and respect?

Because they are \_\_\_\_\_.

23. The responsibility that God gave to us in Genesis 1:26 is to a) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ all living creatures. This responsibility was given to us because

we are made in b) \_\_\_\_\_'s \_\_\_\_\_ and the animals are not.

24. In Genesis 1:28, God gave us the responsibility to fill the earth and subdue it. In other words, we were given the responsibility to manage, control and use the resources of the world wisely. God authorised us to care for the earth and made us responsible to him.

God could share his authority over the earth with us because we have

been created in \_\_\_\_\_.

25. Now read **Genesis 2:15**. What further responsibility is given here?



Adam was to a) \_\_\_\_\_ and b) \_\_\_\_\_ of the Garden of Eden.

- 26.** We can refer to our responsibilities in the earth as “stewardship”. This means that God
- a) has given us authority to treat animals just as we like.
  - b) made us responsible to him to manage the land well.
  - c) has given us no authority.
- 27.** God has called us to be \_\_\_\_\_ of his world, with its animals and natural resources.
- 28.** Which of the following show good stewardship of the earth?
- a) Throwing rubbish in the street.
  - b) Manuring the land to produce better crops.
  - c) Damaging trees or plants by careless hacking, burning or uprooting.
  - d) Being in charge of a factory and doing nothing to prevent air or water pollution.
  - e) Planting crops that prevent soil erosion.
  - f) Being cruel to animals.
  - g) Destroying rain forests or cutting down other trees without replanting.
- 29.** Because we have been made in the image of God, we
- a) should treat people with \_\_\_\_\_.
  - b) have been given responsibility as \_\_\_\_\_.
- 30.** The fact that God made us stewards means that we are responsible for making our own moral decisions. We can choose between what is right and wrong (Deut. 30:19–20). We were not created as robots or puppets in God’s hands.

Which of the following can make their own decisions?

- a) Humans
- b) Robots
- c) God
- d) Puppets

- 31.** Some people say that humans do not have freedom to choose or make their own decisions. They say that we are like computers that have already been programmed. In Genesis, God showed us that this is not so, when he gave us the right to become either good or bad \_\_\_\_\_ of the earth.
- 32.** We have the ability to make personal decisions but there are limitations to what we can choose to do. We are not absolutely free. For example, which of the following can we do?
- a) Jump a mile into the air.
  - b) Live on earth for 1,000 years.
  - c) Fight against temptation.
  - d) Try to help others.
  - e) Put our faith in God.
- 33.** Although, because we are creatures, not the Creator, there are certain things that we cannot do, there are many things in which we are able to act according to our own personal \_\_\_\_\_.
- 34.** Let's make a comparison between ourselves and machines. If the driver puts his lorry into first gear, presses certain pedals and levers, he knows that the lorry will begin to move forward.
- a) When the driver does this, does the lorry have the freedom to move backwards?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- b) In other words, can the lorry make any decisions for itself? \_\_\_\_\_
- 35.** Now let's take an example, applying this to ourselves. Someone who knows us well can guess the way we will probably react when we get some good news.
- a) But are we free to react differently if we want to? \_\_\_\_\_
- b) Unlike the lorry, we are not bound to act or react in a set manner. We have the freedom to act according to our own \_\_\_\_\_.

- 36.** We have a certain amount of freedom to act according to our own personal decisions, and as such can choose whether we will become good or bad \_\_\_\_\_ of the earth.
- 37.** Because we can make our own decisions, which of the following can we influence?
- a) The atmosphere we create in our home.
  - b) Our friends and acquaintances (for good or bad!)
  - c) The future of our country.
  - d) The course of the stars.
- 38.** God has placed us on the earth as his stewards. This fact assumes that we have the ability to \_\_\_\_\_.



Now do **Test 3.1**.



**Congratulations** on finishing Lesson 3.1 successfully.



### Reflecting on this lesson

Note down in your notebook anything from today's lesson:

- that you want to discuss in your group meeting;
- that is significant for your own personal faith.

Spend some time in prayer asking God to help

**Feedback to Lesson 3.1**

- |  |   |                               |
|--|---|-------------------------------|
| 1. a) 15:1 and 2<br>b) 1) 15:3–9<br>2) 15:10–11<br>3) 15:13–20 | 14. c.  | 26. b.                        |
| 2. heart   | 15. a) very good<br>b) image                      | 27. stewards                  |
| 3. God   | 16. Because we are<br>made in the image<br>of God | 28. b. e.                     |
| 4. very good   | 17. image   | 29. a) respect<br>b) stewards |
| 5. very good   | 18. a.  | 30. a. c.                     |
| 6. God   | 19. a) God<br>b) God                              | 31. stewards                  |
| 7. Humans  | 20. respect                                       | 32. c. d. e.                  |
| 8. a) very good<br>b) image                                    | 21. c. d. h.                                      | 33. decisions                 |
| 9. No  | 22. made in the image<br>of God                   | 34. a) No<br>b) No            |
| 10. a. c. e. f. g. i. j.                                       | 23. a) rule over<br>b) God's image                | 35. a) Yes<br>b) decisions    |
| 11. c.   | 24. God's image                                   | 36. stewards                  |
| 12. a. i. j. (can also be: c. e.<br>f. and g.)                 | 25. a) work                                       | 37. a. b. c.                  |
| 13. image of God   | 25. b) take care                                  | 38. make our own<br>decisions |



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