



## Leader's Notes – Session Three

These lessons are meant to serve several different audiences and therefore customized as needed and used with flexibility. The leader does not need to teach everything in the lesson but should choose what is most appropriate or needed for your audience and time. The answers also are included here as additional help in discussion. The unique experiences and insights of leader and participants will frame what you will actually cover.

*Read the Leading the Lessons guide and the Narration sheet for additional help.*

## Experiencing Relationships

How do you get to know someone well? You spend time with them, you talk to them, observe them, travel with them. When you don't know someone well, the potential for discrimination, segregation, judging, condemning and gossiping can happen.

- Discuss what it has been like when you or a certain grouping of people have been ignored, sidelined, or felt the impact of discrimination by others.

*Let participants share...but don't spend too much time here as it is just setting the mood.*

### [Watch "My Son, My Savior" Chapter 3 – The Miracles and Message]

- *What struck home most as you watched?*
- *What questions emerge for you?*

## His Miracles Attracted More and More People to Jesus

Read the account: John 2:1-11:

- Why do you think Jesus' mother would have told Jesus, "*They have no more wine?*"

*Mary must have expected Jesus would do something about it. We have no evidence that she had seen miracles from him previously ("this was the first of his miraculous signs") but she knew who he was.*

- Determine what Jesus was trying to get across to his mother with the words he spoke to her: "*Dear woman, why do you involve me (what's that between you and me)? My time has not come.*"

*"Dear woman" – Jesus doesn't address her here as "mother" but "woman" as he had with other women (John 4:21, 8:10, 20:15). This was not a rude comment, but a polite vs. intimate address to her. It may be the way he was expressing that the relationship of natural motherhood and authority would no longer play an important part in his public life and ministry—similar to the way he addressed her from the cross.*

*"Why do you involve me?" – (Gr: ti emoi kai soi = what to me and to you/ what do we have in common), distances the speaker from the other person and can be used as a reproach (see the expression used also in Mark 1:24; 5:7). Jesus listens to the request, but when and how Jesus acts will be in accord with his own conscious purposes.*

*"My time is not yet come" – often what Jesus says when he talks about his death and return to his Father (John 7:30, 8:20, 12:23&27, 13:1, 17:1). It often was used in conjunction with a succession of steps that would move him closer to the public eye or the angry grasp of the Jewish leaders.*

*"Do whatever he tells you" – shows Mary committing the solution to him. Jesus does tell us to ask for whatever is our concern and entrust the solution to him.*

- Besides his compassion and concern for people, discuss other reasons Jesus did these miracles. (John 2:11).

*The miracles revealed his glory – drew attention to who he was.*

*The miracles helped the disciples and others put their faith in him.*

*It is of value to recognize that Jesus cares about even the small things of life (no wine) but is quick to establish a connection with the mundane and the real purpose of his mission.*

## **The Threat of Traditions and Rules of Men**

- Analyze what Jesus is saying to the teachers of the Law...and you...about the laws of Moses:

*“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them... Anyone who breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven ... unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven”*

*(Matthew 5:17-20).*

One of the experts in the law tested Jesus by asking, “Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?” Jesus replied, “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments” (Matthew 22:34-40).

Jesus told them, “Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you hypocrites; as it is written: ‘These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. They worship me in vain; their teachings are merely human rules.’ You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to human traditions” (Mark 7:6-8).

*“It was not through law that Abraham and his offspring received the promise that he would be heir of the world, but through the righteousness that comes by faith ... the law brings wrath”*

*(Romans 4:13-25).*

*Leader note: Jesus might have seemed radical to the teachers of the law, but Jesus was the one who truly understood the law. The law is not about outward conformity but must emerge from a proper heart—one that is driven by loving God completely and as a result also loving neighbors. The law was there to guide people to do just that but reveals how we have failed and the wrath of God against us.*

*Without perfect fulfillment of law, there is no entrance to the kingdom of God. Jesus came to perfectly obey the law in our place since you would have to be perfect to fulfill it (surpassing even what the Pharisees and teachers of the law thought they had achieved). Jesus was also the one for whom the law prepares people. Faith in Christ connects us with his righteousness which makes us acceptable to the law accepted by the lawgiver.*

- Rules, rituals, and traditions have their value. Compare times they are beneficial and when they get in the way of the relationships God wants us to have with him and with others.

*The routine of rules, rituals, and traditions can bind people together in a common community that keeps a regular focus on faith, family, and friends. It provides a template of schedule and tasks that make things go smoothly and can ensure a proper message is consistently communicated from year to year.*

*They get in the way when they become more important than the people we are to love; when people aren't doing it our way; when strangers walk in and continue to feel marginalized; when we condemn others because they did it wrong; when we think we gain God's favor by keeping them; when keeping the traditions is more important than loving God and neighbor.*

Read John 5:16-30:

- Besides breaking the Sabbath law, what bothered the Jewish leaders about the message Jesus was spreading? (See John 5:16-18.) (See also John 10:31-39).

*They knew what he was saying when he said “My Father and I.” They heard him loud and clear to be calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God. That angered them. Notice, however, that the demons recognized him for who he was, “I know who you are—the Holy One of God” (Mark 1:24), “What do you want with me, Son of the Most High God?”*

- Discuss why our relationship with God is dependent on our relationship with Jesus (vs. 21-24).

*The heavenly Father entrusted all judgment to the Son. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him. Without the proper relationship with Jesus, there is no eternal life—only eternal punishment.*

## Jesus not only Spoke the Message...He is the Message

Read Luke 4:14-22:

- Determine the immediate and long-range impact of his comment, “*Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.*”

*Jesus was using Scripture as a basis for belief—not fanciful conjectures, or legends or traditions.*

*Jesus was declaring that he was the fulfillment of the prophecies of the Old Testament. They would see the evidence of it. They would one day have to realize he will not only be Savior but also judge.*

*We will find him in the Scriptures and understand him better through our reading of it.*

- What does the following passage, spoken to Jewish religious leaders, add to this? “*You study the Scriptures diligently because you think that in them you have eternal life. These are the very Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life ...*” (John 5:39-40).

*Some read Scriptures and miss the whole point. They make it about conformity or principles of living. Yet the basic purpose and message of all of Scripture is to lead us to Christ—whether it be the law that shows us the need for a Savior or the gospel that unfolds the beauty and power of what he had done to lead us to faith in him.*

*Those who refuse to come to Jesus will face the judgment we all deserve and fail to have the life he gives.*

## Jesus’ Family

“*Who are my mother and my brothers?*” Jesus looked at those seated in a circle around him and said, “*Here are my mother and my brothers! Whoever does God’s will is my brother, and sister and mother.*”

- Discuss the impact Jesus’ statement might have had on ...

... Jesus’ mother, brothers, and sisters

*His family may have been taken aback when they heard what he said. It tells us that even his brothers did not believe him (John 7:3-5). They thought he was out of his mind and were going in to save him (saving the Savior? ...Peter tried that too, once). Yet Jesus was teaching that it is not the biological relationship that counts in the kingdom of God but faith in him that comes from hearing and shows itself in doing. That makes you family.*

... the crowds gathered around him

*The crowds may also have been puzzled but it must have drawn the believers closer to him to see him as brother, family ... to be valued as children of the Father no matter how others looked at them.*

... You – *Let participants give their own take on what this means for themselves—Jesus as brother. We are his abundantly loved children no matter what life seems to say or how others may view us.*

Another time while Jesus was teaching, a woman in the crowd called out, *“Blessed is the mother who gave you birth and nursed you.”* Jesus’ replied, *“Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and obey it”* (Luke 11:27-28).

- Define what Jesus was saying here. Compare what Elizabeth had said in Luke 1:42-45 with what Jesus is saying about those who are considered “blessed.”

*Any notion of special privilege based on being the mother of Jesus is absent here. True kinship with Jesus is not based on genetic relationships or race. “Blessed are those who believed what the Lord has said to her will be accomplished” (Luke 1:45); “Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed” (John 20:29).*

- Determine what the following passages say about our family relationship with Jesus.

*Both the one who makes men holy and those who are made holy are from the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers ... he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death—that is the devil (Hebrews 2: 11-18).*

*To all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God (John 1:12-13). (See also Romans 4:16-25; 9:6.)*

*For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, “Abba, Father” ... Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ (Romans 8:15,17). (See also Galatians 4:4-7.)*

*How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! (1 John 3:1).*

*Leader Note: Jesus was God but came to be our brother and is not ashamed to be associated with us as such. He is the Holy One whose righteous life declares us to be holy in God’s eyes and through the Holy Spirit continues to sanctify us—making our hearts and actions more in line with his holiness. He became one of us, so he could take our place in the punishment of death and conquer the devil’s power over us.*

*Those who believe have been given the privileges of being children of God. It was not by our decision and power of choice (we were dead in sins, unable), but was what was worked in us by the Holy Spirit—“born of God.” That makes those who have faith in Jesus fellow-heirs with him of the riches of heaven.*

### Put it into Practice:

- If what you presently believe doesn’t match up with what Jesus says, both can’t be right. Seriously rethink your relationship with Jesus.
- Besides you, who are the “whoever’s” in your area of contact that need to know Jesus? Make a plan to build a healthy relationship with them so that you can share the Word and the Holy Spirit can turn it into a healthy relationship with Jesus.

### CHRISTIAN SONGS to consider that express similar messages to this lesson:

You may want to refer people to the messages in these songs

- You are the Way; though You Alone – ...can we the Father find... You are the truth...the life...the way...
- Rock of Ages – *nothing in my hand I bring, simply to thy cross I cling*
- Just as I Am – *without one plea but that thy blood was shed for me...*
- Mary, Did you Know – *that your baby boy will some day walk on water? ... save your sons and daughters?*

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