

# FOLLOWING JESUS: LIFE OF CHRIST (I)

## Introduction and Infancy

Sample Lesson



Luke 2:41-52





This sample lesson is from the Level 2 course **Following Jesus: The Life of Christ (1): Introduction and Infancy.**

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## Welcome

This course is the first 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 1 on the Introduction and Infancy is a discipleship and training course used worldwide for equipping Christians within their local churches. The whole series is based on the New International Version of the Bible. If you use other versions, adjustments may be necessary.

## 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 1 Lesson 3

### Matthew, the Author



Today I'm going to introduce you to two of Jesus' future apostles. Mind you, it won't be easy because one is a Zealot and the other a tax collector.

#### Preparing for this lesson:

- Take a moment to pray.
- Remember to keep a notebook handy to note down any questions or issues for discussion.

#### Objectives

- At the end of this lesson you will be able to:
1. Write the name of one apostle who opposed Roman rule and one apostle who supported it;
  2. State the occupation of Matthew before following Christ and after following Christ;
  3. State the role of Simon the Zealot before following Christ;
  4. State the main theme of Matthew's Gospel and how it differed from Roman rule and the revolutionary movement.

1. There are four books in the Bible that tell us about Jesus' life. They are called Gospels. The author of the first Gospel was Matthew. Jesus chose and prepared twelve men to be his special messengers in extending his kingdom on earth. They were called his apostles (sent ones). Read the list of Jesus' apostles in **Matthew 10:2-4**.



Is the writer of the first Gospel listed here as an apostle? \_\_\_\_\_



**Note:** Keep your Bible open at this place.

2. Before following Christ, which one of the apostles was
- a) a tax collector? \_\_\_\_\_
- b) a Zealot? Look for the answer in **Matthew 10:2-4**, and keep your Bible open at this place. \_\_\_\_\_



**Note:** Some Bibles use the word "**Publican**", which means tax collector. Some Bibles use the word "**Canaanite, Cananaean** or **Patriot**" instead of Zealot.

3. Who were the Zealots in Palestine? \_\_\_\_\_

4. *Fisherman*                      *Apostle*                      *Tax collector*
- Doctor*                      *Carpenter*                      *Owner of a pub*

Which of the above was Matthew's job?

- a) before following Christ? \_\_\_\_\_
- b) after following Christ? \_\_\_\_\_
5. There were two Simons in the group of apostles, not just one. Who were they? Look up the answer in **Matthew 10:1-4**.
- a) Simon called \_\_\_\_\_
- b) Simon the \_\_\_\_\_
6. As there were two apostles named Simon, you can make clear to which one you are referring by mentioning either Simon called
- a) \_\_\_\_\_, or Simon the b) \_\_\_\_\_.



7. The drawing below shows Matthew the tax collector, Simon the Zealot, and a Roman soldier. Which of these three is marked in the drawing by the Letter A? \_\_\_\_\_
- the Letter B? \_\_\_\_\_
- the Letter C? \_\_\_\_\_



8. The first Gospel was written by a) \_\_\_\_\_. Before following Christ he worked as a b) \_\_\_\_\_.
9. Simon the Zealot and Matthew were both of a) \_\_\_\_\_ nationality, and they lived in the same country, which was called b) \_\_\_\_\_, within the c) \_\_\_\_\_ Empire. Both became Christ's d) \_\_\_\_\_.
10. In many countries today, as in Palestine then, there are revolutionary movements made up of nationalists who hope to free their country from another power. Before following Christ, which of the twelve apostles a) supported and worked for the Romans? \_\_\_\_\_ b) was a nationalist? \_\_\_\_\_
11. Before following Christ, what would have been the relationship between Matthew the tax collector and Simon the Zealot? One of friendship or one of hatred? \_\_\_\_\_

12. In the following list, mark each of the phrases in the following way. Those that apply to Matthew only, with “M”; Matthew and Simon, with “MS”; Simon only, with “S”; neither of the two, with “X”.

- |                               |   |
|-------------------------------|---|
| a) ___ Zealot                 | g) ___ Author of the first Gospel                         |
| b) ___ Worked for the Romans  | h) ___ Revolutionary                                      |
| c) ___ Hated the Romans       | i) ___ Christ’s apostle                                   |
| d) ___ Native of Palestine    | j) ___ Tax collector                                      |
| e) ___ Roman                  | k) ___ Jewish   |
| f) ___ Traitor to his country | l) ___ Native of a country with a Mediterranean coastline |

13. Isn’t it strange that Simon and Matthew should find themselves together as Christ’s apostles, even though they had been so bitterly opposed politically? Read **Matthew 10:7**.



In which kingdom were they reconciled and united?

\_\_\_\_\_

14.  What is the main theme of the Gospel according to Matthew? You will find it mentioned in **Matthew 4:17**.

- a) The Kingdom of Heaven       b) The Roman Empire
- c) The Revolutionary Movement

15.



The word “**kingdom**” occurs more than 50 times in Matthew’s Gospel. Indeed, it is the key word in this Gospel. For this reason you will be underlining it each time it is found there. Make a start now by underlining in red the word “**kingdom**” in each of the following verses: **Matthew 4:17; 4:23** and **10:7**



**16.** The kingdom of heaven that Christ preached was a kingdom of love. It was as far removed from the political ideas of the revolutionaries as it was from those of the Roman Empire.

a) Do you remember the drawing showing the execution of the 2,000 captured Zealots, in **Lesson 2.9**?

Did the Roman Empire remain in power by love or by military force?

\_\_\_\_\_

b) The Zealots had great nationalistic ideals; they wanted to free their country from pagan Roman oppression.

Did they want to achieve this by love or by violent revolution?

\_\_\_\_\_

**17.** Which of the following used violence instead of love in order to achieve their aims? Tick them both.

a) The Roman Empire     b) The Revolutionary Movement

c) The Kingdom of Heaven

**18.** What is the main theme of the Gospel according to Matthew?

The \_\_\_\_\_

**19.**  Read **Luke 4:18**.

a) Was Christ concerned about the condition of the oppressed?

\_\_\_\_\_

b) What will Christ do about those who are oppressed?

\_\_\_\_\_

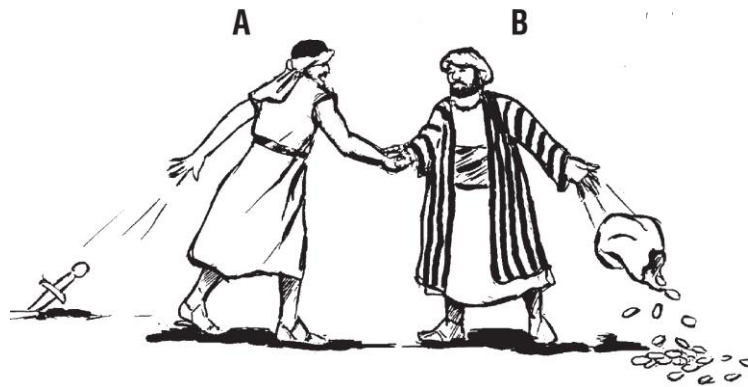
**20.** The following drawing shows two of Christ's apostles.

a) Identify them by writing the name of each here.

A. \_\_\_\_\_

B. \_\_\_\_\_

b) Does this drawing show them as they were before or after they had entered the kingdom of heaven? \_\_\_\_\_



Title: \_\_\_\_\_

c) Choose the most appropriate title from the list below, and then write it in the space below the drawing.

- The Kingdom of Heaven*      *The Revolutionary Movement*  
*Imperialism*

21.  Read **John 18:36**. Christ promised that in his kingdom he would set the oppressed free.

But would he do this by violence? \_\_\_\_\_

22.  Read **John 6:15**. Jesus was a Jew. When the people came to him in order to make him King of Palestine by force, what did Jesus do?

- a) He accepted the offer of leading a violent revolution.
- b) He refused the offer and withdrew.
- c) He approved of their plans but hadn't the courage to join them

23.  Read **Matthew 5:44**.

Was the kingdom of heaven established by violence or by love?

\_\_\_\_\_

24. The kingdom of heaven differed from the ideas both of the Roman Empire and of the Revolutionary Movement in that it was motivated by

a) \_\_\_\_\_ instead of by b) \_\_\_\_\_.

25. Simon the Zealot and Matthew were united in love as a result of
- a) Imperialism.                       b) the Revolutionary Movement.
- c) the Kingdom of Heaven.
26. What is the main theme of the Gospel according to Matthew?
- \_\_\_\_\_
27. God wants our strongest loyalty to be to
- a) our political party.                       b) our homeland.
- c) the kingdom of heaven.                       d) our family.
- e) our church or denomination.
28. Now do **Review 1.3**.



**Congratulations** on finishing **Lesson 3** successfully.

Don't forget to go to the Group Meeting. It is an essential part of the course.



### **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.

Review 1.3

1. In Jesus' country there were two opposing political ideas. Write the name of the apostle who supported each of these, before following Christ.
  - a) One who supported Roman rule. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b) One who supported nationalism. \_\_\_\_\_
2. What was Matthew's nationality? \_\_\_\_\_
3. In what country did Matthew live? \_\_\_\_\_
4. What was Matthew's occupation
  - a) before following Christ? \_\_\_\_\_
  - b) after following Christ? \_\_\_\_\_
5. With which Empire did Matthew collaborate?  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. What was Simon the Zealot before following Christ?  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. Was Simon the Zealot for or against Roman rule?  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. What is the main theme of the Gospel according to Matthew?  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. According to tradition, who was the author of the first Gospel?  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. In which kingdom were Matthew and Simon the Zealot united?  
\_\_\_\_\_
11. On what main point did the kingdom of heaven differ from both Roman rule and the revolutionary movement? \_\_\_\_\_



**Feedback to Lesson 3**

1. Yes
2. a) Matthew  
b) Simon
3. Jewish revolutionaries
4. a) Tax collector  
b) Apostle
5. a) Peter  
b) Zealot
6. a) Peter  
b) Zealot
7. A: Simon the Zealot  
B: Matthew the tax collector  
C: Roman soldier
8. a) Matthew  
b) tax collector
9. a) Jewish  
b) Palestine
10. a) Matthew  
b) Simon the Zealot
11. One of hatred
12. a) S  
b) M  
c) S  
d) MS  
e) X  
f) M  
g) M  
h) S  
i) MS  
j) M  
k) MS  
l) MS
13. Kingdom of heaven
14. a
16. a) By military force  
b) By a violent revolution
17. a. b.
18. kingdom of heaven
19. a) Yes  
b) Set them free
20. a) A. Simon  
B. Matthew  
b) After c) The Kingdom of Heaven
21. No
22. b.
23. By love
24. a) love  
b) violence/ hatred
25. c.
26. The kingdom of heaven
27. It should be c.





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