

# Lesson 11

## Jesus Calls Us To Serve Him

**Bible Lesson:** Colossians 3:12-25

**Memory Verse:** Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father. *Colossians 3:17*

**Enrichment Memory Verse:** Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve. *Colossians 3:23-24*

**Catechism Memory Work:** And in Jesus Christ His only Son, our Lord; . . .

*What does this mean?*

I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true Man, born of the Virgin Mary, is my Lord; who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, bought me and freed me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil; not with silver and gold, but with His holy and precious blood and with His innocent sufferings and death; in order that I might be His own, live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness; . . .

### TEACHER PREPARATION

#### Prepare to Teach:

✠ Students will understand that when Jesus lives in them, He changes them so that they will want to live for Him.

#### Prepare Materials:

*Along with the regular materials needed for class, you will need the following items for this lesson:*

- ♦ Quarter-long project materials (listed in Introductory section): for this, Lesson 11, have the students add onto last week's message the

following: "serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence and blessedness"

#### Prayer Preparation

1. Pray that God's Word might have its way in your life, that you may serve Him as he wills.
2. Pray for your students, that God's Word might reveal to them that God's will for their lives is that they may be His own, to live under Him in forgiveness and trust.
3. Pray that your students may in faith look ahead to the preparation God may have for them so they may serve Him.

### BIBLE BACKGROUND

#### A. Bible Study

The desire to serve God does not come naturally to us. It is a fruit of being made a child of God. How can we serve God? I cannot wash His feet or bring Him something to eat. We are able to serve God through loving and caring for our neighbors, those people whom God has called us to help and serve. It has been said that "God doesn't need our good works but our neighbor does."

These acts of service and love are not offered as if through them we merit something before God. To do so would demean the blood of Christ shed at the Cross. We do not add our works to His but rely on His alone for our salvation. We note along with this, the great opportunity it is, as a believer, to serve in thanksgiving and joy in God's kingdom. It is amazing to consider that we are invited to participate in the work of God's kingdom.

Remember when we pray in the Lord's Prayer, "thy kingdom come," we pray knowing that "the kingdom of God comes indeed of itself without our prayer, but we pray in this petition that it may come also to us" (SC, Lord's Prayer, 2<sup>nd</sup> Petition). The question that follows is this: How is this done? When our heavenly Father

gives us His Holy Spirit, so that by His grace we believe His holy Word and live a godly life here on earth and in heaven forever" (SC p. 107).

It is only because of Jesus that we can live a godly life here on earth or as we say in the meaning to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Article, serve in "righteous, innocence, and blessedness." The Savior has called us to share in the work of the kingdom using the various gifts and talents that He has given to us. Do not forget that He "gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ" (Ephesians 4:11-12). Even now, as you prepare to teach, God is using you to bless and help your students. As you prepare, you pray for them, you consider how you might make the truth of God's Word clear to them, you love them. You serve your students in this way; you serve God in this way.

God shows His rule in this world through the authorities and institutions that He has created. In the earthly realm, governments and various authorities are in place to keep order and promote that which is good. The Christian Church has been given the Great Commission to further the spread of the Kingdom of God in such a way that more and more might be saved. This is why we are called the body of Christ. We are, by His grace and through the power of the Holy Spirit, able to be the hands and feet of Christ; bringing the Good News to the entire world.

## B. Creed Study

### Jesus Christ Calls us to Serve Him

Jesus "has redeemed me,...that I might serve Him." Or as the familiar saying goes, "We are saved to serve," a delightful result of the saving grace of God (Ephesians 2:8-10). God has given to each of His children a place to serve Him in His kingdom, and He supplies the necessary gifts and abilities to carry out the assigned task. He calls and equips His people through his Word. One such servant was Jeremiah.

### The Context (Jeremiah 1:1-3)

Jeremiah is a well-known Hebrew prophet, known for the almost impossible mission to which God called him. As a prophet, he was to call the people of Judah back to God at a time when they were on the brink of national and spiritual ruin. Corrupted by the influence of pagan Canaanite worship, they had fallen into apostasy, and this was followed by social and moral decay.

Jeremiah was called to speak to an indifferent and rebellious people. He soon acquired a reputation for pessimism and gloom and was rejected, hated, and persecuted. Such a prophetic mission demanded a strong and continuing assurance of his calling, as well as courage, faith and determination. The book begins with the circumstances surrounding Jeremiah's call (1:1-3).

As with most prophecies, these opening verses supply information as to the author and date as a means of setting God's message in historical perspective. "To whom the word of the Lord came" (1:2) is a favorite expression of Jeremiah and means more than that the word of God was spoken to and heard by him. It means that the word is influencing, taking possession of him, placing him under obligation.

At this point the word of the Lord becomes a matter of personal importance to Jeremiah. His life and thought were formed to a large extent by prophets such as Amos, Hosea, Isaiah and Micah, and probably by the lives and sayings of Elijah and Elisha. Hosea especially seems to have gripped the mind of Jeremiah with his striking pictures of divine love for wayward Israel. Jeremiah also uses the imagery of Hosea in describing Israel's apostasy as harlotry and adultery.

So the word of the Lord came to him, and took possession of him at an early age. The divine word would strengthen and sustain him in performing the almost superhuman tasks placed on him by God's call. At times the struggle grew very bitter, yet from every battle with his enemies, from every conflict with his own flesh and blood, from every wrestling with God, Jeremiah came through more than a conqueror because the Word of God possessed him. The Word held him in its strong and living and persuasive embrace, supplying him strength, endurance, patience and faithfulness. Such is the power of the Word of God to every believer who is called and sent in Christ.

### The Call (Jeremiah 1:4-10f)

Jeremiah was "*foreknown*" (1:4-5) in the truest sense of the word (Romans 8:29-30). Before he was born or "formed" (1:5), God began to form Jeremiah. God knew him, took an interest in him, and separated him to a

special work - to be a prophet to the nations. There is nothing careless or haphazard about the way God chooses Jeremiah or any of His children, or in His plans for them (Psalm 139:14-16).

This word is a special comfort to the child of God, and it is that word that continues to give assurance and strength and purpose to our lives, that they might be lived in God's perfect will. For Jeremiah, God had worked out each step of the process from conception to consecration with an intimate awareness both of the need and the One who would meet that need. Under such circumstances, Jeremiah had little choice but to surrender to the high calling of God. To be so loved and so chosen is the privilege of every child of God in Christ (Ephesians 1:1-6).

Jeremiah is *fearful* (1:6). He shudders at the thought of becoming a prophet. He feels so unworthy, so incompetent for the office. "I do not know" literally refers to a knowledge gained by experience. He is inexperienced and thus feels he cannot do the work for he is only a youth. The word for "youth" here can mean a young person from the age of infancy to the period of manhood, including all who are yet inexperienced in a given profession. Jeremiah does what any of us would do - protest that he is not qualified in any way for the work to which God is calling him. Moses felt the same way when God called him (Exodus 4:10ff).

God says, "*fear not*" (1:7-8). Fear is one of the most paralyzing of human emotions. It affects all our efforts at times, but is for some reason especially present in Christian witness. Fear can only be dispelled fully by the love of Christ (I John 4:18). The Lord assures Jeremiah that there is no reason why he should be afraid or reluctant to go. He is chosen as God's ambassador and God will map out his paths and his work. He will speak the words God gives him to speak. God will support His servants in the mission assigned to them (1:8). It does not mean that Jeremiah will be free from opposition, physical danger, etc., but he will survive all difficulties because God will be with him. What more should he need?

God sends Jeremiah *forth* (1:9-10). God touches Jeremiah's lips and tells him that he will be sent forth with the Word of God in his mouth, a word to the nations, a prophet speaking the divine message. Throughout his life God will put His words in the prophet's mouth. How useless then to worry about his inexperience, or fear his opponents. Jesus gives the same assurances to His Church today as He sends us out. He promises that He will be with us and that the Holy Spirit will enable us (Matthew 10:19-20; John 16:13; Acts 1:8).

There is in the touch of God a cleansing and purifying power that enables the Word to go out and accomplish what God intends, for the words of the prophet are in fact the words of God. God tells Jeremiah what the effect of the Word will be (1:10). That Word will tear down what is corrupt in the nation and people, for that must be uprooted and torn down. Only then can God build and plant anew. The Word (law and gospel) always has that two-fold purpose: destruction and construction. God uses the law in our lives to remove sin, to break down the hardness and resistance of the sinner's heart. When this is done, God can apply the gospel of grace to create a new heart and cause us to grow in grace and in the knowledge of Christ (II Peter 3:18; Ephesians 4:15). We, too, can be assured that the Word of God will accomplish what God intends (Isaiah 55:11).

When God calls His prophets He creates the willingness to serve Him before He actually sends them as His messengers. God does not want unwilling servants in His kingdom. Yet God demands unconditional surrender to His will. By His gracious Word He works to remove our fears, doubts and objections, and persuades, convinces and convicts those He calls to willingly go wherever He sends them and speak what He wants them to speak.

## BEGINNING YOUR CLASS HOUR

### Welcome

#### Open with Prayer

Ask students for suggestions for thanksgiving and other prayer topics.

Encourage participation in sentence prayers.

Close the prayer session with prayer for God's leading in the class session. Pray that students and you, the teacher, will learn what God would teach you about His will today.

### Recite Memory Work

Listen to students recite their memory work:

**From the Bible:** Isaiah 43:1b

And

**From the Catechism:** And in Jesus Christ His only Son, our Lord; Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, Born of the Virgin Mary; Suffered under Pontius Pilate, Was crucified, dead and buried; He descended into hell; The third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, And is

seated on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; From where He shall come to judge the living and the dead.”

Add: And in Jesus Christ His only Son, our Lord; . . .  
*What does this mean?*

I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true Man, born of the Virgin Mary, is my Lord; who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, bought me and freed me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil; not with silver and gold, but with His holy and precious blood and with His innocent sufferings and death; in order that I might be His own, live under Him in His kingdom, . . .

## Review

Review last week’s lesson (in progress).

## Introduce Wall Words

significant—  
mentored—  
hospitality—  
unique—  
ordinary—  
noticeable—

## Introduce the Lesson

In progress

## Teach the Lesson

In progress

# APPLYING THE BIBLE LESSON

## Memory Work

**BIBLE VERSE**—Colossians 3:17

*Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.*

**CATECHISM**—READ

*The Second Article of Redemption*

*And in Jesus Christ His only Son, our Lord; . . .*

*What does this mean?*

*I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true Man, born of the Virgin Mary, is my Lord; who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, bought me and freed me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil; not with silver and gold, but with His holy and precious blood and with His innocent sufferings and death; in order that I might be His own, live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness; . . .*

**REVIEW** the parts of the Second Article & Meaning previously learned. Then **READ** together today's portion. **ASK** Why did Jesus redeem you? (So that you might be His own, live under Him in His Kingdom and serve Him.) **ASK** What does it mean to live under Jesus? (To obey Him because He is my King.) If we belong to Jesus, we will serve

Him and live for Him all our lives. We will have happy lives if we serve Him. But we'll be even happier when we serve Him in heaven. We don't know exactly how we'll serve Him in heaven, but the Bible teaches us that we will serve Him there. That will be forever.

## Activity Pages

### Activity 1— Serving God, Serving Others

ANSWERS

1. service
2. serving
3. examples, different, different
4. unique
5. ordinary, glamorous
6. neighbors

### Activity 2— What's The Word?

ANSWERS

1. ordinary
2. hospitality
3. persistently
4. prophet
5. condemned
6. redeemed
7. leprosy
8. parable
9. mentored
10. citizens

## CLOSING THE LESSON

### Closing Prayer

### Assignment

Since next week's lesson is the last one of this quarter, ask your students to review the lessons, verses and catechism.