

IN HIS STEPS

by
David A. Ramos

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to *In His Steps*!

This course was inspired by a novel called *In His Steps*, written in 1896 by Charles M. Sheldon. In the novel, a pastor challenges his congregation to "pledge themselves, earnestly and honestly for an entire year, not to do anything without first asking the question, 'What would Jesus do?'" (WWJD). It has sold 30 million copies, putting it in the top 50 bestselling books ever.

However, in order to answer the WWJD question, we must answer another question: How can you know what Jesus would do if you don't know what Jesus did do? (HCYKWJWDIYDKWJDD?)

This was the question that led me to invest 2,000+ hours studying the life of Christ.

In this seven-week course, we will go on an amazing journey. We will study the life of Christ in an integrated and comprehensive way. By the end of the course, you will know Jesus in a fresh, new way. I am confident that you will learn things that you have never heard before. But our goal is not just information ... it is transformation.

Course Outline:

1. Jesus is THE Story
2. Jesus Set the Example
3. Jesus Developed His Team
4. Jesus Connected with People
5. Jesus Charted the Course
6. Jesus Taught the Scriptures
7. Jesus Accomplished His Mission

Follow me:

Jesus called His disciples with a simple, two-word command, "Follow me."

This is a call to accept Jesus as your Lord and Savior ... and to make Him your role model for life.

I look forward to going on this journey with you. Please contact me at dave@WWJDcoaching.com if you have any questions or suggestions.

Godspeed,



IN HIS STEPS – LESSON ONE: JESUS IS THE STORY

Some FOUNDATIONAL TRUTHS:

- Jesus has ALWAYS existed! Thus, Jesus' story precedes creation. His story precedes the scriptures. His story precedes His incarnation. (John 1:1-2)
- Jesus is fully God and fully human. He *voluntarily* accepted the limitations that living in a human body would bring (Philippians 2:7).
- Jesus is the main theme of the entire Bible.
 - One Book. One Message. 63,779 Cross References!

The Four Gospels:

- Matthew (written by the Apostle Matthew, an eyewitness)
 - Jesus as Messiah
- Mark (written by John Mark, a companion of the Apostle Peter)
 - Jesus as Servant
- Luke (written by the Luke, a companion of the Apostle Paul)
 - Jesus, Son of Man
- John (written by the Apostle John, an eyewitness)
 - Jesus, Son of God
- The total is 89 chapters and 3,779 verses.

The *In His Steps* Chronological Side-by-Side Harmony:

- 218 unique events
- Some key insights:
 - Half of events are recorded in only ONE Gospel.
 - Only 9% (20 events) are recorded in all four Gospels. But, even when an event is recorded in all four Gospels, there are **SIGNIFICANT** details that can only be discovered when you harmonize the accounts.
 - Even Luke, the “most complete” Gospel only records 63% of the events.
 - Half of the events occur in the last seven months of Jesus' life.

Our Disclaimer:

- “Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, not even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written.” (John 21:25)

Our 40-Day Challenge:

- Study the Life of Christ for the next 40 days ... pick the option that works best for you.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Which of the four Gospels is your favorite? Why?
- How has your understanding of the Gospels changed today?
- If someone asked you, “Who is Jesus?”, how would you answer?
- Will you accept the 40-Day Challenge? If so, which option is best for you?

“How can you know what Jesus would do if you don't know what Jesus did do!”

Dave Ramos

IN HIS STEPS – LESSON TWO: JESUS SET THE EXAMPLE

God, in His providence, recorded the activities of Jesus' earthly life in four Gospel accounts. However, it is remarkable how little we actually know:

- Jesus lived approximately 12,150 days, but we only have a record of roughly 100 of them.
- During His three-year public ministry, Jesus spoke approximately 2.2 million words, but we have a record of only 31,426 of them.

We are commanded to imitate Christ:

- "Then Jesus said to His disciples, 'If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me.'" (Matthew 16:24)
- "For I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you." (John 13:15)
- "Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ." (1 Corinthians 11:1)
- "Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us." (Ephesians 5:1-2)
- "Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 2:5)
- "For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps." (1 Peter 2:21)
- "The one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked." (1 John 2:6)

As you strive to imitate Christ, consider two questions:

1. What Did Jesus Do? (WDJD?)
2. What Did Jesus Teach? (WDJT?)

Even though Jesus was fully God, He practiced seven spiritual habits in His life:

1. **Follow Like Jesus.** "Very truly I tell you, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does." (John 5:19)
2. **Fight Like Jesus.** "Jesus said to him, 'Away from me Satan.'" (Matthew 4:10)
3. **Pray Like Jesus.** "Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed." (Mark 1:35)
4. **Study Like Jesus.** "And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself." (Luke 24:27)
5. **Work Like Jesus.** "Jesus said to them, 'My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I too am working.'" (John 5:17)
6. **Celebrate Like Jesus.** "Go and make preparations for us to eat the Passover." (Luke 22:8)
7. **Rest Like Jesus.** "Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion." (Mark 4:38)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Have you ever intentionally made Jesus your "role model?"
- Which of the seven spiritual disciplines comes most naturally to you?
- Which of the seven spiritual disciplines do you struggle with the most?
- Please share one specific action that you will take to apply the WWJD model this week.

We must know Jesus before we can imitate Him.

Charles M. Sheldon

IN HIS STEPS – LESSON THREE: JESUS DEVELOPED HIS TEAM

Four specific events describe how Jesus called His disciples:

- On Jesus' "first day," He called His first followers (Event #30)
- Approximately nine months later, Jesus invited four to "Follow Me." (Event #46)
- Shortly thereafter, Matthew was called (Event #52)
- Approximately 18 months into His ministry, Jesus selected His twelve (Event #60)
 - Follower → Disciple → Apostle

The Original Twelve:

1. Simon → Peter
2. James the Elder
3. John the Beloved, brother of James
4. Andrew, brother of Peter
5. Philip
6. Bartholomew, also called Nathanael
7. Thomas, also called Didymus
8. Matthew Levi
9. James the Younger
10. Jude/Judas, also called Thaddaeus
11. Simon
12. Judas Iscariot, the traitor

Why did Jesus choose these guys?

- Perhaps He chose them because of their faithfulness and potential.

Jesus applied seven disciplines to develop His team:

1. **The Right Design.** Jesus recruited disciples, promoted twelve to apostles, and favored the inner three.
2. **The Right Development.** Jesus trained, coached, mentored, disciplined, challenged, and corrected them.
3. **The Right Dynamics.** Jesus created positive dynamics, including inclusion, trust, teamwork, etc.
4. **The Right Decisions.** Jesus taught them to follow God as their leader.
5. **The Right Deliverables.** Jesus gave them a clear vision, an inspiring mission, and foundational values.
6. **The Right Direction.** Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to empower, guide, and align them.
7. **The Right Results.** The team did not overthrow the Romans (as the Jews expected), but they did change the world.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Which of the disciples do you relate to the most? Why?
- Would you consider yourself to be a follower, a disciple, or an apostle?
- Who is on your team?
- How will you apply the WWJD model to develop people like Jesus this week?

Jesus is the world's greatest leadership role model.

Ken Blanchard

IN HIS STEPS – LESSON FOUR: JESUS CONNECTED WITH PEOPLE

Jesus' time was pretty evenly divided among four categories of people:

- 29% of the events were with “Just the Disciples”
- 24% of the events were with religious leaders
 - Often, the Disciples were there as well
- 23% of the events were with “large crowds”
 - Often, the Disciples were there as well
- 24% of the events were with small groups or individuals.
 - Often, the Disciples were there as well
- **PLUS: Remember our disclaimer – John 21:25**

Jesus was “proactively inclusive.” He went out of His way to connect with people that Jewish society, including the religious leaders, ignored, devalued, or considered “unclean”:

- Gentiles
- Pagans
- Women
 - Mary Magdalene, Mary (mother of James), Salome (mother of James and John), Joanna the wife of Chuza, Susanna, and many others
 - The Samaritan Woman
 - The Syrophoenician Woman
 - The bleeding woman
- Lepers

One of the primary ways that Jesus connected with people was through healing:

- The Blind
- The Demon Possessed
- The Lepers
- The Deaf
- The Lame
- Others
- The Dead!
- The (Spiritually) Dead!!!
 - “I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die.” (John 11:25-26)

Each of Jesus' encounters provides profound spiritual lessons, and we should consider how they are representative of His encounters with us.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- What made Jesus so compelling to people?
- What types of people do you connect with most easily?
- Is there someone that you are, perhaps unintentionally, ignoring or devaluing?
- How will you apply the WWJD model this week to connect with people more effectively?

If we truly love Christ, we should care for those who are loved by Him.

Charles Haddon Spurgeon

IN HIS STEPS – LESSON FIVE: JESUS CHARTED THE COURSE

WDJG? (Where Did Jesus Go?):

- The Bible records that Jesus made 77 specific trips.
- During Jesus' three-year ministry, it is estimated that He walked over 2,500 miles.
- Jesus was not just "wandering around." He was being led by the Holy Spirit and every trip was missional/intentional.
- Obviously, He made many more trips than these. (John 21:25)

Some of the key places that Jesus visited include:

- From Heaven to Nazareth!
- Nazareth
- Bethlehem
- Jerusalem
- Egypt
- The Jordan River
- The Wilderness
- Bethany
- Cana
- Capernaum
- The Sea of Galilee
- Samaria
- The Decapolis
- Tyre and Sidon
- Caesarea Philippi
- Mount Hermon (?)
- Pilate and Herod's Palaces
- Golgotha
- Hades
- Post-resurrection appearances
- The Mount of Olives

NOTE: See map on last page to help follow along.

Plus:

- There is no record of Jesus traveling to any of the major cities or power centers in His time.
- Each place that Jesus visited had spiritual significance ... and has a spiritual lesson for each of us.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Which of these locations would Jesus have found you in?
- Which location had the biggest spiritual lesson for you personally? Why?
- Is Jesus calling you to travel to "unclean" or "pagan" lands?
- How will you apply the WWJD model this week to make more of your trips more "missional?"

God only had one son, and He was a missionary and a physician.

David Livingstone

IN HIS STEPS – LESSON SIX: JESUS TAUGHT THE SCRIPTURES

We must think of Jesus as a “Rabbi.”

- Although John called Jesus “the Lamb who takes away the sins of the world,” His disciples immediately called Him “Rabbi” (which means teacher).
- The gospels record thirteen instances where people called Jesus “Rabbi.”
- There are many examples of Jesus teaching in synagogues.

However, He was no “ordinary Rabbi.”

- “The people were amazed at his teaching because he taught them as one who had authority, not as the teachers of the law.” (Mark 1:22)

Jesus taught using seven different styles:

1. Sermons
2. Discourses
3. Parables
4. Conversations
5. Corrections
6. Condemnations
7. Confrontations

Most of Jesus’ teaching was an exposition on the Torah (the Old Testament):

- Jesus quoted or expounded the “Old Testament” over 60 times.
- He quoted or referenced 19 Old Testament books and 20 Old Testament characters.
- Often, He rejected the Pharisee’s interpretation.

Jesus’ key themes were:

- Salvation by Faith for All (Not by “keeping the law” and not just the Jews)
 - “Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved ...” (Mark 16:16)
- The Kingdom of God/Kingdom of Heaven
 - “Repent, for the kingdom of Heaven is near.” (Matthew 4:17)
- The Power of Love
 - “By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” (John 13:35)
- The “Inverse Economy”
 - “The first shall be last.” (Matthew 20:16)
- The Demands of Discipleship
 - “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.” (Matthew 16:24)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- What is your favorite parable?
- Which of Jesus’ teaching methods are you most comfortable with?
- Which of Jesus’ key themes are you most comfortable with teaching?
- How will you apply the WWJD model this week to improve your teaching effectiveness?

“People were amazed at his teaching because he taught as one who had authority.”
Mark 1.22

IN HIS STEPS – LESSON SEVEN: JESUS ACCOMPLISHED HIS MISSION

Jesus and the eleven disciples travel to the Garden of Gethsemane \cong Thursday April 6, 30 A.D. Around midnight.

- Jesus prays for Himself while Peter, James and John sleep
- Jesus is betrayed, arrested, and abandoned

Jesus is taken to the house of Annas, in Jerusalem \cong Friday April 7, 30 AD. Around 1:00AM

- Jesus is examined by Annas
- Peter and one other disciple (John) in the courtyard

Jesus is taken to Caiaphas' council chamber. Around 3:00 AM

- Jesus is interrogated by Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin
- Peter's three denials
- Jesus is formally condemned by the Sanhedrin
- Judas commits suicide

Jesus is led to Pilate's Palace. Around 5:00 AM

- Jesus' first appearance before Pilate

Jesus is sent to Herod

- Jesus' appearance before Herod Antipas

Jesus is sent back to Pilate. Around 6:00 AM

- Pilate declares Jesus' innocence
- The crowd chooses Barabbas
- Jesus is mocked and flogged
- Pilate's third interrogation

Jesus' final journey to Calvary. Around 8:00 AM

- Simon helps Jesus carry His cross

Jesus is crucified. Friday, from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM.

Jesus dies.

- The immediate aftermath

Summary: Everything was done in full accord with, "the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God." (Acts 2:23)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Jesus faced tremendous persecution. What were His "keys to success?"
- How has your understanding of Jesus changed over the past seven weeks?
- What is your assessment of the WWJD model? Do you plan to incorporate it into your daily life?

"It is finished."

Jesus

IN HIS STEPS – ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Resources on the WWJD Coaching website: <https://www.wwjdcoaching.com/resources>

- In His Steps – The Detailed Harmony handout
- In His Steps – The Side-by-Side Passion Narratives

Additional resources to help you walk *In His Steps*:

- *In His Steps* by Charles M. Sheldon
 - This book, written in 1896, started the WWJD movement
- *A Harmony of the Four Gospels* by Orville E. Daniel
 - <https://a.co/d/6dz9Oa9>
- *The Life of Jesus in Chronological Order* by Mike Mazzalongo
 - <https://youtu.be/hO0E5vIxSH4>
 - Also available on Audible
- *The Life and Teachings of Jesus of Nazareth*
 - Available for free at: www.PlusNothing.com
- *The Chosen Harmony* - A 40 Day Reading Program
 - <https://a.co/d/g6ZMMzj>
- The Audio Version of the Gospels, read by Max McLean
 - Available free on the YouTube “Blessfully” channel: <https://youtu.be/kMtezP8UrvA>
 - Also available on Audible, YouVersion, and many other streaming services.
- 40-Day Reading Plans:
 - <https://www.bible.com/reading-plans/1370-the-40-day-gospel-bible-reading-challenge>

Other great books:

- *The Jesus I Never Knew*, by Phillip Yancey
- *Twelve Ordinary Men*, by John MacArthur
- *The Incomparable Christ*, by J. Oswald Sanders
- *Lead Like Jesus*, by Ken Blanchard, Phil Hodges, and Phyllis Hendry

Other resources:

- That's My King video of Dr. S.M. Lockridge's sermon
 - <https://youtu.be/yzqTFNfeDnE?si=hHFCvMECQVkJSERnZ>
- The Chosen TV series
 - <https://thechosen.tv/en-us>
- The Route 60 Movie
 - <https://route60.movie>

Israel news and ministry:

- All Israel News
 - www.AllIsrael.com
- The Joshua Fund
 - www.JoshuaFund.com

HCYKWJWDIYDKWJDD?

How can you know what Jesus would do if you don't know what Jesus did do!

