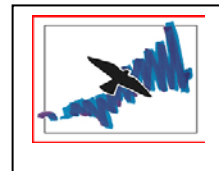


Week beginning:

THEME: Who's Got Talent?

CHRISTIAN VALUE: Commitment



**Reading: Luke 9:51-62** When the days drew near for Jesus to be taken up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem. And he sent messengers ahead of him. On their way they entered a village of the Samaritans to make ready for him; but they did not receive him, because his face was set toward Jerusalem. When his disciples James and John saw it, they said, "Lord, do you want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them?" But he turned and rebuked them. Then they went on to another village. As they were going along the road, someone said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go." And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." To another he said, "Follow me." But he said, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father." But Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead; but as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God." Another said, "I will follow you, Lord; but let me first say farewell to those at my home." Jesus said to him, "No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God."

**INTRODUCTION TO THE THEME:**

This is a valuable passage which highlights many important aspects of Christian discipleship and demonstrates that we are all on a journey. Jesus acknowledges that there will be people who hear his words and want to follow him and other who will reject what he says. Many people approached Jesus and asked if they could follow him and Jesus 'lays it on the line', explaining what this will involve. Some of the followers are quite shocked by Jesus' responses to their offers to follow him – he tells them that they will have to give up everything they have and refocus on God – that requires commitment and sacrifice.

**GATHERING / WELCOME (This can be said and signed)**

Leader: The Lord is here  
**All: His Spirit is with us.**

**WORSHIP SONG** - Suggested songs: Glorify Your Name, Jesus put this song into our hearts, I watch the Sunrise. (No Pianist for Assembly? No Problem 1 )

<b>Way in 1 – Britain's Got Talent</b>	<b>Idea 1 - INTRODUCING THE BIBLE STORY</b>
<p>If possible prepare a clip of the first audition of 'Spelbound' in Britain's Got Talent, to show to the children. (This can be done by saving the scene on to Realplayer.) If you cannot show this ask the children if any of them watched the programme and what they remembered about the audition. If you have a talented gymnast or member of staff with a sporting talent ask them to demonstrate what they can do and then talk about what is required to reach these levels of excellence and how much commitment is required.</p> <p>How often to they train – one day a week?            How much stamina is required?            Do they have faith in one another and their coach?            Are they passionate about what they do?            Do they support and encourage each other?            Strength – both physical and emotional?            A desire to share with others what they do?            How much practice is required?            Do they have to place their trust in others?            Reflect on all of these questions.</p> <div data-bbox="193 1765 715 2101" data-label="Image"> </div>	<p>In the Bible there is a wonderful story where Jesus is explaining to people who ask to be his followers, what being a disciple will involve. Jesus challenges these people by telling that they will need to be totally committed to God and be prepared to suffer all sorts of hardships and give up, in some cases, everything! Jesus told his followers that they may not have the comforts of a home and would need to rely on other people to feed them and provide them with shelter. One follower said he would be along when he had buried his father. In those days the teachings were that this was more important than anything else but Jesus reminded them that God was more important and if he was going to follow him he would have to leave that to someone else. Another follower wanted to go home and say farewell to his family but Jesus said God was the most important thing and if you keep looking back at what you have left behind you cannot be a committed follower of God.</p> <p><b>REFLECTION</b> – Just like the young people in Spelbound, Christians need to be totally committed to God. They need to give 100% and it isn't about going to Church one day a week. Ask the children to reflect on what they are committed to? Why are they committed to that particular thing?</p> <p><b>RESPONSE</b> – What can we do to show our commitment to Jesus' values of love and care for other people? How did the young people in Spelbound respond when their talent was recognized as a result of their commitment? This is how Christians should feel – elated and excited by the story they have to tell.</p> <p><b>PRAYER</b> – Loving Jesus, help us to understand the rewards and excitement we can experience when we follow you. Help us to understand the commitment required and learn to trust you. AMEN</p>

### Way in 2 – Side stepping and making excuses!

Set out a short drama involving an adult to act as the parent and a child.

**Adult:** *Name*, can you bring your wash-basket down? I'm just about to put the washing machine on.

**Child:** Yeah Ok! I'm just finishing this computer game!

**Adult:** *Name*, can you come and empty the dishwasher for me?

**Child:** Ok! I'm just finishing this book – I'm on the last chapter!

**Adult:** *Name*, can you tidy your bedroom?

**Child:** Yeah – I'm just watching the end of this television programme.

**Child:** Mum/Dad, can you come and help me with my homework?

**Adult:** Not at the moment *name*, I'm just on the computer. I'll help you later.

**Child:** Mum/Dad, can we go to the park together?

**Adult:** Later perhaps – I'm just watching this on the television!

**Child:** Mum/Dad can you read a book with me?

**Adult:** When I've made this phone call I'll see if I've got time.

Ask the children what was happening in that little sketch. We heard the child and the adult both making excuses about why they couldn't do something and sometimes we make excuses too quickly not to do something. Do we really think about what are the important things for other people or do we just think about what is best for us.



### Idea 2 - INTRODUCING THE BIBLE STORY

Jesus was always traveling around talking to people – he inspired people with his new way of teaching. Jesus told stories that children and adults could listen to and he told stories about God and how God wanted people to think and behave. What Jesus was saying was often very different to what the religious leaders of the day were saying. People had been distracted by other things and Jesus wanted to share the news of God's love in a new way! Some people didn't like what Jesus was saying or they were too busy arguing about other things.

One day Jesus was on the road and asked his disciples to go ahead to the next village and tell the villagers that he would be visiting the village. The village was inhabited by Samaritans who didn't welcome Jesus – they were so busy about their politics.

Jesus' friends, the disciples James and John, were so angry that they suggested that the village should be destroyed but Jesus told them off because they were being too condemning. The people in the village were too busy with their own needs and desires that they would not give time to listen to Jesus. Their minds were not open to new ideas and they may have been scared of trying something new.

**REFLECTION –** Are we too busy sometimes to listen to Jesus and think about what he is saying to us.

Do we make excuses?

Do we take time to look at the beautiful world that God has given us or do we say we are too busy?

Do we stop to see if there are ways that we can help other people or do we think about our own needs first?

Many of us do make excuses!

God never makes excuses – he is always there for us, right beside us, when we need him.

**RESPONSE –** Play some quiet music whilst the children think of occasions when they have made excuses so that they don't have to do something.

**PRAYER-** Loving Jesus, you walk beside us and watch us grow and learn. You respond without making excuses at the times when we have become too busy thinking about ourselves. Help us to learn to listen, learn and love. AMEN