



Count the Cost!

By Deborah Wassenberg

Introduction:

Following Jesus is the best decision we can ever make—but it's not a casual one. There is more to being His follower than simply accepting an invitation. Jesus wants us to think carefully, choose wisely, and follow Him with our whole hearts.

Warm-up Activity: Blocks for Tower Building

Set up separate stations with different types of construction and building blocks so children can build.

- Jenga
- Lego/Duplo
- Mega Bloks
- Wooden unit blocks
- Foam blocks

Bible Lesson: Discipleship Tested

Bible Reference: Luke 14:25–33

Optional Skit: Blunderman's Folly

Scene: Put a picture of a ruin or unfinished building on the screen.

Prop: A dilapidated advertising sign that reads: 'Tower Project – Established 1983'

Characters: Toby and Mia

Toby and Mia enter stage left. They are on their way to training.

Toby: Come on, Mia.

Mia: It's not my fault we're running late!

Toby: Let's take the shortcut across the field past Blunderman's Folly.

Mia: I hate going past that way.
It gives me the creeps.

Toby and Mia stop beside Blunderman's Folly.

Toby: It's just an old ruin.
(*Toby reads the sign aloud*)
'Tower Project – Established 1983'

Mia: That's positively ancient!
What happened?

Toby: The builder, Mr Blunderman, couldn't finish it.

Mia: Why not?

Toby: After he started building, he ran out of money.
He didn't factor in all the costs before he started.

Mia: What a shame.
It could have been an amazing tower.
A landmark for everyone to see.

Toby: Yeah.
Instead, the tower has become a joke because it was never finished.
That's why everyone calls it 'Blunderman's Folly'.

Mia: What's a 'folly'?

Toby: Foolishness.
In this case, a building that costs a lot but has no practical purpose.
A big, expensive whoops.

Mia: Not a great way to be remembered, is it?

Toby: And I don't want to be remembered for always being late for training.
Come on!

Toby and Mia run off stage.

Visuals You Will Need:

Idea: *Print the visuals out and glue them to the sides of cardboard boxes. Turn the box to the correct face to build the story as you teach it.*

1. Crowds following Jesus
2. Child and family
3. Person carrying cross
4. Tower in ruins
5. Soldiers
6. Children and Jesus

Words:

1. Large crowds followed Jesus around.
They never knew what He would do next.
Jesus would pray for people, and they would be healed or set free from demons.
The Pharisees would try to trap Jesus with tricky legalistic questions, but He would outwit them every time.
It was all very exciting!
2. Until Jesus turned to the crowd one day and said,
'You cannot be My disciple until you love Me more than you love your father and mother, your wife and children, and your brothers and sisters.
You cannot follow Me until you love Me more than you love your life.'
Loyalty to Jesus is before your loyalty to anyone else.
You need to choose Him over everyone, no matter who they are.
That must have made the people in the crowd think.
Following Jesus is challenging!
3. Then Jesus said, 'You cannot be My disciple until you carry your own cross and follow Me.'
The crowd knew exactly what that meant.
In the Roman world, before a man died on a cross, he had to carry it (or at least the horizontal beam of the cross) to the place of execution.
If someone picked up their cross, it was a one-way journey – there was no coming back.
It means as a follower of Jesus, you give up what you want and do what Jesus wants you to do.
You can't follow Him halfway.
That must have made people in the crowd think.
Following Jesus is confronting!
4. Then Jesus said, 'Suppose one of you wants to build a tower.
What is the first thing you will do?
Won't you sit down and figure out how much it will cost and if you have enough money to pay for it?
Otherwise, you will start building the tower, but not be able to finish.
Then everyone who sees what is happening will laugh at you.
They will say, 'You started building, but could not finish the job.'
As a follower of Jesus, you don't start out unless you are ready to stick with it.
That must have made people in the crowd think.
Following Jesus means being committed!
5. Then Jesus said, 'What will a king do if he has only 10,000 soldiers to defend himself against a king who is about to attack him with 20,000 soldiers?
Before he goes out to battle, won't he first sit down and decide if he can win?
If he thinks he won't be able to defend himself, he will send messengers and ask for peace while the other king is still a long way off.
So then, you cannot be my disciple unless you give away everything you own.'

The king must calculate the cost of his commitment to a battle.
It is not a decision to be made lightly.
That must have made people in the crowd think.

Following Jesus is not to be miscalculated!

6. Following Jesus is a lifelong friendship, not a one-time event.

Following Jesus means:

- Talking to Him
- Learning from Him through listening and reading your Bible
- Obeying Him
- Trusting Him
- Living His way every day

Ministry to the Children:

Following Jesus is the most important decision you will ever make. And Jesus invites everyone to follow Him. You become a follower of Jesus by understanding that Jesus died on the cross to take away our sin. He rose again to give you new life. He is the *only* way to God. This is the moment of saying: “Jesus, I want You to be my Saviour and my Lord.”

Prayer:

“Jesus, thank You for inviting me to follow You. Help me think carefully, choose wisely, and follow You with my whole heart. When it’s hard, remind me that You are with me. Your Holy Spirit will help me. You never leave me half-finished. Amen.”

Memory Verse: Luke 9:23

“Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me.”

Build a Verse

If you’ve used boxes to present the story, you might like to write the words of the Memory Verse on one side of each box. Children must turn the boxes to find the words, then work together to arrange them in the correct order before reciting the verse out loud.

If you’re not using boxes, write the words of the Memory Verse on large blocks and hide them around the room. Invite the children to search for the blocks, bring them back, and build the verse in the correct order before saying it aloud together.

Example:



Game: Bucket Speed Stacking

You will need:

- Stacking buckets of different colours

Alternatively, you could use plastic cups or clean pot plant containers.

What to do:

- Create teams to compete against each other
- Create stacks (pyramids) of different numbers of buckets (3, 6, and 10)
- End with a mega tower stack where children must alternate bucket right-way up and bucket upside down to see how high the tower can get before falling!

Craft: Cardboard Tube Tower

You will need:

- Cardboard tubes of all sizes
- Scissors
- Sticky tape (and double-sided tape)
- Felt pens

What to do:

Children use the cardboard tubes to build a tower. They can join the tubes by cutting small slots and fitting them together, or by using sticky tape to hold them in place. Once their tower is standing, they decorate it with felt pens.

