



S1.Lesson 21: Power of Prioritizing

Middle School Lesson Plans

Supplies: TV and DVD to watch the Nooma video: *Shells* (currently available at Amazon, [HERE](#));

OPENING PRAYER

WATCH Nooma Video: Shells

ASK

Rob Bell at the beginning of the video says, "I'm not convinced that people need a cell phone with even more features..."

- Do you think people need cell phones with even more features?
- Why?

Bell says, "But it seems like a lot of people never stop moving, going from place to place, meeting to meeting. So busy. And yet life, in some sense, is passing them by, like they're doing so many things, a little bit of everything and yet it isn't much of a life."

- Do you think this describes someone you know?
- Do you think this describes you at all?

Bell then says, "Jesus doesn't do everything. He can't be everything to everybody."

- What do you think about that?
- Does this challenge how you understand Jesus?
- Why?

Bell says, "Jesus has been surrounded by this crowd that has all these expectations of him. There's all of these people and they have very strong opinions about what he should be doing and who He should be doing it for."

- The people who surround you, what are their expectations for you?
- Do you follow these expectations?
- Why or why not?

TELL

- Bell says that Jesus can say no to these expectations because he's already said yes to something else.
- That something else is God.

- And because Jesus says yes to God, he does some pretty cool things, right?
 - Teaches with authority
 - Walks on water
 - Turns water into wine
 - Feeds thousands with a loaf of bread and some dried fish
 - Heals numerous people (the blind can see, the lame can walk)
- We're going to read a scripture story now, where Jesus invites others to live like he does.

READ Luke 5:1-11

1 Once while Jesus was standing beside the lake of Gennesaret, and the crowd was pressing in on him to hear the word of God, 2 he saw two boats there at the shore of the lake; the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. 3 He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Peter and asked him to put out a little way from the shore. Then Jesus sat down and taught the crowds from the boat. 4 When he had finished speaking, he said to Peter, "Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch." 5 Peter answered, "Master, we have worked all night long but have caught nothing. Yet if you say so, I will let down the nets." 6 When they had done this, they caught so many fish that their nets began to break. 7 So they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both boats, so that they began to sink. 8 But when Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!" 9 For Peter and all who were with him were amazed at the catch of fish that they had taken; 10 and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. Then Jesus said to Peter, "Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching people." 11 When they had brought their boats to shore, they left everything and followed Jesus.

ASK

- Who are the named fisherman in the story? (Peter, James and John)
- This means they are professional fisherman. This is their career. In verse five, though, does it sound like they were successful professionals? (not during the previous night, no.)
- Who is NOT a fisherman in the story? (Jesus, the son of a carpenter - a landlubber!)
- Does it make sense, then, in verse 5, why Peter would be reluctant to do as Jesus says?
- Rob Bell tells a story of his son not being able to catch a starfish because his hands were filled with shells. What types of "shells" might Peter have held on to that would've stopped him from saying yes to Jesus' instructions? (the nets were already cleaned; he was too tired; He's got other things to do; What did Jesus know – he wasn't a fisherman, etc)
- But because Peter did let go of his "shells/excuses," what happened? (they caught a whole lotta fish)
- And then, because Peter had let go once and seen the results, what was he and his fellow fishing buddies able to do in verse 11 (let go of everything and follow Jesus).

TELL

- In the video, Bell asks, "Do you have a hard time saying no? What have you said yes to? Because you can't say no unless you've said yes to something else."
- When we say yes to God, then it becomes much easier for us to see what we are to say no to.
- Just because it becomes easier for us to see, doesn't, however, mean that we *want* to say no.
 - But that topic is for another class.
- But now, we're going to do an activity that (hopefully) illustrates how having said yes to one thing first then helps us to be clearer about the next thing we have to do.

EXPLAIN "ADD" Activity

- Get into pairs.
- Face each other.
- Put your hands behind your back and extend a certain number of fingers on either one or both hands.
- On the count of three, both you and your partner bring your hands out in front of you.
- The first one to add up, and say out loud, all the fingers that are extended wins.
- Do this a few times with your partner and then switch partners.

DO "ADD" Activity

ASK

- So did you discover the secret of how to add the fingers quickly in this game? (The key is to already know how many fingers you're holding up so that when your partner's hands are brought out all you have to do is add).

TELL

- When you already know what you are going to saying yes to, then it is easier to respond when someone asks you to participate in something new.
- Saying yes to God first helps you to know, then, what other things to say yes to and to what things to say no to.
- This is, in part, what Jesus means when he says, "Seek first the Kingdom...and all these things [what we eat, drink, wear] will be given to you as well."
- The best way to know how to best seek first the kingdom, we can choose to follow Jesus.
- And in order to know how to follow Jesus, we need to be familiar with what Jesus did.
- And that is today's reminder of the Good News.

CLOSING PRAYER