IGNORING JESUS’ PRINCIPLES

The Edict of Milan in A.D. 313 brought an end to 150 years of sporadic and intense periods of Christian persecution at the hands of the Roman Empire. Prior to this decree, believers who refused to swear loyalty to Caesar as a god had been hunted, fined, imprisoned, fed to lions, crucified, and burned alive, among many other atrocities. Houses of worship were razed to the ground and property was confiscated. Scriptures, which were slowly and painfully copied by hand, were burned. Weary Christians, who had been hiding in caves and other remote places, welcomed the Edict of Milan, which was the first Roman proclamation that guaranteed religious liberty to every citizen of the empire.

Who could have guessed that in just a few years, professed Christians would be clamoring for domination over other religions and even over fellow Christians who held opposing beliefs? During the Roman emperor Constantine’s reign (A.D. 306–337), Christian churches formed alliances with the monarch in exchange for government favors. The church as a whole grew corrupt with political and financial ambitions that directly opposed Jesus’ principles. If the church had remained true to Christ’s spirit, the unholy mixture of church and state that resulted in the religious tyranny of the Middle Ages may never have happened.

In just a few centuries, the church had ironically become an excellent example of what Jesus said not to be and not to do. In the sixteenth century, the Protestant Reformation began to slowly rediscover the basics of religious liberty. Today, it’s imperative that we know and promote the original principles Jesus established.
Write out Luke 9:43–56 from the translation of your choice. If you’re pressed for time, write out verses 54–56. You may also rewrite the passage in your own words, or outline or mind-map the chapter.
Go back to your scribed text and study the passage.

Circle repeated words/phrases/ideas

Underline words/phrases that are important and have meaning to you

Draw Arrows to connect words/phrases to other associated or related words/phrases

What special insights do your marks seem overall to point to?

Memorize your favorite verse. Write it out multiple times to help memorization.

What ideas or habits did the disciples have to unlearn to embrace Jesus’ spirit?

What can we learn from Jesus’ example in similar situations about how to relate to church members or pastors who have the wrong spirit?

Read more at www.inversebible.org/RL01-3
After looking at your scribed and annotated text, what special insights do your marks seem to point to overall?

What questions emerge after studying this lesson? What parts are difficult?

What other principles and conclusions do you find?

Why does God destroy? How do we reconcile this part of His nature with His loving, merciful side?

Read more at www.inversebible.org/RL01-4
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What relationship do the following verses have with Luke 9:43–56?

2 Kings 1
Genesis 19:1–29
Revelation 20:9
Matthew 10:14–16
Matthew 12:14–21
Philippians 2:1–8

What other verses come to mind in connection with the primary passage?

Meditate on the primary passage again and look for where Jesus is.

What is He saying to you personally through the text of the week?

How do you see Jesus differently or see Him again?

What are some of the characteristics of the spirit of Christ? What are some ways we can embrace it in everyday life?

Prayer Response:

Read more at www.inversebible.org/RL01-6
Review the memory verse. How does it apply to your life this week?

After this week’s study of the chapter, what are some personal applications you are convicted of in your life?

What are some practical applications you must make in your school, family, workplace, and church life?

Read more inSight from the Spirit of Prophecy at www.inversebible.org/RL01-7
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Share insights from this week’s memory verse and Bible study as well as any discoveries, observations, and questions with your Sabbath School class (or Bible study group). Consider these discussion questions with the rest of the group.

In what ways did Jesus extend religious liberty to others?

Why was it hard for the disciples to learn lessons of tolerance toward others?

What was the difference between Christ’s spirit and that of His disciples?

How did the disciples justify wanting to bring fire down on a Samaritan village?

How did the cross demonstrate Christ’s spirit?

How can we know which spirit we’re really of? How can we make sure we don’t mistakenly think we’re of Christ’s spirit when we’re actually of our culture’s spirit?

How should we relate to Christians who lack the spirit of Christ?

How can we do a better job of looking out for others’ interests?