



# following *strange* instructions

## Children's Story

Cycle C, Proper 23

**Title:** Following Strange Instructions  
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**Church:** Charleswood Mennonite Church, Winnipeg MB  
**Text:** Luke 17:11-19  
**Theme:** Sometimes Jesus expects us to trust and follow strange instructions.

### Wondering Questions:

- I wonder why the people in these stories had to follow instructions that seemed strange to them.
- I wonder whom we can trust, even when they give us strange instructions to follow.
- I wonder if the woman in the first story was following God's instructions when she decided to help Lucille's cat.
- I wonder what strange instructions God has for us to follow today.

### Gathering Activity:

*(Welcome the children and ask them all to turn around two times, or hop on one foot, etc. before they sit down in their place to hear the story. Don't insist, but encourage them to follow your instructions.)* Who thought that I was asking you to follow strange instructions this morning? Who wondered why I was doing this? The reason I gave you strange instructions to follow, is because that's what our story will be about today. The ideas for this story come from Luke 17 (*show them the place in your Bible*) Now, let's do something that isn't strange. Let's get ourselves ready to listen. Settle into a comfortable position and connect with that quiet spot inside where we know that God is near. *(Pause)* Are you ready? Here is the story.

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## Story:

One day Lucille was walking in the woods behind her house. She met a kind older woman who was out there walking her dog. The woman was happy for the chance to chat with Lucille, because she was lonely. Lucille told her about her sick cat, who could only get better with expensive medicine, and that they didn't have enough money for the medicine. The woman asked her all about her cat's problems. They walked on, silently enjoying the singing of the birds and the rustle of the leaves. The woman said that being out in the forest reminded her of the many surprising ways that God shows his love. Lucille agreed, and they marveled at some interesting mushrooms that peeked out from under the fallen leaves. When it was time for Lucille to go home, the woman asked Lucille to come back in two days to the place in the woods where they had met today. And, would she please bring her dad and her cat along with her? Lucille thought this was very strange, but she had a feeling that she could trust this kind woman and agreed to follow her strange instructions. She told her dad all about this visit and he agreed to help her follow these instructions.

Two days later, Lucille's cat was even sicker. She could hardly walk, so Lucille packed her up in her cat cage. Her dad carried the cage, and together, they walked into the forest behind their house. The woman was already there, waiting for them. She told them that she was a veterinarian, an animal doctor, and that she wanted to help Lucille and her cat, by giving the cat the medicine it needed. She opened her bag and gave Lucille a bag of pills. If the cat would eat one every day for a week, she should soon feel better. Lucille was so happy she hugged the woman, who was quickly becoming a good friend. Lucille and her dad gave the cat a pill every day, and soon it was feeling better, just like the woman had said. Every time Lucille went back into those

woods, she hoped she would meet the kind woman again, so that she could tell her how much those pills had helped her cat.

This story is a lot like a story about Jesus in Luke 17 (show them the place in your Bible). Jesus went for a walk, too. He was walking with some of his friends when ten people with a bad skin sickness came to Jesus and asked him if he could heal them. He said that, yes, he could heal them. All they had to do was go and show themselves to the priests, who were leaders at their place of worship. This also seemed like a strange set of instructions for getting better, but they followed them. On their way to the priests, they noticed that their skin was getting healthy again. They were healed! This made them very happy. All of them kept walking to the priests, except for one of them. He was so happy, he just had to say thank you and praise God together with Jesus, so he came running back to Jesus and knelt down in front of his feet to thank him. Jesus was pleased and told him that he was healed because of his faith. The healed man skipped off to show the priests that he was now healthy.

## Prayer:

Dear God. Please help us to have faith when it Dear God, thank you for these stories of getting better by following strange instructions. Please help us to trust and follow your instructions when we need your help and when you want us to help someone else. Help us to remember to listen and do what you ask us to do. Amen.

\*A song that is particularly suitable for this story focus is Bryan Moyer Suderman's *When you learn to follow Jesus (you will act a little strange)*. Available on the CD, *God's Love is for Everybody*, © 2002, from [bryan@smalltallmusic.com](mailto:bryan@smalltallmusic.com)