



ADULT

# Called to Serve

By Daphne Myers

Lesson 4  
March 24  
2013

for use as

**STEP 1** ▶

Lesson 4

**Focus:**

Receive the Kingdom, and be one who serves.

Lesson 4

**Bible Basis:**

Luke 22:14-30

Students will look at what it means to be a servant in the Kingdom.

**OPENING ACTIVITY:** *Being Served or Being a Servant*

**A**s your students arrive, discuss the differences between serving others and being a servant. Service to others often comes at a great personal price and loss. One person who has served his country at great personal sacrifice is Nelson Mandela, who is described in this week's story.

**OPENING STORY** [make copies or read aloud to the class]:

**SERVING HIS COUNTRY**

Nelson Mandela led the struggle to replace the apartheid regime of South Africa with a multi-racial democracy. Jailed for 27 years, he emerged to become the country's first black president and to play a leading role in the drive for peace in other spheres of conflict. For such accomplishments, he won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1993.

His charisma, self-deprecating sense of humor, and his lack of bitterness over his harsh treatment, as well as his amazing life story, partly explain his extraordinary global appeal.

Since stepping down as president in 1999, Mandela has become South Africa's highest-profile ambassador, campaigning against HIV/Aids and helping to secure his country's right to host the 2010 football [soccer] World Cup. Mandela was also involved in peace negotiations in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi, and other countries in Africa and elsewhere.

Diagnosed with prostate cancer in 2000, at age 85, Mandela retired from public life four years later to spend more time with his family and friends and engage in "quiet reflection."

"Don't call me, I'll call you," he warned anyone thinking of inviting him to future engagements.

## Lesson 4

# Memory Verse

“But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves.”

—Luke 22:26

The former president has made few public appearances since his retirement. In November 2010, his office released photos of a meeting he had held with members of the U.S. and South African football teams. In late January 2011 he was admitted to a Johannesburg hospital for “specialized tests.” The South African presidency reminded a concerned nation Mandela has had “previous respiratory infections.” He was admitted to the hospital again in February 2012 for what the president’s office said was “a long-standing abdominal complaint.”

Mandela was born in 1918 into the native Thembu people in a small village in the eastern Cape of South Africa. In South Africa, he is often called by his clan name, “Madiba.” Born Rolihlahla Dalibhunga, he was given his English name, Nelson, by a teacher at his school. His father, a counselor to the Thembu royal family, died when Nelson Mandela was nine, and he was placed in the care of the acting regent of the Thembu people.

Mandela joined the African National Congress in 1944, first as an activist, then as the founder and president of the ANC Youth League. Eventually, after years in prison, he also served as its president.

Mandela qualified as a lawyer, and in 1952 in Johannesburg opened South Africa’s first black law firm with his partner, Oliver Tambo. Together, Mandela and Tambo campaigned against apartheid, the system devised by the all-white National Party that oppressed the black majority. In 1956, Mandela was charged with high treason, along with 155 other activists, but the charges against him were dropped after a four-year trial. Resistance to apartheid grew, mainly because of the new Pass Laws, which dictated where black people were allowed to live and work.

In 1958, Mandela married Winnie Madikizela, who was later to take an active role in the campaign to free her husband from prison. In 1960 the ANC was outlawed and Mandela went underground.

Tension with the apartheid regime grew, and soared to new heights in 1960 when 69 black people were shot dead by police in what is called the Sharpeville massacre. This marked the end of peaceful resistance and Mandela, already national vice-president of the ANC, launched a campaign of economic sabotage. He was eventually arrested and charged with sabotage and attempting to violently overthrow the government.

Speaking from the dock in the courtroom, Mandela used the stand to convey his beliefs about democracy, freedom, and equality. “I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities,” he said. “It is an ideal which I hope to live for and to achieve. But if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die.”

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In the winter of 1964 he was sentenced to life in prison. In the space of 12 months between 1968 and 1969, Mandela’s mother died and his eldest son was killed in a car crash but he was not allowed to attend the funerals. He remained in prison on Robben Island for 18 years before being transferred to Pollsmoor Prison on the mainland in 1982. As Mandela and other ANC leaders languished in prison or lived in exile, the youths of South Africa’s black townships fought white minority rule. Mandela did not condemn the sometimes violent protests, even though this may have secured his release from prison.

The world community tightened the sanctions against the apartheid regime first imposed on South Africa in 1967. The pressure produced results, and in 1990, President F. W. de Klerk lifted the ban on the ANC, Mandela was released from prison, and talks began on forming a new multi-racial democracy for South Africa.

In December 1993, Mandela and de Klerk were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, and five months later, for the first time in South Africa’s history, all races voted in democratic elections. Mandela was overwhelmingly elected president.

Mandela’s greatest problems as president were the housing shortage for the poor, rising crime, and slum townships blighting major cities. He also worked on building a new international image of South Africa, and he succeeded in persuading the country’s multinational corporations to remain in and invest in South Africa.

After his official retirement, his public appearances have been mostly connected with the work of the Mandela Foundation, a charitable fund that he founded. On his 89th birthday, he formed The Elders, a group of leading world figures, to offer their expertise and guidance “to tackle some of the world’s toughest problems.”

[You and your class can watch a short biography of Mandela at this website:

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UqoYmx\\_L-Xs](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UqoYmx_L-Xs)]

[Now form small groups to discuss the following questions.]

- ▶ How has Nelson Mandela illustrated what it means to be a servant?
- ▶ In what ways are you a servant?
- ▶ What is your motivation to serve?
- ▶ Are you serving as God wants you to serve? Explain your answer.

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[When you are finished with the questions, go on to Step 2 in your *Adult Teacher’s Guide*.]

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News Sources:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-12305154>

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## ON ASSIGNMENT

**A**t the Last Supper, Jesus explained that His followers are not to exercise lordship over each other; on the contrary, the greatest person in His kingdom is the one who serves. What are we doing to be the “greatest” in His kingdom?

Jesus says serving is the way to greatness. All around us are those He wants us to serve. Some we may want to serve; others we may not want to. But as His humble servants it is His direction we follow, not our own.

### • ACTIVITY •

- ▶ How open are you to serving?
- ▶ What opportunities for serving are there for you and your abilities?
- ▶ What can you do to be ready to serve?

End with a closing prayer, thanking God for the sacrifice of His Son and asking for His power and guidance as we serve in His kingdom.

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## THE BIBLE IN THE NEWS

A rap music website that is similar to Wikipedia has added the entire King James Bible to their site and invited users to make comments on the text:

<http://www.christianpost.com/news/entire-kjv-bible-added-to-wikipedia-like-rap-site-scholar-issues-caution-90880/>