

Jesus Calls His Disciples

Overview

Materials You'll Need

- colored construction paper
- footprint pattern
- glue
- scissors
- markers
- fish pattern
- paper clips
- black crayon
- sponges
- tempera paint
- paper plates



Scriptures

Lk 5:1-11

Bible Truth Objective(s)

Peter, Andrew, John and James gave up their jobs as fishermen and became disciples of Jesus

Behavioral Objective(s)

To be good followers of Jesus by identifying ways they can imitate Jesus

Memory Verse

"From now on you will catch men."
(Lk 5:10)



Bible Knowledge

The Sea of Galilee

The Sea of Galilee is a large body of water thirteen miles long and eight miles wide, surrounded by hills. The lake is noted for its sudden and violent storms. At least nine populated cities stood on its shores. Capernaum and Bethsaida, centers of the fishing industry, were two of these cities.

Fishermen on the Sea of Galilee used nets, often bell shaped with lead weights around the edges, to make their catch. A net was thrown flat on the water, and the lead weights caused it to sink and cover the fish. The fisherman then pulled up on a cord, drawing the net around the fish. Nets had to be kept in good condition, so they were washed to remove weeds and mended if there was the need.

Here on the Sea of Galilee was where Jesus Christ called His first four disciples to follow Him. Simon Peter and his brother Andrew were chosen first, and then Jesus called James and John. Peter, Andrew, James and John were commercial fishermen. They owned their own boats, and fished to

earn a living.

When Peter witnessed the miracle that Jesus performed, he recognized that following Jesus was the most important thing he could do. Peter and three others responded wholeheartedly to Jesus' calling, for "they forsook, and followed Him" (Lk 5:11). The fishermen all left their commitments to follow Jesus as He preached, taught, and healed.

The First Disciples

Jesus Christ chose twelve disciples in all. The word "disciple" comes from a Latin root. Its basic meaning is "learner" or "pupil." In Matthew 10:2, the disciples are referred to as apostles, delegating greater responsibility and authority. The English word "apostle" comes from the Greek term "apostolos" which means messenger, or ambassador. It refers to someone who is sent on behalf of another, in this case, on behalf of Jesus Christ. According to Matthew 10:2-4, the twelve disciples were: Simon Peter, Andrew, James (son of Zebedee), John, Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew, James (son of Alphaeus), Thaddeus, Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot. The names are recorded in pairs, probably because they were sent out that way.



Understanding Your Students

This week's lesson is about how Lord Jesus called some fishermen to follow Him. Your students will probably understand how Peter, Andrew, James, and John physically left their fishing nets to follow Jesus, but they will need your help to realize that following Jesus means more than just following a leader in a game. It means doing what He wants us to do according to His will.

Children at this age tend to admire others who are stronger, smarter, more beautiful etc., and want to do the same things that these people are doing. It is important to gear the children to think about the kind

of people they should imitate. You should also talk about why Peter, Andrew, James, and Peter chose to follow Jesus, but not anyone else. How can we be like the disciples who truly followed Jesus?

Throughout the lesson, explain what the word "follow" means. Use other words such as "obey" or "copy" to illustrate its meanings. When the students copy or imitate your actions during hymns or rhymes, remind them that they are following your actions and doing what you want them to do. You can also ask students why it would be a good idea to follow Jesus, and what they can do to follow Him. What kinds of things would Jesus want us to copy Him in? (e.g. the way He treated His earthly parents, the way He prayed to God, the way He cared for others who were sick or had no friends etc.)



Vocabulary

Frustrated

to be mad and upset at the same time

Greet

to say hello to someone

Miracle

something amazing God does that no one else

can do; like when someone who is about to die gets well or when someone who can't walk can walk again

Sinful

to be full of sin; sin is anything that we have done wrong; if we have sinned in the past, we should ask God to forgive us

Disciples

they were Jesus' students who chose to follow Him and to listen to His teachings



Before You Teach

While preparing for this lesson, it is a good time to reflect upon the question, "What does it really mean to follow Jesus?" Looking into the dictionary, to "follow" means to pursue after, to seek, to accept as authority, and to imitate. Jesus wants us to pursue after Him; to seek Him with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all our mind; to accept Him as the authority in our life and submit to His plan; and to imitate Him—that is, to be more like Him and follow His footsteps. Have we become true followers of God ourselves?

What was it like when Peter, Andrew, James, and John first heard Jesus' calling? They didn't respond to Him the first time, but as Jesus carried out great miracles, healing the sick, helping the poor, telling people about salvation with God's wisdom, they realized that He was truly the Son of God. Thus, they made that determination to leave

everything behind to follow Lord Jesus without any reservations.

Do we respond to Jesus' calling the same way they did? Do we have doubts? How has our faith been strengthened over time so that we are able to follow Christ daily? What does it mean in today's life to follow Him? These are all good questions that help us examine our own journey of faith. We need to see the relevance of our own faith in our lives before we can strengthen others.

For this lesson, teachers could also share with the students testimonies of how other brothers and sisters follow Jesus wholeheartedly in their life. Describe the things they do so that the students can see faith in action. For example, the RE teachers follow Christ by serving God with their time and effort each week as they teach the students. Others sacrifice their time by visiting members who are sick or need encouragement. All of these are good examples for the students to imitate and appreciate as they grow older.



Bible Story

Jesus Begins to Preach

Last time, we talked about how Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist, and God was very happy about this. He even spoke from heaven and said, "This is my Son. I love Him. And I am very pleased with Him." After Jesus was baptized, He was ready to do the work that God had sent Him to earth to do. What did God send Jesus Christ to do? He sent Jesus to earth to tell others about God and how they can know God. So Jesus started traveling from one place to another to tell people about God. That was His job.

Jesus Comes to the Lake

Boys and girls, have you ever gone fishing with your parents or other family friends? Do you remember how many fish you caught last time? (Allow time for them to respond.) Well, let me show you something that you can use when you go fishing out on a lake. (Take out an origami sailboat that is pre-made.) Our Bible story today tells us about how Jesus used a boat and helped some fishermen catch a lot of fish.

One day Jesus was walking by the Sea of Galilee. It was huge and beautiful. Many fishermen would try to catch fish there. Jesus walked past many boats and saw men working very hard. Some had caught a lot of fish and were emptying their nets, so that they could get ready to go back out to the waters to catch more fish. Others were taking the fish that they had caught to the markets to sell them. Jesus walked by many boats, and He finally stopped next to one that had two fishermen in it. They were Simon Peter and his brother Andrew. Peter and Andrew looked very tired and frustrated, because they had been trying to catch fish all night long but they did not catch a single one.

Peter and Andrew were very surprised when they saw Jesus standing right next to their boat. Jesus greeted them and stepped in their boat. He said, "Please row the boat away from shore a bit." So Peter rowed it away from the shore. Do you know what Jesus did after that? (Allow students to answer.) Jesus taught the people who had gathered around to listen to His teachings from the boat. When He was on the boat, there was more room for people to stand around on the shore and listen. Jesus talked about God and how much God loved them. He also told

them how to be saved.

Jesus Tells Peter to Throw Out His Net

When He finished teaching, He turned to Peter and said, "Row out to the deep water and let your net down." Jesus asked Peter to do this because He was trying to help him catch some fish.

But Peter said, "We were fishing all last night. We didn't catch anything. But if you want me to try again, I will let down the net. I'll obey you."

So Peter listened to Jesus and rowed the boat out even more, into the deeper waters. Then Peter and his brother Andrew let down the net and waited for a little while. Then they tried to pull it up. But it was really, really heavy. They had caught so many fish that the net was starting to break. Peter and Andrew were surprised to see so many fish in the net! What would they do now? They could not pull up the net by themselves. They looked around and saw some of their fishermen friends in their boats.

"Please help us pull the net up!" they quickly asked their friends. Two of their friends, James and John came over in their boat and tried to give them a hand. Soon, with everyone's help, they eventually filled both boats with so many fish that they began to sink.

Jesus Calls His First Disciples

Because of this great miracle, Peter knew just how special Jesus was. He had fished all night but he did not catch any fish. Now, with Jesus' help, he caught more than his boat could fit. He knelt down in front of Jesus and cried, "Lord, you shouldn't be near me; I am a sinful man!"

But Jesus said, "Don't be afraid." Then Jesus told all four of the fishermen, Peter, Andrew, James, and John, to follow Him. He said, "Come, and follow me. From now on, you will catch men." Do you know what that means? Jesus wanted them to help Him find people instead of fish. He wanted them to help teach the people about God.

Do you know what the four fishermen decided to do? Peter, Andrew, James and John all obeyed Jesus. They pulled their boats up to shore. Then they left the boats, the nets, and all the fish that they had caught. From now on, they would follow Jesus and do just what He said. So they left everything behind and followed Him.

We Are All Disciples of Jesus Christ

Boys and girls, can you imagine if Jesus asked you to come follow Him? What would your answer be? Would you say yes or no? (Give students time to respond.) Maybe when Jesus asked you, you were playing with a friend. You might say, "Just a minute, Jesus, we are not done playing yet. Ask me later again, okay?" Or maybe you thought about it, then decided that there was no way that you could leave your parents and toys to follow Jesus.

It is a hard decision to make, isn't it? Well, Peter, Andrew, James and John said yes right away, because they knew that it was very important for them to help Jesus teach others about God. They were called disciples because they were Jesus' followers. Jesus also taught them about God.

Unlike these disciples, Jesus will probably not

ask us to leave our home like the four fishermen did. However, we can still be like Peter, Andrew, James, and John and follow Jesus in our every day life. How we can still follow Jesus without going away from our families? (Encourage students to share.) Yes, we can pray, sing hymns, and be a good little child of God every day by listening and obeying our parents. Most importantly, we can tell our friends about God's wonderful blessings. Following Jesus means that we choose His way instead of our way of doing things. Learning to follow Jesus is an important part of growing up. We follow Jesus by learning about Him, doing the things He wants us to do, and telling others about Him. We can be a true follower of Jesus today! We can be His disciples too.



Check For Understanding

- 1. What kind of work did Peter and Andrew do?** (They were fishermen.)
- 2. Why did Jesus want to use Peter's boat?** (So the people could see and hear Him; to teach the people.)
- 3. Did Peter and Andrew catch any fish when they fished the night before?** (No.)
- 4. When Jesus came, what did He do to help Peter and Andrew catch many fish?** (He just asked them to put down their net.)
- 5. What do you think it means when Jesus said that He wanted Peter, Andrew, John and James to find people instead of fish?**

- 6. What did the fishermen do when Jesus told them to follow Him?** (They left all their things and followed Jesus.)
- 7. What did Jesus and the men do after they left everything behind?** (They went to tell people about God's love.)
- 8. These fishermen became Jesus' disciples. What are disciples and how can we be Jesus' disciples today?** (Disciples are followers of Jesus Christ; allow students to answer.)



Life Application Story

When I Grow Up

One Sabbath afternoon at church, the kindergartners were having class. Mrs. Laurie was going to tell a story about Jesus. But before that, Mrs. Laurie asked the class a question.

She asked, "Who do you want to be like when you grow up?"

John raised his hand.

John said, "I want to be like my dad. He is strong and tall."

Susie raised her hand, also.

Susie said, "I want to be like my sister Anna. She's nice and helps me a lot and she's also smart."

Then Rachel raised her hand.

Rachel said, "I want to be like my preschool teacher Ms. Maribel. She knows a lot of things and she's funny."

Tommy was the last one to raise his hand.

Mrs. Laurie asked, "Who do you want to be like, Tommy?"

Tommy said, "I want to be like Superman." Everyone in the class laughed when they heard his answer.

"He's so strong, and he can do anything! He can see through things, and he can fly!" Tommy said.

"Yes, that is true but Superman is just a superhero from a book. He is not real. Even though a lot of the things we read from books or see in movies seem real, they are just make-believe. No one can fly or see through things, although they certainly can come in handy," explained Mrs. Laurie.

Susie raised her hand.

"Yes, Susie," asked Mrs. Laurie.

"So does that mean it is bad to be like Superman?"

"Well, some of the things he does are good things, like when he helps people who are in danger. In fact, all of the people whom we just thought of are really good examples. They are good examples because they all do good or nice things that make us want to copy them. But there's somebody we should all be like. Does anyone know who this someone is?"

John said shyly, "Is it Jesus?"

"Very good John! Yes, we should all be like Jesus and follow Him."

Tommy asked, "But is Jesus stronger than Superman?"

Mrs. Laurie said, "Remember that Superman isn't real; he is just made up by people. Jesus is

God. He can do anything."

Then Rachel asked, "Does Jesus know even more than my teacher?"

Mrs. Laurie smiled and answered, "Jesus knows everything. He even knows what we are thinking and how we feel."

Susie asked, "Is Jesus nicer than my sister Anna?"

Mrs. Laurie said, "Jesus is the nicest person there is. Jesus loves us and takes care of us. And He wants us to follow His example because He is always kind and loving. Do you want to follow Him?"

Everybody agreed that they should be like Jesus and follow Him. Then, they said this hymn together:

"Follow, follow, I will follow Jesus,
Anywhere, everywhere, I will follow Him.
Follow, follow, I will follow Jesus.
Anywhere He leads me I will follow on."

Questions to Think About

1. **Who do you want to be like when you grow up?** (Allow students to answer.)
2. **Why does Jesus want us to follow Him?** (Because we can become children of God and we can find peace and joy in life.)
3. **What does it mean for us to follow Jesus?** (Allow students to answer; some possibilities are: we need to be baptized, we need to go to church, we need to pray, we need to go to class.)
4. **How should our behaviors change once we decide to follow Jesus?** (Answers may vary; students should be encouraged to imitate Jesus; e.g. helping others, obeying their parents, praying to God.)



Activity 1

Jesus and His Disciples

Look at the pictures. Put them in the right order.

1. Jesus on the boat;
2. Nets are cast down;
3. Catch a lot of fish;
4. Drop things to follow Jesus.



Activity 2

I Will Follow Jesus

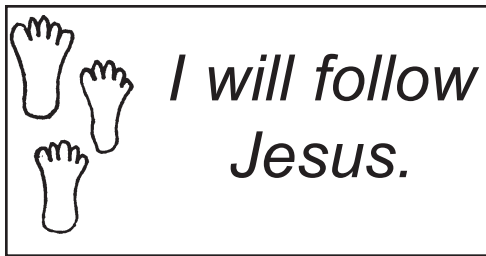
Materials:

1. colored construction paper (1 per student)
2. footprint pattern
3. scissors
4. glue

5. markers

Directions:

1. Photocopy the footprint pattern for each student (each will need all three).
2. Allow each student to choose one colored construction paper.
3. Have them cut out the footprints.
4. Then place the footprints on the construction paper so as to create a walking pattern (see diagram). Be sure to leave enough room to write, "I will follow Jesus."
5. Glue the footprints on the paper and use a marker to write down the words.
6. During the activity, talk about how they can follow Jesus, just as the fishermen did.



Activity 3

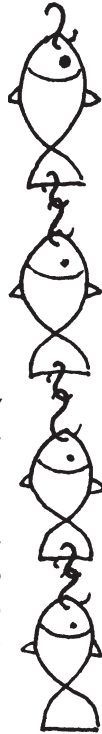
Hanging Fish

Materials:

1. fish pattern
2. scissors
3. markers
4. paper clips

Directions:

1. Give each student a fish pattern page. Have the students color the fish.
2. Have the students cut out the fish. They can glue the entire page onto construction paper first (before they cut the fish out) to make the fish more sturdy.
3. Help the students string the fish together by putting a paper clip through the "nose" and "tail" of each fish. Do this in turn for all the fish so that there is a string of fish.



Optional Activities

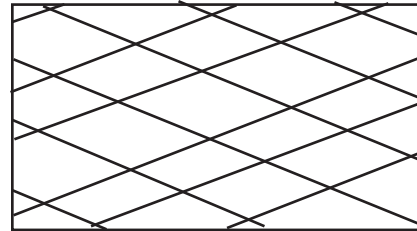
Fish in the Net

Materials:

1. thick black crayons
2. blue construction paper
3. sponges (cut into fish shapes)
4. tempera paint in various colors
5. paper plates

Directions:

1. Give each student a piece of blue construction paper.
2. Give each student a black crayon and have them produce a netting pattern on their paper (see diagram).



3. Pour some paint onto the paper plates. Have each child dip the fish-shaped sponge onto the paint and blot the sponge onto the construction paper. This will produce a fish pattern over the netting.
4. Let the students continue to dip and blot until they have many fish that have been "caught in the net."
5. As the students are engaged in this activity, review how the fishermen caught fish for a living. Then after they met Jesus, Jesus told them to follow Him and help Him catch people instead. How can we help to "catch people"?

Follow the Leader

Allow each student to take a turn at being the leader. They can choose an action and the rest of the class must follow that action. Help the students brainstorm some ideas first (e.g. clapping their hands, hopping on one foot, tiptoeing around the room).

Activity 7:1

Jesus and His Disciples

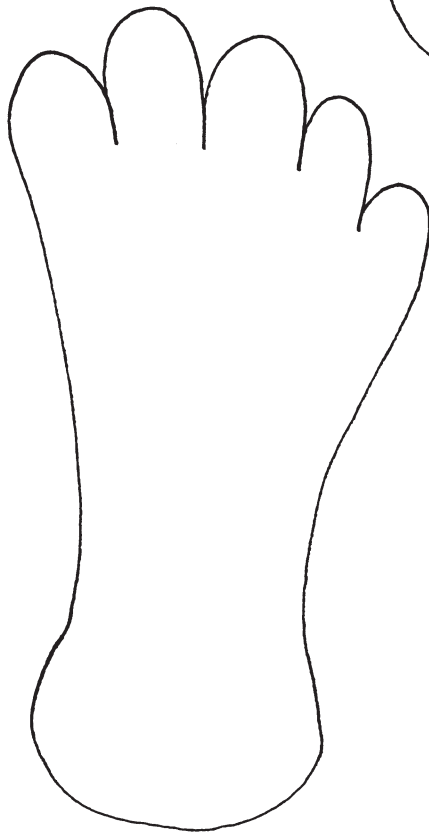
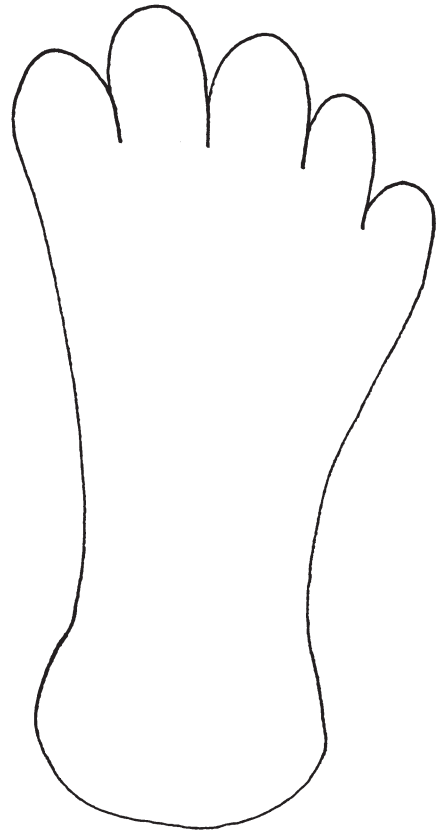
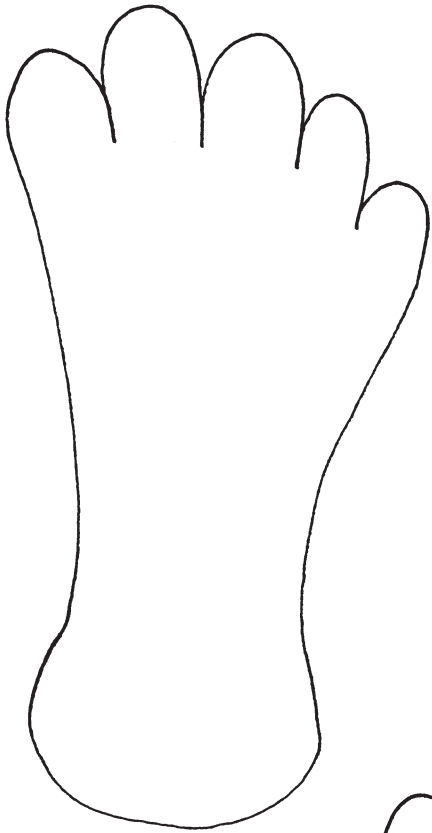
Look at the pictures. Put them in the right order by filling in the numbers.



Activity 7:2

I Will Follow Jesus

Footprint pattern



Activity 7:3

Hanging Fish

Fish pattern

