

Life of Christ

Jesus chooses four friends

Matthew 4:18-25

Younger Verse

My God will help with all your needs. Philippians 4:19

Older Verse

My God will meet all your needs according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:19

Lesson Goals

See how Jesus loves us and wants us to go to Heaven one day
Learn how we can follow Jesus

Welcome Time

Isn't it fun to play games with friends. Do you remember how you met some of your best friends? Jesus had friends too. Let's see how He found some of His friends.

Bible Story

*Please note: This portion of the lesson is given to help in teaching the lesson. Please read through the story and read it in the Bible. Do **NOT** read from this piece of paper. Instead, make a note sheet and place it next to the story in the Bible.*

After Jesus left the desert (last week's lesson), He started to tell people about God. He walked to different places in His country to help the people know how to follow God.

One day Jesus was walking by a lake called the Sea of Galilee. It was a great place to fish so there were men with boats and nets trying to catch fish to eat or sell for money.

Jesus saw two brothers throwing out nets to catch fish. Their names were Peter (also called Simon) and Andrew. Jesus simply said, "Come, follow me and I will help you fish for men." They dropped their nets and followed Jesus.

The three of them walked further down the lake and Jesus saw two more brothers named James and John. They worked with their father to catch fish for a living. They probably had a good business selling fish.

When Jesus saw them, He called and asked them to follow. Immediately, they stopped fishing and went with Jesus. They left their father and their nets to go with Jesus.

When Jesus used the phrase "fish for men," He was trying to explain that He would show them how to help others learn and know about him.

When a person tries to catch a fish, he would put out a big net and wait for the fish to swim into the net. Then, he would draw up the net with the fish. In the same way, Jesus would show His new friends how to help people listen and be interested in learning about God then follow Him with all their heart.

Jesus and His new friends traveled around the area telling people the good news of how much God loved them. He healed people who were sick and helped them understand who God was. News about Jesus spread all over the area. Many people came to listen and see who this amazing man was. Many people began to follow Him.

Jesus' four new friends were special. Jesus knew that they would learn much from the time that they spent together. He knew that much later, they would help many people know who He was and help them trust in Him. These four were not smart, handsome men. They were ordinary people. In fact, the Bible tells us that James and John were called the Sons of Thunder which meant that they got angry easily. Peter often "put his foot in his mouth." That means that he said or did something that he wished he hadn't done.

Just like Jesus chose these four friends, He loves us and wants us to follow Him. He loves us just like we are and He knows that if we follow Him with all our heart, He can help us do amazing things we never dreamed of doing to help others learn and know Him.

Is Jesus your friend? It's easy to know who Jesus is in your mind. He did many wonderful things to help people. It is a different thing to know Jesus in your heart—to trust Him and believe in Him. You must believe that He died and came back to life and ask Him to come into your heart. Jesus will come into your heart and help you live for God. If you want to know more, talk to us about it. Jesus can change your life, like he changed these fishermen's lives.

Learning Activities

Try games, crafts, or activities to help the kids see the importance of following Him.

Memory Verse Activities

Before class, write the words of the verse on fish and attach them under the chairs (or hide them). Let the kids find their fish and put the verse in order.

Prayer Time

Ask God to help us obey Him immediately, like the four fishermen.

Snack Time/CleanUp

Share fun snacks together around the "fish" theme!

Planning for January 26
Jesus teaches about attitudes
Matthew 5:1-12

Preschool Lesson
For
Jesus chooses friends

One day, Jesus walked along a seashore. The lake was called the Sea of Galilee. He probably got warm sand in His sandals as He watched fishermen try to catch fish in their big nets. He knew that He would find some special friends along the way.

Soon, He saw two brothers named Peter and Andrew. Jesus called out to the two men and asked them to come and follow Him. (Cup your hands around your mouth like you are calling for someone) Peter and Andrew dropped their net and went with Jesus. They knew He was a special man from God.

As they walked along the beach, Jesus saw two more brothers named James and John. They were on a big boat trying to catch fish. Jesus called to them to come join them. (Cup your hands around your mouth like you are calling for someone) Immediately, they dropped their nets. They left their father and the boat and traveled with Jesus.

Jesus had four special friends named Peter, Andrew, James and John. (Ask the kids to say the names with you) They walked with Jesus and saw Him do amazing things to help people understand and love God. These four fishermen loved Jesus and told many people about Him.

God loves us too! He wants us to be His friend and follow Him. That means that we will love Him and help others know and love Him too. Let's pray and thank God for being our friend.

Here is a fun finger play to help the kids remember the lesson:

Jesus walked along the shore (walk two fingers of right hand along left forearm).

He watched (put right hand on brow to shade eyes)

the boats at sea (touch the fingers of both hands together to form a triangle boat and rock them in the air-sea).

He loved (put both hands over heart)

the busy fishermen (pretend to use a fishing pole or net).

He called (cup hands around mouth),

"Come follow me" (wave toward yourself with your hands).

(from Group publishing)

Hands-on Activities For Jesus chooses Friends

Play “Red Light, Green Light,” only instead of calling out "RED LIGHT" or “GREEN LIGHT” call out "RED FISH!" "GREEN FISH!" for stop and go.

Cut out a fish shape using newspaper or cardstock. Write the verse on the fish. Staple or tape almost completely shut, leaving room to stuff with crumbled paper or tissue. Staple or tape closed. Hang up as a reminder of the lesson.

Try the “Fishing for people” game. Bring a dowel with a string (fishing pole) or something similar. Spread out a blue sheet as a mat for the children to sit on. Select one volunteer to be the first “fisherman.” The rest of the children are the fish. They sit on the blue sheet with their backs facing the fisherman. The first fisherman casts his line toward the fish. Whenever the yarn string falls on someone, he/she comes to the fisherman and the fisherman tells him/her one thing about who Jesus is, what He is like, or what He has done for us. The "fish" who has been caught becomes the "fisherman" and casts the line toward the fish. The object of the activity is to see how many fish can be caught and how many ways we can learn to be fishers of men.

There are lots of varieties of snacks for today’s lesson. Fish crackers or gummy fish are an option as well as blue Jell-O cups or even fish sticks (if you have a microwave or oven).

(This activity can be messy.) Before class, fill a box with sea shells or beach objects and cover with play sand. Let the kids dig for the objects. (It is best to do this outside!)

Cut out fish shapes and write questions from the lesson. Let the kids take turns “fishing” and answering the questions.