

Life of Christ

Jesus Chooses Four Friends

Matthew 4:17-22

Younger Verse

“Come, follow me,” Jesus said. Matthew 4:19

Older Verse

“Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will make you fishers of men.” Matthew 4:19

Lesson Goals

Learn that Jesus has chosen US to be his friends
Understand how we become his friend
Show ways we can help others to be friends of Jesus

Welcome Time

Have you ever gone fishing? Did you catch any fish? Today we will learn about some fishermen who became friends of Jesus.

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 Simon, also called Peter, and Andrew. Jesus simply said, “Come, follow me and I will show you how to fish for men.” They dropped their nets and followed Jesus! They were the first two **disciples** of Jesus. A disciple is a person who follows 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 were fixing their nets. When Jesus saw them, He called and told them to follow him. Immediately, they stopped fishing, left their father and their nets and went with Jesus. They also became disciples of Jesus.

Ask: What do you think Jesus meant by “fish for men?” To catch fish, a person has to reach out to the fish with a net or pole and try to get

them to come to them. In the same way, Jesus showed his disciples how to “fish for people” by reaching out to them. He showed people love by healing, teaching and caring for their needs. He was an example to his disciples of how to bring people to Him.

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.**

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 know Him. We can become disciples of Jesus too!

Ask: 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.

Review Questions

1. Who were the first two men that Jesus called to be his disciples? (Answer: Peter and Andrew)
2. What did Jesus say to these men? (Answer: “Come, follow me and I will make you fishers of men.”)
3. Who were the other two brothers that Jesus called to be his followers? (Answer: James and John)
4. What did all four of these men do for a living before they followed Jesus? (Answer: fishermen)
5. How can we become followers of Jesus? (by believing in Him and receiving Him into our heart)

Prayer Time

Thank Jesus for choosing us to be His friends. Pray that we will help others to know that they can be His friends too.

Life Application

What are ways we can fish for people and bring them to Jesus? (Invite them to Bible Study, pray for them, help them)

Planning for Lesson 4
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 nets 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 follow Him (Cup your hands around your mouth like you are calling for someone). Right away, they dropped their nets. They left their father and the boat and followed 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 follow the leader. Remind the children that we can follow Jesus just like Peter, Andrew, James and John did.

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.