

FOLLOWERS

WEEK 5 — LEAVING IT ALL BEHIND

AUGUST 23, 2026

Main Point:

Following Jesus means leaving some things behind.

This Week's Message:

We are called to leave it all behind. What Jesus is calling us to is far better than anything we think we need to hold onto in this life. When Jesus calls us, He'll provide everything we need. We need only to drop everything and follow Him.

Scripture:

Matthew 4:18-22; Mark 2:14-17; Matthew 10:37-39; Luke 9:57-62

This Month's Memory Verse:

"You were chosen to do good even if you suffer. That's because Christ suffered for you. He left you an example that he expects you to follow." 1 Peter 2:21

Provided Videos: See www.glendalechristian.org/summitvolunteerresources

- Game Video
- Bible Story Video
- Review Quiz Video
- Worship Video: Kids
- Worship Video: Runnin
- Worship Video: Praise You Anywhere

Suggested Order of Service:

1. Game Video – 3 Min
2. Icebreaker Activity – 5 Min
3. Message – 25 Min Total
 - a. Lesson – 15 Min
 - b. Bible Story Video – 2 Min
 - c. Discussion Time – 5 Min
 - d. Review Quiz Video – 3 Min
4. Memory Verse Activity – 10 min
5. As time allows:
 - a. Work on Take-Home Page
 - b. Worship Videos

GAME VIDEO:

Exploding Cupcakes

ICEBREAKER ACTIVITY

Encourage the children to pretend based on the prompt and to do everything in slow motion while music plays in the background. It's just plain silly. Then revert to doing everything double time. Follow the video prompts and music as you go back and forth from slow to fast.

Say, "I love a good slow-mo video! And it's hilarious when videos get sped up! We're going to play a game called 'Slow-Mo to No-Mo.' So I'm gonna give you a scenario to act out and each of you will start when I say, 'Slow-Mo!' You'll pretend you're in slow motion until you hear me say, 'No mo!' Then you'll go double time. This is gonna be super goofy. Are you guys ready?"

- Swimming
- Jumping hurdles
- Folding laundry
- Conducting music
- Playing baseball
- Line dancing
- Playing drums

LESSON:

Main Point:

Following Jesus means leaving some things behind.

Scripture:

Matthew 4:18-22; Mark 2:14-17; Matthew 10:37-39; Luke 9:57-62

Play Lesson Video Here

Introduction

Our world is full of choices. Life is full of choices. We make choices every day, even when we aren't thinking about it. We choose everything from the clothes we put on in the morning, to the food we eat, to taking steps this way or that, to how many times we swish our toothbrushes over our gums before we spit. So many choices!

And when you make a choice for one thing it automatically becomes a choice against any other possibilities. If I choose pizza, then I'm saying "no" to tacos, burgers, tuna casserole, marshmallow salad, and chocolate covered broccoli. If I choose to play tuba in a marching band, then I'm choosing *not* to play the bass drum, the trumpet, or the contrabassoon. If I choose to play spring soccer, then I'm choosing not to compete in baseball or extreme ironing.

Transition

This is where the disciples had to make a choice, didn't they? We learned about when they first met Jesus and He told them things that He couldn't possibly know without truly being the Messiah. And we saw where Jesus called Peter and Andrew as they were fishing and called them to come fish for people. Each of these times Jesus said, "Come, follow me." This was no small ask, and it wasn't a request just for that day either.

Rabbis back then would hand select their disciples. This was a very honored and privileged blessing. Families longed for their sons to be chosen. But choosing one rabbi meant that you chose *not* to follow anyone else. You followed only your rabbi

for years, leaving your family and friends to commit to his teachings, and to try to become just like him. And since Jesus was a rabbi, He scouted out His disciples.

Matthew 4:18-19

As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will send you out to fish for people."

This is where we were last week. We watched as this invitation to follow this new rabbi came to Peter and Andrew as they fished. Jesus was intentional about his request and knew that their fishing careers may be over, but their fishing days were far from over. Notice how they responded.

Matthew 4:20

At once they left their nets and followed him.

That was easy! But it only seemed that easy. Remember, to follow a rabbi meant that you were choosing not to pursue any other kind of work or education. But since these guys were rough around the edges, and not your typical disciple material, they jumped at the chance! Jesus continued His scouting mission and found two more.

Matthew 4:21-22

Going on from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John. They were in a boat with their father Zebedee, preparing their nets. Jesus called them, and immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.

Again, that was easy! Same reaction. Sayonara, boat! So long, nets! See ya later, Dad! We're following Jesus, our rabbi. No more fish. No more long days on a boat. They were disciples now. Their job description had just changed radically. But Jesus wasn't done yet. He happened upon another one.

Mark 2:14

As he walked along, he saw Levi son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax collector's booth. "Follow me," Jesus told him, and Levi got up and followed him.

Levi, who is better known to us as Matthew, was just hanging out doing the job, where he took money from his own people, and gave it to the Romans; their enemies who oppressively ruled over them. This might sound like a simple decision, but to quit this job meant giving up lots and lots of money. But Levi was cool with it. Goodbye, tax booth. Let the Romans collect their own taxes!

These disciples had to make some pretty big choices. To follow Jesus, they had to give up things like family businesses, jobs, and wealth. And they had to leave their families behind! They couldn't make a choice for Jesus, without making choices against other things.

Matthew 10:37

"Anyone who loves their father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves their son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me."

Jesus said that you can't love your family more than Him. That's intense, but the disciples understood what He meant. They had to put Jesus first.

Conclusion

Jesus calls everyone to follow him. And for those of us who do, we have to leave certain things behind. Most of the time it won't be the people we love, or where we live, or even the day-to-day circumstances that make up our lives. It typically revolves around how we live.

We have to leave behind selfishness, greed, envy, and lying, along with anything else that goes against Jesus' teachings. We may need to leave our own plans behind to follow his plan for our lives. We may need to leave certain friendships behind if they pull us away from Jesus.

Saying "yes" to Jesus is always going to mean saying "no" to something else. But we gain a whole lot more than we lose. Saying "yes" to Jesus means eternal life. But it also means that this life is filled with the peace, joy, love, and freedom that He brings. No matter what we must say "no" to, saying "yes" to Jesus is the best way we can possibly live.

SIMPLE PRAYER

Dear God,

Thank you for calling us to leave everything behind!

In Jesus' Name, Amen.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. If you could custom design a new kind of animal, what would it look like?
2. How many sets of brothers did Jesus have as disciples?
3. What was the response of those Jesus called in our story today?
4. What job did Levi leave behind?
5. What dreams did they probably have that they had to give up to follow Jesus?
6. What kind of impression did their immediate departures probably have on anyone watching?
7. How can you leave something behind that holds you back from following Jesus?

REVIEW VIDEO

MEMORY VERSE CARD GAME ACTIVITY:

"You were chosen to do good even if you suffer. That's because Christ suffered for you. He left you an example that he expects you to follow." 1 Peter 2:21

Printed cards are provided for the memory verse games. There are 3 stacks of cards – one is easier, one is harder, and one is words that are not in the verse to make it harder for kids as needed. See the Memory Verse Card Games Guide for a variety of games you can choose from to help your students memorize the verse in fun and interactive ways.