



YEAR 3 • LESSON 4

Jesus and His Disciples

Matthew 4:19

QUESTIONS

AGES 3–5

1. Who did Jesus command to follow Him? *Four fishermen: Simon, Andrew, James, and John.*
2. What did Simon, Andrew, James, and John do when Jesus called them? *They left everything and followed Him.*
3. Why should we follow Jesus? *Because Jesus has authority and is in charge of everything.*
4. In what two ways did Jesus prove His authority? *(1) He called the disciples with authority. (2) He taught with authority.*

AGES 6–8

1. What does “disciple” mean? *It means “follower.” This is what it means to be a Christian.*
2. What kind of people does Jesus choose to be His followers? *He chooses ordinary people.*
3. Where does discipleship begin? *It begins with Jesus. He chooses the ones He will call, and those He calls always come to Him.*
4. What work did Jesus call the fishermen to do? *He called them to fish for men—to bring others into the kingdom of God.*

AGES 9–11

1. How quickly did Simon and Andrew respond? *They followed Jesus right away.*
2. What did James and John leave behind? *They left behind their boat, their nets, and their father Zebedee.*
3. What was different about Jesus’ teaching? *Instead of repeating what other people said about the Bible, He taught with His own authority.*
4. What did Jesus call His disciples to do? *Their message was to proclaim, “The kingdom of heaven is at hand.”*

INTRODUCE

AGES 3–5

GREATER AUTHORITY

When the children disobey their parents, do their parents say, “It would be nice if you would stop disobeying, but you do not have to”? Or do they say, “(Child’s name), stop disobeying”? When parents want children to do something, do they say, “I would like you to make your bed, but only if you feel like it”? Or do they say, “(Child’s name), please make your bed right now”? Parents have authority over children. They do not suggest; they command. And it is the child’s job not to argue, but to obey immediately and completely. But there is someone with even more authority than parents—Jesus. Let’s look at a story that shows us how we must respond to His authority.

THE STEPS OF JESUS

Draw and cut out several drawings of footprints. Place the footprints on the floor throughout the room. The footprints should be placed so that a traveled path is revealed. As children arrive, instruct them to follow the path as closely as possible. Challenge them to walk the path without letting their feet touch any of the floor around the footprints. Use this activity to introduce what it means to be a disciple (follower) of Jesus.

AGES 6–8

STUDENT TEACHER

At the beginning of class, ask for a volunteer to serve as your disciple during Sunday School. This individual will follow you everywhere you go, helping you with every activity. Try to involve them as much as possible. During the lesson, talk about how the child followed you everywhere you went and did everything you did. Note the child’s obedience: did he follow your commands immediately and completely? Explain that this is what it means to be a disciple. Then talk about what it means to be Jesus’ disciple, following His commands immediately and completely.

FISHERS OF PLASTIC SOLDIERS

Before class, place plastic army men in an aquarium filled with water. Before the lesson, read Mark 1:17 and tell the children they will be playing a game called “fishers of plastic soldiers.” Call children up one by one, blindfold them, and see how many plastic soldiers they can catch with a small net in ten seconds. After all the children have had a turn, award a prize to the best fisherman. Ask the children what it means to be a “fisher of men.” Tell them that we’ll learn what it means in today’s lesson.

AGES 9–11

GOING FISHIN’

Come to class prepared to fish. Wear waders and a fishing hat. Carry a fishing pole, net, and tackle box. Ask the children if they have had any success fishing in this class. Fix a candy bar to the end of your fishing line and hold it out over the children. When a child reaches up to grab it, pretend to set

the hook and reel them in. Next, try a small prize. Finally, try a dollar bill. Talk about how much fun it is “fishing for men.” Tell the children that we will talk about what it actually means to fish for men in today’s lesson.

COPY CAT

Ask a child how they’re doing. After they respond, repeat what they say. Do this with everything the child says. As far as you are able, copy the child’s words, expressions, body language, and movements. After the activity, explain that copying someone is, in a small way, like becoming their disciple, or follower. You try to do what they do and say what they say. This is what we do when we become a disciple of Jesus. In today’s lesson, we’ll learn about four men Jesus called to follow Him.

ILLUSTRATE

AGES 3–5

“DO NOT MAKE ME COUNT TO THREE!”

Sometimes parents give their children until the count of three to obey. However, being a follower of Jesus means that we obey Him immediately. When Jesus called Simon and Andrew to follow Him, they “immediately...left their nets and followed” Jesus (Mark 1:18). Give the children a command and tell them to try to obey before you can count to three. After the activity, talk about why it’s important to obey God and our parents right away.

FISHING FOR...LEGOS?

Before class, construct a miniature fishing pole using a small, wooden dowel and white yarn. Attach a paper clip to the end of the yarn. Next, glue a small magnet to the back of a Lego person (or other small, plastic figurine). Place the Lego person in a small aquarium (without water) and surround it with underwater scenes (seaweed, fish, sand, etc.). “Fish” for the Lego person in class and talk about what Jesus meant when He said He would make the disciples “fishers of men” (Mark 1:17). If time allows, allow the children to “fish” for the person after the lesson.

AGES 6–8

CLAY POTS

Bring in a plain clay flower pot and a beautiful jewelry box. Ask: “Which do people normally put their expensive jewelry in?” Explain that they normally choose the beautiful jewelry box. What about Jesus? Does He put His glory inside ordinary people (hold up the pot) or only inside the smartest, richest, most famous, or most religious people (hold up the jewelry box)? Read 2 Corinthians 4:7 and explain that God often chooses ordinary people to display His glory. So if you realize you aren’t anything special (hold up pot), have hope! Jesus can use you! But if you think you are extra special and can serve Jesus better than others (hold up box), be warned. Jesus does not want people who brag about themselves.

PHONE A FRIEND

The hit television game show, *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire*, allowed contestants to call a friend to help them answer one question. If you had to answer one question about the Bible, who would you call? What about science? Or math? You would call an authority on that subject. However, most experts can usually only speak about one subject with authority. In contrast, Jesus has complete authority over everything.

JESUS CALLS THE DISCIPLES

Materials: Craft sheets, straws, hole punch, tape, glue, scissors, and crayons.

Directions: Have students color and cut out pictures from the craft sheet. Then color and cut out the boat from the second craft sheet and fold up along the dotted lines. Use tape to connect the flaps together. Cut out the sail and use a hole punch on the dotted circles. Stick a straw through the holes. Attach the straw to the inside of the boat with tape. Glue the boat to a piece of blue cardstock. Glue the picture of Jesus onto the blue cardstock in front of the boat, and glue the picture of the disciples inside the boat. Make a net by gluing on several pieces of yarn.

AGES 9–11

COMPLETE OBEDIENCE

Talk about some situations in which it is especially important to follow the directions exactly as they are given: building a bridge, packing a parachute, disarming a bomb, administering medications, or fixing the brakes on your car. Talk about the consequences of not following the directions. Explain that being a disciple of Jesus means striving to obey Him completely, like the disciples did when they left everything to follow Him (Mark 1:18, 20). Talk about the danger of partial obedience to Jesus' commands and why He deserves complete obedience.

MASTER TEACHER

Read the story of Jesus' post-resurrection appearance to two disciples on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13–35). Talk about the disciples' reaction to Jesus' teaching (24:32). Compare this to the people's response to Jesus' teaching in the synagogue (Mark 1:22).

DISCIPLESHIP CHECKLIST

Have you become a follower of Jesus? If you have, it should be obvious in your life. Ask the children to silently think about what their answers would be as you read the following questions:

- Do you enjoy reading the Bible?
- Do you desire to obey your parents?
- Do you pray on your own?
- Do you like church?
- Do you always desire and work hard to do what is right?
- Do you recognize sin in your life?

- Do you repent quickly when you realize you have sinned?