



Jesus and His Disciples

KEY VERSE

Matthew 4:19



Lesson Overview (TEACHER)

TRANSITION

Lesson 3 detailed Jesus being the eternal Word made flesh, calling His first disciples, and revealing His Messianic identity through signs and teaching. Lesson 4 follows Him as He launched His public Galilean ministry, where He preached the gospel, called more followers, and commissioned the twelve disciples.

CENTRAL TRUTH

Jesus calls sinners to follow Him.

KEY TEXTS

Matthew 4:12–25; 8:18–22; 9:9–17; 10:1–42; Mark 1:16–20; 2:13–17; Luke 4:16–30; 5:27–32; 9:23–27; 14:25–35

SPOTLIGHT ON THE GOSPEL

Jesus came preaching repentance and the nearness of God’s kingdom, calling both the loved and hated to leave everything and follow Him. He still issues that same gracious call today to every sinner. He died on the cross to save anyone who repents and believes!



Family Devotional (PARENT)

This section explains what the Family Devotional covers for parents to use with their children each day of the week. Each devotional reinforces the lesson taught in Sunday School.

DAILY DEVOTIONS

- Day 1 **Jesus and His Disciples (Sunday School review)**
Matthew 4:12–25; 8:18–22; 9:9–17; 10:1–42; Mark 1:16–20; 2:13–17; Luke 4:16–30; 5:27–32; 9:23–27; 14:25–35
- Day 2 **Jesus’ Ministry in Galilee**
Matthew 4:12–17, 23–25
- Day 3 **Jesus Reveals Himself in Nazareth**
Luke 4:16–30
- Day 4 **The Fishers of Men**
Matthew 4:18–22; Mark 1:16–20
- Day 5 **Jesus Defends His Disciples**
Matthew 9:9–17; Mark 2:13–17; Luke 5:27–32
- Day 6 **Jesus Sends the Twelve**
Matthew 10:1–42
- Day 7 **Jesus Teaches About Discipleship**
Matthew 8:18–22; Luke 9:23–27; 14:25–35

LAST WEEK



NEXT WEEK



Jesus and His Disciples

JESUS' EARLY GALILEAN MINISTRY

NOTE: Do not read this commentary aloud to the children. The commentary is designed to help educate and prepare the teacher for the lesson. The teacher's goal in studying the commentary is to better understand the lesson.

After a time of ministry in Judea, and after John the Baptist was arrested by Herod Antipas, Jesus began an extended ministry primarily in Galilee, the northern region of the land of Israel (Matt 4:12; Mark 1:14; Luke 4:14a). By concentrating His ministry in this region, Jesus was fulfilling prophecy (Matt 4:14–16; see Isa 9:1–2). The message He preached was to “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Matt 4:17), and it was also “the gospel of God” (Mark 1:14b–15). At this point in His ministry, Jesus often did His preaching in synagogues in Galilee (Luke 4:15), which eventually led Him back to His hometown in Nazareth (v16a). In Nazareth, “as was his custom, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day” (v16b). Jesus stood up to read and He was handed the scroll of the prophet Isaiah (v17a); He turned to the text of Isaiah 61 and read from the first verse (v17b): “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor” (v18a; see Isa 61:1). In Jesus’ day this was a well-known Messianic text, in which the Messiah Himself was speaking; this was clear because the speaker claimed to be “anointed” as the Messiah is. However, Jesus did not read the entire text; He stopped at the line “to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor” (Luke 4:19; see Isa 61:2a). He then carefully rolled up the scroll, returned it to the attendant, and sat down while everyone in the synagogue had their eyes “fixed on him” (Luke 4:20). He then said something astounding: “Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing” (v21). Jesus meant that by His ministry, He was fulfilling Isaiah’s prophecy, particularly the passages referring to His first coming. The portion of the text referred to His mission of preaching good news and proclaiming God’s favor and grace in His first coming. However, the remainder of Isaiah’s prophecy (the part He did not read) refers to the mission to bring about “the day of vengeance” during His second coming (Isa 61:2b; the day of the LORD) and then to bring the restoration of the nation of Israel (Isa 61:2c–62:12). *In His hometown, He unambiguously claimed that He was the Messiah.*

The citizens of Nazareth in the synagogue responded to Jesus’ Messianic claim by speaking well of Him (Luke 4:22a) and wondering about His claim. Unfortunately, they quickly remembered that He was the son of one of their neighbors and disregarded His words (v22b). Jesus related a proverb to them that indicated that He knew that a prophet is not often welcome and respected in His hometown (vv23–24). He recalled the Old Testament examples of Elijah and Elisha, who were not welcomed by their countrymen, but instead served Gentiles (vv25–27). This enraged those in the synagogue, so they drove Him out of town and attempted to throw Him off a cliff (vv28–29), but He escaped (v30). Jesus then made Capernaum His headquarters (Matt 4:13; see 9:1), and He continued to preach in synagogues in other locations in Galilee and nearby regions, including Judea (Matt 4:23–25; Luke 4:42–44).

JESUS CALLED HIS DISCIPLES

Jesus called His disciples to follow Him in Galilee (Matt 4:18–19). Jesus had already met Andrew, Peter, Philip, and Nathanael (see John 1:35–51), but they had not yet become His full-time followers. Since Peter and Andrew were fishermen (Matt 4:18b), Jesus found them while walking along the shore of the Sea of Galilee (v18a). He called them to become “fishers of men” (v19b); upon this direct call, they followed Jesus immediately (v20). A little further along the shore, Jesus met a pair of brothers named James and John, who were working with their father Zebedee

in their fishing enterprise (v21a). He called them as He had called Peter and Andrew (v21b), and they also responded immediately and followed Jesus (v22). After a time in ministry, Jesus met a man named Matthew (Matt 9:9a), who was also called “Levi” (see Mark 2:14; Luke 5:27). Matthew was a tax collector, and Jesus saw him sitting in his tax collecting booth (Matt 9:9a). Tax collectors were often Jews, like Matthew was, who worked for the Romans collecting taxes from fellow Jews; for this, they were despised and outcast from the Jewish community. It is not clear if Jesus and Matthew had a prior acquaintance—like the other disciples Andrew, Peter, Philip, and Nathanael—although it’s likely that they did. Jesus gave Matthew the same “Follow me” (v9b) call as the other disciples, and Matthew responded as they did and followed Christ (v9b). Matthew invited Jesus to his home and the tax collector prepared “a great feast in his house” (Luke 5:29), likely to introduce Him and His disciples to other tax collectors and people in his circles (see Luke 5:29a; Matt 9:10a). The scribes and Pharisees were offended that Jesus was eating and “reclining at table” (Luke 5:29b; Matt 9:10b) with such people (v11; Mark 2:16; Luke 5:30). Jesus replied that it is not the healthy that need a doctor, but those who are sick (Matt 9:12; Mark 2:17a; Luke 5:31). *He clarified further and said that His message was not for the righteous, but for sinners (Matt 9:13b; Mark 2:17b; Luke 5:32).*

THE TWELVE DISCIPLES’ FIRST MISSION

When Jesus had completed the work of calling His disciples, there were twelve (see Matt 10:1–4; Mark 3:13–19; Luke 6:12–16). These twelve men were not the only ones to follow Jesus, but they were given unique access to Him and given special teaching and responsibilities. On one occasion, He sent them on a special mission to “the lost sheep of the house of Israel” (Matt 10:5–6; see Mark 6:7–13; see Luke 9:1–6). Their message was to proclaim, “The kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Matt 10:7). They were to perform unique signs or miracles (v8a); these were the sort of signs they had seen Him do, which authenticated Him as the Messiah and would, in turn, authenticate them as His ambassadors or apostles. They were to minister without payment (v8b) and bring only basic provisions for the journey (vv9–10). They were to expect hospitality; if they did not receive it, they were to regard anyone who refused them with disdain (vv11–15).

Jesus took this occasion to teach the twelve about the wider implications of their service for Him—not just for this special mission, but for simply being His disciples in the world. Jesus warned His disciples that they would face persecution, not just from the world, but even from members of their own family (vv16–22a; vv34–37). They should be wise and careful “as serpents” and yet innocent and inoffensive “as doves” (v16). They should endure persecution (vv22b–23) and should expect to receive what He received (vv24–25). Jesus told them they should not fear because while their enemies might kill their bodies, they could not separate them from the care of their heavenly Father (vv26–31). Jesus promised He would recognize them before the Father in heaven (v32). Jesus instructed His disciples that they must be willing to stand for Him even if it cost them their lives (v39; see Mark 8:34–38; Luke 9:23–27; 14:25–35); but He promised them they would be rewarded for even the smallest service in His name (Matt 10:40–42).

LESSON SUMMARY

The four Gospels record Jesus beginning His Galilean ministry after John the Baptist’s arrest, preaching repentance and the kingdom. In Nazareth’s synagogue, He claimed to fulfill Isaiah 61, which caused people to reject him. Jesus called Peter, Andrew, James, John, and Matthew to follow Him; He ate with sinners and declared He came for the sick, not the healthy. Jesus selected His twelve disciples and sent them to proclaim the gospel to Israel.



The following section is provided for you to use as a devotional. This will help you prepare for your upcoming Generations of Grace lesson time. *Check off your progress as you go.*

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Teaching Outline

This section is designed to be used as a clean copy of your notes for teaching the lesson. Follow the teaching outline below as a step-by-step guide during your Sunday School lesson.

- ☐ **PRAY** with your class that the children would understand the central truth and gospel message, and that you would teach the children effectively.
- ☐ **REVIEW** last week's lesson and the central truth to begin your lesson.
- ☐ **INTRODUCE** this week's lesson and the central truth using the selected introduction, illustration, or application from our additional resources page.

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- ☐ **READ** the key texts from Scripture you selected that connect to the central truth.

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- ☐ **TEACH** your class using your summarized notes and questions from the **LESSON OUTLINE**. The points provided are the main headers from the commentary. Use the visual aid you selected and always connect your lesson back to the central truth.



LESSON OUTLINE

1. **JESUS' EARLY GALILEAN MINISTRY (MATTHEW 4:12-17; 23-25; MARK 1:14; LUKE 4:14)**

- How did the people in Jesus' hometown react when He said He was the Messiah?

2. **JESUS CALLED HIS DISCIPLES (MATTHEW 4:18-22; 9:9-13; MARK 1:16-20; 2:13-17; LUKE 5:27-32)**

- What did Jesus ask His disciples to do when He said, "Follow me"?

3. **THE TWELVE DISCIPLES' FIRST MISSION (MATTHEW 10:1-42; MARK 6:7-13; LUKE 6:12-16; 9:1-6)**

- What job did Jesus give His twelve disciples when He sent them out?

- ☐ **CONCLUDE** this week's lesson with the spotlight on the gospel and tie it into the central truth and the lesson you just taught.

- ☐ **PRAY** for the children hearing this lesson that they would be saved and follow the LORD.