



April 2, 2023

UNIT 19 SESSION 5

Jesus Called His Disciples

John 1

KEY PASSAGE:

John 1:29

The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

What did Jesus do to save us?

Jesus lived a sinless life, died on the cross, and rose from the dead.

CHRIST CONNECTION:

Jesus, the Son of God and true King of Israel, came to earth to show what God is like and to save people from their sins. He called disciples to follow Him. We are Jesus' disciples when we trust in Him. We can invite everyone to come and see the good news about Jesus.

LEADER Bible Study

New Christians may find themselves wondering, Now what? What do I do? To answer these questions, we may talk with those new believers about Bible reading, prayer, community, and mission. Though these are all good and essential things, they alone do not capture Jesus' initial call to ^[1]_[SEP]His disciples.

When Jesus first began calling disciples, He used two words: "Follow Me." He didn't say "Clean yourself up" or "Work harder." He said, "Follow Me."

The call to follow Jesus is a call to our souls to find rest. He invites us to be with Him and enjoy Him. Jesus' invitation is not to be amazing, to do great things, or even to get to work. Jesus' initial invitation is to follow Him.

Jesus has most certainly called His followers to go and do good works, but the order in which we heed His calling and instructions is vital to our spiritual health.

It's easy for us to get caught up in the activity of God, the work of His mission, and the effort we must engage in to grow as He desires for us; however, these are not to ^[1]_[SEP]be first.

God calls us to come to Him; draw near to Him; and to see a glimpse of His goodness, beauty, splendor, and grace. And it is only in seeing these realities that we will go and do faithfully. For if we seek to go and do before we come and see, we will find ourselves in a spiral of constant despair, feeling like we are falling short or equally as dangerous, feeling like we must earn our way to God.

Jesus' call to His disciples to come and see is the same invitation that we have today. Whether we have walked with God for decades or are new to the faith, our greatest need is to draw near to God and experience His glorious grace. It is then that we will see Him for who He truly is, understand ourselves more fully, and then live faithfully for His glory.

TERMS TO KNOW

Disciple: follower of Jesus. As the messianic proclaimer of the reign of God, Jesus gathered about Himself a special circle of 12 disciples, clearly a symbolic representation of the 12 tribes (Matt. 19:28).

WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, ask kids about their week, and help new kids connect to your group.

SAY If you were the captain of a sports team, what qualities would you look for in your teammates? Would you want someone who is fast, strong, or tough? Why?

Activity Page (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete "Decipher the Disciples" on the activity page.

SAY When Jesus began His ministry, He chose a group of 12 men to follow Him. Today, we will learn more about the men He chose and how we can follow Him too.

Session Starter (10 minutes)

Surrender

Read each of the options below and ask kids which option they would rather give up. Invite kids to take turns sharing their answers and their reasons why.

Ice cream or candy

Pizza or tacos

Movie theaters or TV

Vacations or parties

Music or dance

Dogs or cats as pets

SAY Some of those choices may have been easier than others. But sometimes it can be hard to give up things we love. In today's Bible story, Jesus told certain men to follow Him. Jesus' call to follow Him meant they would have to surrender and trust Him above all else. Jesus' call to follow Him means giving up the ways of the world to follow the ways of His kingdom. Let's read our Bible story to learn who Jesus called to follow Him.

LEARN the Bible Story

Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus!

Use [The Gospel: God's Plan for Me](#) as a reference.

Key Passage Activity (10 minutes)

John 1:29

The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!

Show the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading aloud John 1:29 together.

SAY In today's Bible story, after John announced that Jesus was the Lamb of God, two of John's disciples followed Jesus. Let's continue working to remember our key passage and that Jesus is the Lamb who takes away our sin.

Form kids into two teams. Give each team a set of index cards with words from the key passage written on each card. Shuffle each set. Provide each team with a set of cards. Challenge teams to put the cards in order of the key passage as quickly as they can.

LOVE God by Applying the Story

Bible Skills & Review (10 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the New Testament Israel Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to John 1. Explain that the Gospel of John was written by one of Jesus' twelve disciples named John. Explain that John provided an eye-witness account of the events of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection.

Consider comparing the New Testament Israel Map to a modern-day map to help kids understand where these stories took place. (Tip: Locate the areas in and around modern-day Galilee [C5].) Choose a volunteer to read aloud John 1:47-48.

SAY *When Jesus called Nathanael, He revealed more of His identity as the Son of God. He told Nathanael that before He called him, He had seen him under the fig tree. Nathanael responded to this by declaring that he believed Jesus was the Son of God.*

By reading and studying our Bibles, we can learn more about who Jesus declares Himself to be. Like Nathanael, we can see how Jesus revealed what God is like when we read about His life, death, and resurrection. Jesus is the Son of God and not only has power to see all things, but is also kind and welcoming toward sinners.

Group Discussion (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

SAY In today's story, how did Jesus show us what God is like?

Discuss how Jesus showed God's love and care for His people. Lead kids to think about how Jesus did not look for the most important or most qualified people. Explain that He called regular, ordinary men to follow Him. Lead kids to understand that in Jesus we also see God's power, kindness, and His desire to welcome sinners.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read John 1:14.)

SAY *How can we follow Jesus as His disciples today?*

Explain that trusting Jesus as our Savior is the first step in following Him. Discuss how when we surrender our lives to Jesus, He gives us a new heart with new desires that want to obey His words. Lead kids to understand that disciples of Jesus follow His teachings and desire to make more disciples.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read John 8:31.)

SAY *What are some ways you can introduce others to Jesus like Andrew and Philip did?*

Lead kids to think about how they can invite others to church, share a Bible story, tell how Jesus has been faithful in their lives, or share the gospel. Encourage kids to tell others the good news about Jesus.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read Rom. 1:16.)

LIVE the Mission

Activity Choice (10 minutes)

Tic-Tac-Toe

Create a tic-tac-toe grid on the floor using masking tape. Form kids into two teams and provide each team with five pieces of paper. Designate one team as Xs and the other team as Os. Invite each team to write either Xs or Os on their papers.

Tell kids that you will call out a Bible verse and the first team to find the verse and read it gets to put either an X or an O on the grid. Call out each Bible verse one at a time:

2 Corinthians 5:21

1 John 3:5

1 Peter 2:22

Romans 5:8

Colossians 1:19-20

Philippians 2:8

Hebrews 12:2

Matthew 28:6

1 Thessalonians 4:14

SAY What did Jesus do to save us? [Allow responses.] **Jesus lived a sinless life, died on the cross, and rose from the dead.** Each of the Bible verses in our game reminded us of this truth. We can share this good news with others who need to know Jesus.

Who doesn't love making paper airplanes?! Follow the instructions on the next page to show kids how to fold an airplane. But there is something special about this airplane that will help them share the gospel with others! If time, allow kids time to color their cross and make another airplane.

Reflection and Prayer (5 minutes)

Guide kids to think about and answer the questions listed below:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Are there any commands in this story to obey?
How are they for God's glory and my good?
- Are there promises in this story to remember? How do they help me trust and love God?
- How does this story help me to live on mission better?

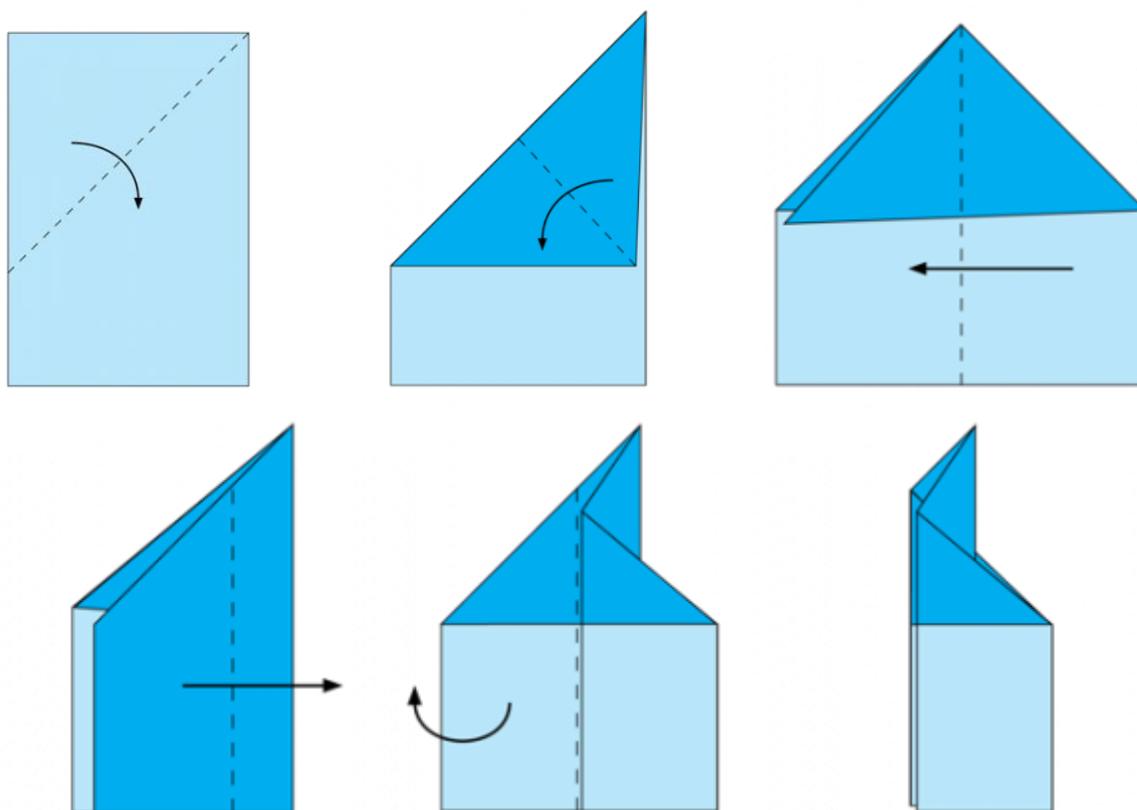
Pray with your group!

Thank You, Lord, for sending Jesus as the Savior of the world. Thank You for inviting us to become Your disciples when we trust in You. Help us share the good news with those around us and tell others about the love of Jesus. Amen.

Make sure to send the sheets home with kids alongside the activity page so that parents can see what their kids have been learning.

What to Do

1 Fold a sheet of paper into an airplane like this:



2

Show the children the airplane and begin sharing the message of salvation.

Guidelines on what to say can be found below.

What to Say

1 I know of a very special place.

- It is better than any holiday destination
- This place is perfect
- There is no sickness, no pain and no hunger
- No one ever dies

2 This special place is called heaven.

- Heaven is a special place that is not on this earth
- So you can't get there in an airplane
- Heaven is God's home
- God wants all of us to go to heaven to be with him

3 We can't be with God in heaven because of the wrong things we have done.

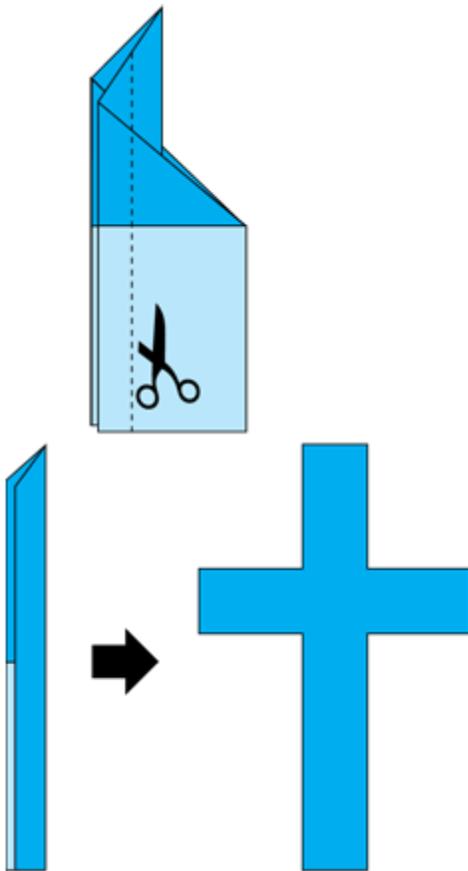
- These things are called sin
- Telling lies, disobeying your parents, hurting others and being selfish are examples of sin
- The punishment for our sins is that we can't be with God in heaven.

Rom 3:23

Everyone has sinned and fallen short of God's glorious standard.

But because God loves us so much and wants us to be with him in heaven forever, he made a special way for us to go to heaven...

Cut the airplane lengthwise into 2. Unfold the paper to reveal a cross.



1

This cross represents Jesus. Jesus is the only way to get to heaven to be with God.

- God loves us so much that he sent his son, Jesus, to earth
- Jesus was a man who was different from any other person
- Jesus is God and never sinned

2 Jesus came from heaven to earth to take the punishment for our sins.

- Instead of us being punished, he took our place
- Jesus died on the cross so that all the wrong things that we have done can be forgiven
- And on the third day, Jesus rose from the grave!

Rom 6:23

The payment for sin is death. But God gives us the free gift of life forever in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Acts 13:30, 31

But God raised him up from the dead! After this, for many days, those who had gone with Jesus from Galilee to Jerusalem saw him.

1 If we want to be with God in heaven, we must believe in Jesus. This means...

- Admit that we have sinned and ask God to forgive us
- Believe that Jesus died on the cross to be punished instead of us, and
- Invite Jesus into our lives to help us turn away from sin

2 Invite the child to sincerely pray for forgiveness and for Jesus to come into his/her life.

Do you think you have sinned?

Do you believe that Jesus died on the cross to take your punishment?

Do you want to ask God to forgive you?

Do you want to invite Jesus into your life?

John 3:16

God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son so that whoever believes in him may not be lost, but have eternal life.

1 John 1:9

But if we confess our sins, he will forgive our sins, because we can trust God to do what is right. He will cleanse us from all the wrongs we have done.

Sample Prayer

Dear Jesus, thank you for loving me. I know that I have sinned. I have done things that are wrong. I believe that you died on the cross to take the punishment for my sins. Please forgive all of my sins. Please come into my life and help me turn away from doing wrong. Thank you that because you took the punishment for my sins, I can have a relationship with you now and will one day be with you in heaven. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

If time, allow kids time to color their cross and make another airplane.