

LESSON 1

JESUS CALLS THE DISCIPLES

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: We Can Follow Jesus

SCRIPTURE: [Luke 5](#)

GOD'S BIG STORY: Jesus teaches the crowd from a boat, helps Simon Peter and his brother catch fish, and calls some of His first disciples to follow Him.

WORD OF WONDER: God so loved the world. He gave His one and only Son. —[from John 3:16](#)

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?

Jesus is called a *rabbi* or *teacher* throughout the Gospels. This was an honored position in first-century Judaism—rabbis knew the Torah (the first five books of our Old Testament) by heart. Clearly, Jesus is no ordinary rabbi—He's the greatest teacher ever!

WHAT?

Rabbis had disciples who were learning to be just like them. Disciples followed their rabbis and listened to their teachings, specifically their interpretations of Jewish law. When Jesus called Peter, James, and John, they would have known they were becoming His disciples.

WHERE?

The Sea of Galilee is a large lake located in northern Israel. Jesus did a large part of His ministry in Capernaum and the surrounding small towns located near the Sea of Galilee.

WHEN?

Jesus began His official ministry around age 30 (Luke 3:23), and at this time began choosing disciples to follow Him. Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, seemed to have already been following Jesus.

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY

The nation of Israel consisted of 12 tribes. Jesus chose 12 disciples to show that He was representing Israel perfectly. He showed that He is the one, true Rabbi whose teachings should always be followed because He is God in the flesh.

Activity: Fishing Sensory Bin

Ahead of time, fill a bin with blue paper or tissue paper and add small toy fish.

Greet the kids warmly and welcome them to church.

Welcome! We're going to talk today about Jesus inviting His first friends, the disciples, to follow Him.

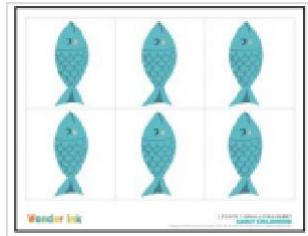
We'll hear a story about some fishermen who followed Jesus. Have you seen fish?

Show the kids the toy fish in the bin. Let the kids play with the items in the bin. Invite them to pretend to catch the fish.

We'll hear today about something amazing that happened when some fishermen met Jesus!

Activity: Gone Fishing

Ahead of time, fill a small plastic bin with blue paper or tissue paper. Add toy fish or print the [Small Fish Sheet](#) on cardstock and cut out the fish pictures.



Put a paper clip on each fish picture. Create two small fishing poles with wooden dowels or rulers, and tie or tape a piece of string or yarn to one end. Tape a magnet to the other end of the string or yarn.

Have you ever been fishing? Allow the kids to respond. **Let's pretend to catch some fish. You can use the fishing pole to catch the fish.**

Demonstrate by using the fishing pole with a magnet. Drag it across the bin so it picks up some of the paper fish. Let the kids take turns using the pole to catch fish.

In today's part of God's big story, we'll hear how Jesus helped fishermen catch fish and then how they chose to follow Him.

Our Wonder Truth today is: WE CAN FOLLOW JESUS.

Encourage the kids to do the following motions while you repeat the Wonder Truth. Older toddlers can say the words with you as they do the motions.

WE CAN—*Point to self.*

FOLLOW—*March in place, like you're following the leader.*

JESUS—*Point up.*

Prayer and Blessing

After the kids finish their activity, pray with them, thanking God for including us and giving us the path to follow. As you say the prayer, walk along the room and encourage the kids to follow and pray along with you.

God, we thank You that we are invited to follow You. Help us as we follow You and invite others to do it too. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Encourage the kids to hold their hands in front of them, with palms up, as if their hands are open to receive something. Tell them to listen and receive the blessing as you speak it over them.

Blessing: Jesus called His first disciples and calls us to follow Him too. May God watch over us, who are His children, and help us follow Him and share His love with others.

Activity: Follow the Silly Leader

Jesus is the best leader ever! We can follow Him every day. We can learn about Him from the Bible, talk to Him in prayer, and worship Him. We can invite others to know Him too by telling them about Him. When we do those things, we are following Jesus. Let's see if you can follow me when I'm being a silly leader. I'll call out silly things to do and you do.

Call out a variety of actions and motions for the kids to do and encourage them to listen and do what you say

- Pretend to pull up a heavy net that is filled with fish.
- Pretend you're on a boat and there's a storm, and the boat is rocking back and forth.
- Stand up and then sit down.
- Flap your arms like a bird.
- Do a silly dance.
- Wave your arms.
- Spin in a circle.
- Touch your toes.
- Clap your hands.
- Make a funny face.

Great job following the leader's directions! The most important leader we can follow is Jesus! And we can invite others to follow Him too.