

# JESUS CHOSE DISCIPLES

Mark 2-3; Luke 6



Jesus was teaching a crowd of people by the sea. He passed by a man named Levi, who was a tax collector. Jesus said, “Follow Me.” Levi got up and followed Jesus.

Later, Jesus went to Levi’s house, and many tax collectors and sinners were eating with Jesus and His disciples. The religious leaders came to Jesus’ disciples and said, “Why does Jesus eat with tax collectors and sinners?”

Jesus heard their question and said, “People who are healthy don’t need a doctor, but sick people do. I didn’t come to call righteous people; I came to call sinners.”

Jesus left with His disciples and went to the sea. A large crowd from all over came to Him because they heard about all He was doing. Jesus asked His disciples to get a boat ready for Him so that the crowd would not crush Him. The people knew Jesus was able to heal, and so everyone who was sick was pressing forward to try to touch Him.

Then Jesus went up on a mountain. He spent all night in prayer to God. The next morning, Jesus called His twelve disciples to Him. He would send these men out to preach and would give them the authority to drive out demons. The Twelve Jesus chose as His disciples were: Simon Peter, James and his

brother John, Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot—who would betray Jesus.

*Christ Connection:* Jesus chose the disciples and still calls people to follow Him today. He invites all people to turn from their sins and trust in Him as Lord and Savior.



## 1 WELCOME TIME

Greet each preteen as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

- **What is your favorite thing about your friends? What do you enjoy doing together?**

## 2 SESSION STARTER

### ☐ OPTION 1: NOW HIRING

Give each kid a piece of paper and a pencil. Tell the kids they will be making a “Now Hiring” poster for a position as one of Jesus’ disciples. They will draw a picture of a disciple (this could be what they think one of the twelve disciples looked like or a picture of themselves) and a job description of what they think Jesus was looking for in a disciple. Allow time for the kids to color their posters. Give kids a chance to share their posters with the group.

**SAY** “ **JESUS INVITED TWELVE MEN TO FOLLOW HIM AS DISCIPLES.** These men were called to follow Jesus, learn from Him, and were then sent out to share the message of the gospel with others. ”

### ☐ OPTION 2: FOLLOW ME



Lead kids to stand in a circle. Explain that the first kid will do a motion, and everyone else will follow that motion. The next kid will add a second motion, and the group will then do the first and second motions. Continue this until everyone has added a motion.

**SAY** “ Great job following each other’s motions. That reminds me of how **JESUS INVITED TWELVE MEN TO FOLLOW HIM AS DISCIPLES.** These men followed Jesus closely, paying attention to both His actions and His words. ”



## THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

**1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY**

The Bible tells us what is true about God and about ourselves. All of the stories in the Bible fit together to tell us the big story of how God rescues sinners through His Son, Jesus.

Today we are going to hear about when Jesus chose disciples. Whether this is your first time or your tenth time hearing this story, there is always something new to learn in God's Word.

**Read from Mark 2-3; Luke 6.**

**•What does this story teach us about God?**

Jesus was looking for people willing to follow Him. **JESUS INVITED TWELVE MEN TO FOLLOW HIM AS DISCIPLES.** Jesus didn't look down on people, but many of the religious leaders of the time did. They tried to find flaws in everything Jesus did, including spending time with people the community didn't like. Jesus informed the leaders that **He didn't come to take care of people who are healthy, but to take care of the sick.**

**•What did Jesus mean when He said He came to take care of the sick?**

**Jesus came to help people who understand their need for a Savior.** If a person doesn't recognize that they are a sinner and in need of a Messiah, then they don't realize they need Jesus. Unfortunately, the religious leaders didn't believe Jesus had the power to heal and forgive sin, so they did not understand. However, there were many others who believed and were saved.

Form groups of two or three and practice retelling the Bible story in your own words. Think of someone you could share the story with this week.

**2 MISSIONS MOMENT**

Share that one day in the jungle by the Amazon River, a missionary was telling children about Jesus using pictures on a board. While she talked to the kids, an older man came closer and listened to her talk. When she finished, the man asked the woman if the story was true. She said, 'Yes, it is God's Word!' But the old man did not believe it. He said, 'This can't be true, or someone would have come before now to tell it. My parents lived their lives and died without hearing the message. It cannot be true or someone would have come sooner.' Then he walked back into the jungle, still not believing what he heard. It made the missionary realize how important it is for Christians to prioritize sharing the gospel with people all around the world.

Erik and Ida Nelson knew the Amazon Rainforest would be a hard place to live, full of jungles and long rivers, but Erik knew the people needed to hear the good news about Jesus. Erik and Ida lived in a city called Manaus, and they traveled by motorboat to villages all along the Amazon River and its many branches. A church in America gave Erik a boat to help him get to villages that no one else could reach.

Missionaries like the Nelsons know there are many people who have never heard about Jesus. We can help missionaries by praying, giving, going on short-term missions trips, and maybe even one day serving as missionaries.

Pray for missionaries serving all over the world.



LEARN

## THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

### 3 GOSPEL DISCUSSION

When Jesus called His disciples, He wasn't looking for perfection. Jesus wanted willing people who knew they were sinners and understood they needed Him. Just like the disciples, we need to accept that we are sinners in need of a Savior. Have you decided to follow Jesus?

### 4 PRAY

God, thank You for calling us to follow You, like You called Your disciples. Please give us courage to live our lives in such a way that others would see You and follow You. Amen.

## THE GOSPEL

### GOD'S PLAN FOR ME

The gospel is the good news—the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use Scripture and the guide provided below to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.

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| <b>GOD RULES</b>                                                                                                                   | <b>WE SINNED</b>                                                                                                                           | <b>GOD PROVIDED</b>                                                                                                       | <b>JESUS GIVES</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <b>WE RESPOND</b>                                                                                                                                                       |
| Ask: "Who is in charge at home?" Explain that because God created everything, He is in charge of everything. Read Revelation 4:11. | Ask: "Have you ever done something wrong?" Tell kids that everyone sins, or disobeys God. Our sin separates us from God. Read Romans 3:23. | Explain that God is holy and must punish sin. God sent His Son, Jesus, to take the punishment we deserve. Read John 3:16. | Ask: "What is the best gift you've ever received?" Say that Jesus took our punishment for sin by giving His life, and He gives us His righteousness. God sees us as if we lived the perfect life Jesus lived. This is the best gift ever! Read 2 Corinthians 5:21. | Explain that everyone has a choice to make. Ask: "Will you trust Jesus as your Savior and Lord? You can turn from self and sin and turn to Jesus." Read Romans 10:9-10. |



## THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

### 1 THINK ABOUT THE STORY

- **Why did Jesus only choose twelve disciples? Why didn't Jesus make everyone follow Him?**
- **How can you follow Jesus this week?**

### 2 GROUP DISCUSSION

Distribute Bibles. Guide preteens to open their Bibles to Mark 3. Choose a volunteer to read aloud Mark 3:7-10. Remind preteens that people were coming from all over to hear Jesus preach and be healed by Him. So many people were coming to Him that He had to retreat into a boat to preach to them so He would not get crushed. Jesus wanted the people to hear the message He came to preach about God and His kingdom. His message would bring healing and salvation to anyone that would believe. Many of the people who came to Him were just seeking physical healing without understanding their spiritual need for a Savior. Every person's greatest need is salvation from sin. Choose another volunteer to read aloud Mark 3:7-10 again. Then lead the group to discuss the following questions.

#### 1. What does the Bible say about judging others?

The Bible says we are not to judge others out of pride or by thinking that we are better than them. While it can be helpful to pay attention to someone's actions and choices—and we should always stand for what God says is right and wrong—we need to remember that only God knows what's in a person's heart. We can ask God to help us see them through His perspective. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Matthew 7:1-5.)

#### 2. Where does the righteousness of a believer come from?

The Bible tells us that righteousness comes from Jesus. He took the punishment sinners deserve, and in its place, He offers believers His perfection. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read 2 Corinthians 5:21.)

#### 3. What do you think it looks like to follow Jesus closely?

Following Jesus looks like loving what He loves and doing what He commands. We have the Bible to guide us as we seek to follow Jesus. Sometimes it's going to feel fun and exciting to follow Jesus, but other times it might feel difficult to follow Him. It will often mean making choices that are different from those the world is making. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Mark 8:34.)

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### BIG PICTURE QUESTION

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What did Jesus teach when He was on earth?  
Jesus taught about God and His kingdom. He taught that all  
Scripture is about Him.

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## THE MISSION OF THE GOSPEL

### 1 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY

Instruct kids to open their Bibles to Matthew 5:16. Lead them in reading the key passage aloud together. Lead kids to find a partner. Designate one partner as the mover and the other as the mirror. Have the mover and the mirror face each other. The mover will do motions while saying the key passage, and the mirror will reflect those motions back to the mover. Allow them to continue for a couple of minutes and then switch roles.

Explain that Jesus gave us the perfect example of how to live in a way that honors God. Believers are called to follow Jesus' example. When Christians live in this way, it shines a light into the world and gives people a picture of what God is like.

### 2 PRAY

Invite volunteers to share prayer requests. Then pray, thanking Him for calling believers to follow Him.

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#### ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

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### WHO'S MISSING?

Write each of the twelve disciples' names on individual pieces of paper. Pass all but one out to the kids. Have the kids take turns reading out the names on their papers. Then have them work together to figure out which disciple is missing. Collect all the cards, mix them up, pass out 11 cards again, and repeat the process. Continue, challenging the kids to cut down on the amount of time it takes to figure out the missing disciple as they keep playing.

**JESUS INVITED TWELVE MEN TO FOLLOW HIM AS DISCIPLES.** These twelve men walked closely with Jesus. As we continue to learn about Jesus' earthly ministry in the next few weeks, we'll hear more about these men and how they learned from Jesus.