

Jesus Calls Disciples: Matthew 4:12-22 Sunday School Lesson

 ministry-to-children.com/servanthood-lesson-4

Written by Leah Pittsinger Last updated March 26, 2019 Leave a Comment Filed Under: Lesson Plans , Servanthood for Kids

September 9, 2015

In Matthew 4:12-22 Jesus begins his preaching ministry and calls his disciples.

As Jesus called his disciples, he was also committing himself to become their servant leader. This lesson shows Jesus' humility and dedication to his disciples helped them learn how to serve. Use this lesson in Sunday School or Children's Church.

TARGET AGES: 9 – 13 Older Elementary. You may need to simplify this lesson when working with younger children.

CURRICULUM UNIT: This lesson is part of the Servanthood for Kids: The Life of Jesus. You can use it as a stand-alone Sunday School lesson or you can teach the whole curriculum in any order.

OBJECTIVE: To identify Jesus' twelve disciples and learn that humility is one of the biggest qualities of a servant of Jesus Christ.

MAIN IDEA: Jesus was a true servant for his disciples because he equipped and taught them how to become leaders of the church.

SCRIPTURE PASSAGES: *Matthew 4:12-22, Matthew 9:9, Mark 2:14, John 1:43 & 49-50, Matthew 10:2-4*

MATERIAL(S): Notebook paper, writing utensils, activity sheet ([click to download](#))

Introduction (15 minutes)

OPENING PRAYER: "Lord, today we accept your call of service on our lives. Teach us how to serve by studying Jesus' selection of his disciples and their willingness to follow him. Amen."

PREVIOUS LESSON REVIEW: Play a "True or False" game with the class to review what they have learned about Jesus' life as a servant. Pass out blank pieces of paper and writing utensils. Consider presenting the winner with a small prize. Suggested questions include:

1. Jesus was born in Jerusalem. (False, he was born in Bethlehem)
2. Jesus had brothers and sisters. (True)
3. Jesus was baptized. (True)
4. Satan tempted Jesus for 20 days in the desert. (False, it was 40 days)

5. Jesus' parents were John and Mary. (False, they were Joseph and Mary)
6. The word "baptize" means to sprinkle someone with water. (False, the meaning is "full immersion")
7. Jesus was 12-years-old when his parents forgot him at the temple. (True)
8. Satan tempted Jesus with water in the desert. (False, he was tempted with bread)

At the end of the game say, "This game teaches us that it can be easy for people to get minor details about Jesus wrong. But, if we keep reading the bible so we know the truth about our Savior. It's very important to read our bibles!"

Matthew 4:12-22 New International Reader's Version (NIRV) Children's Translation

Jesus Begins to Preach

¹²John had been put in prison. When Jesus heard about this, he returned to Galilee. ¹³Jesus left Nazareth and went to live in the city of Capernaum. It was by the lake in the area of Zebulun and Naphtali. ¹⁴In that way, what the prophet Isaiah had said came true. He had said,

¹⁵"Land of Zebulun! Land of Naphtali!

Galilee, where Gentiles live!

Land along the Mediterranean Sea! Territory east of the Jordan River!

¹⁶The people who are now living in darkness
have seen a great light.

They are now living in a very dark land.

But a light has shined on them." (Isaiah 9:1,2)

¹⁷From that time on Jesus began to preach. "Turn away from your sins!" he said. "The kingdom of heaven has come near."

Jesus Chooses His First Disciples

¹⁸One day Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee. There he saw two brothers, Simon Peter and his brother Andrew. They were throwing a net into the lake, because they were fishermen. ¹⁹"Come and follow me," Jesus said. "I will send you out to fish for people." ²⁰At once they left their nets and followed him.

²¹Going on from there, he saw two other brothers. They were James, son of Zebedee, and his brother John. They were in a boat with their father Zebedee. As they were preparing their nets, Jesus called out to them. ²²Right away they left the boat and their father and followed Jesus. **New International Reader's Version (NIRV)**

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Sunday School Lesson (15 minutes)

1. Explain to the students that after Jesus was tempted in the desert by Satan he began choosing specific people to mentor and teach.
 - Ask, "Who can tell me how many disciples, or followers, Jesus picked? Can you name any of them?" Turn to *Matthew 4:18-22*. Read the passage and list the first four disciples on the board (Peter, Andrew, James, and John).
 - Ask, "What do we know about these men from the scripture passage (fishermen, brothers, left immediately, etc)?" Point out that these first four disciples were all fishermen, a very humble job in Jesus day.
 - Look up the rest of the disciples' names by turning to *Matthew 9:9* (Matthew), *Mark 2:14* (Levi, another name for Matthew), *John 1:43,49-50* (Philip and Nathanael, another name for Bartholomew), and *Matthew 10:2-4* (Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Zealot and Judas Iscariot).
2. Say, "Let's brainstorm for a moment: Why was it necessary for Jesus to personally teach disciples during his life on earth (because he was going to heaven and the disciples would have to lead the church as his appointed leaders)?"

Make the distinction that Jesus didn't pick the disciples because they were perfect – for example, Peter denied him and Judas betrayed him – but because they had hearts that were ready and willing to serve. Say, "God doesn't care about our status, popularity, or physical characteristics. He cares about our desire to serve him! Do you have the desire to serve God?"

Activity Sheet (10 minutes) *See attachment* Pass out the "Twelve Disciples" crossword sheet to review the lesson. Consider allowing students to work in pairs or small groups.

Optional Activities: If you need to extend this lesson, we recommend the following free activities from our website:

Conclusion (5 minutes)

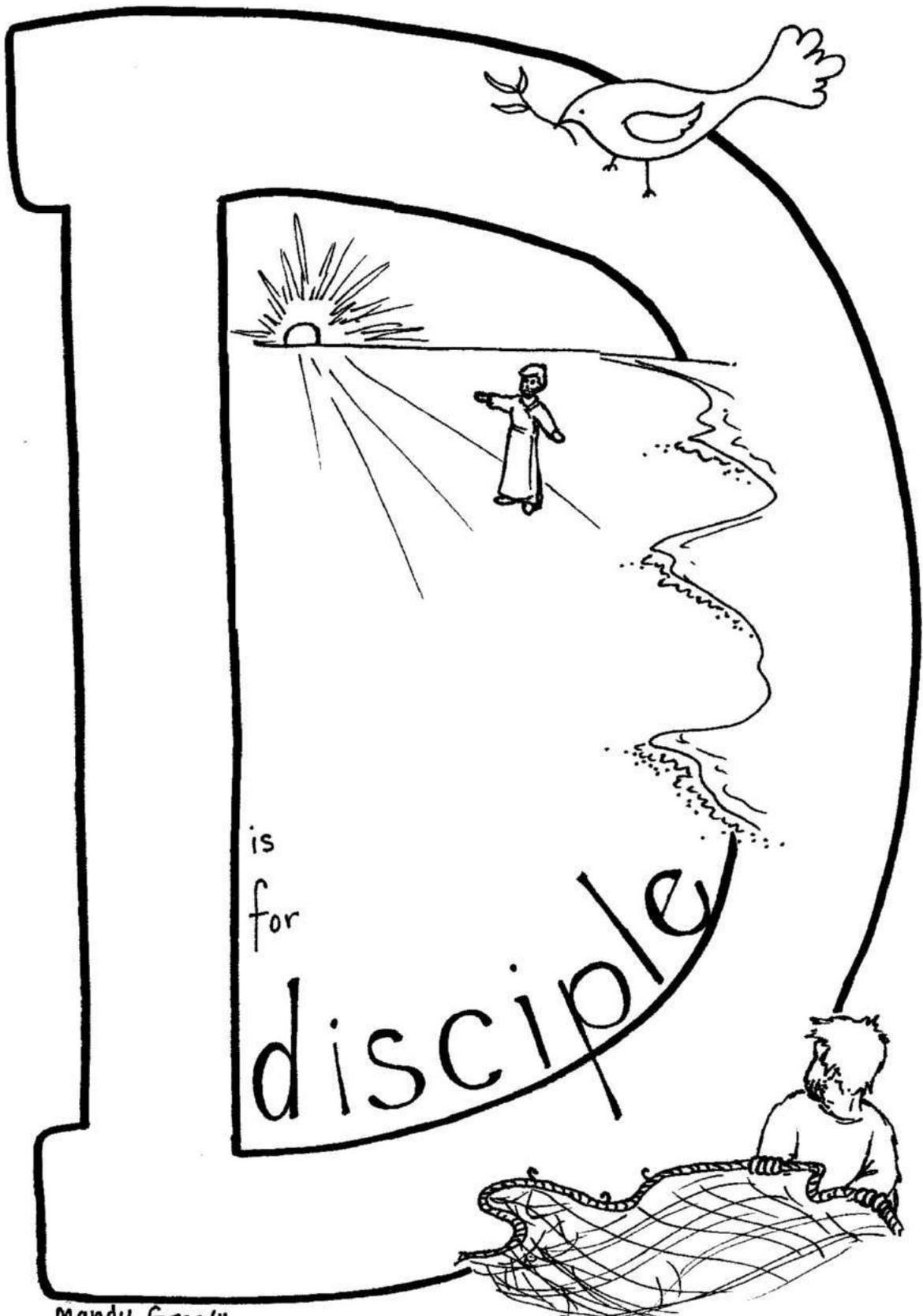
RECAP: Jesus chose his disciples not because they were more intelligent, gifted or prosperous than others but because they had willing hearts to follow him and serve. Service is not about what we can do from our own strength but what God can do when we are humble and submit to his will.

CLOSING PRAYER: "God, humble our hearts as we serve you this week, and give us the opportunity to tell others about Jesus as we serve. Amen."

Simon * Andrew * James * John * Phil

* James * John * Philip * Bartholomew * Matthew *

* Bartholomew * Matthew * Thomas * James * Simon *

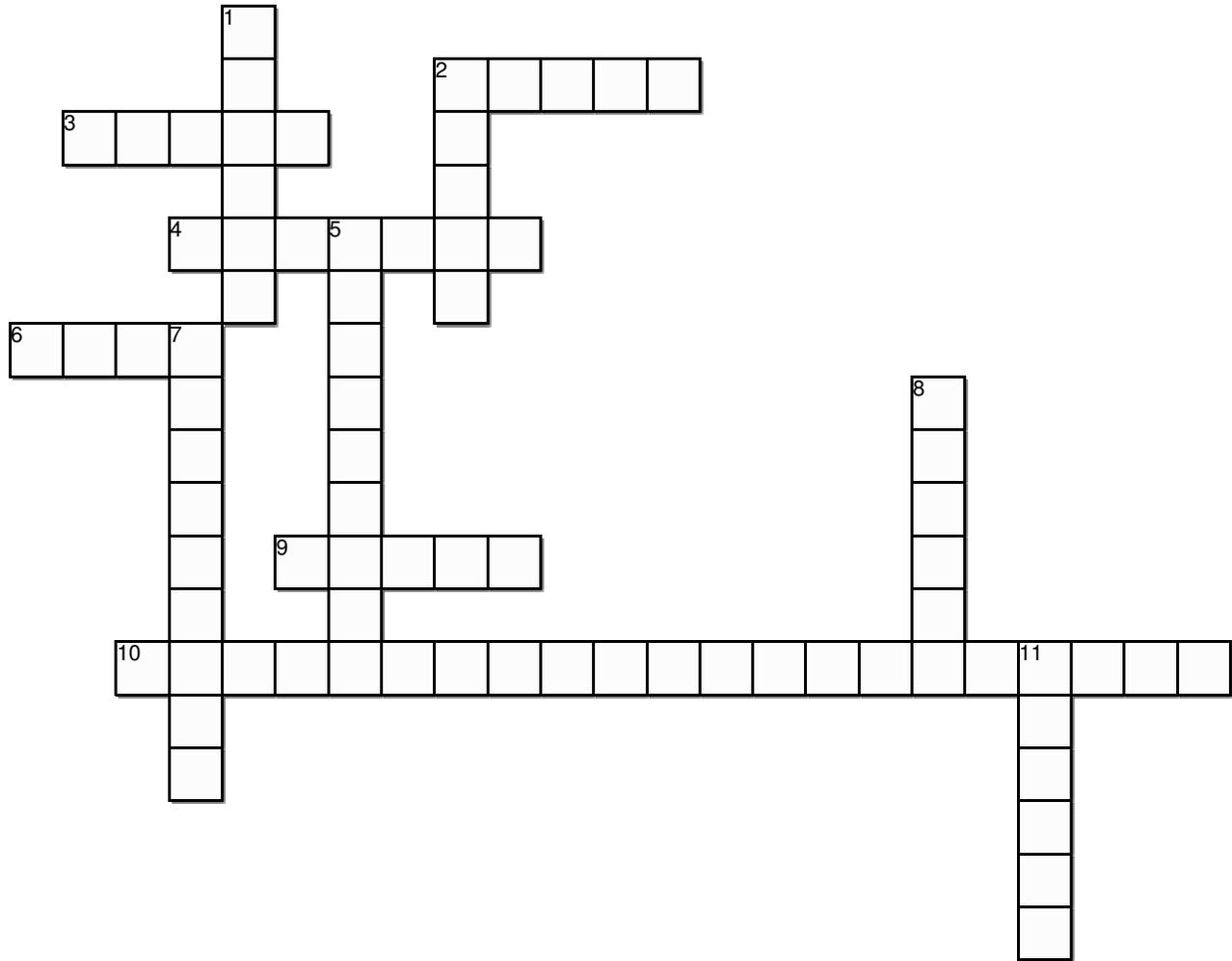


Mandy Grace '11

Thaddaeus * Judas * Simon * Andrew

Name: _____

The Twelve Disciples



Created on TheTeachersCorner.net Crossword Maker

Across

2. The disciple who betrayed Jesus, first name only (Matthew 10:4)
3. Also goes by 'the Zealot' (Matthew 10:4)
4. The tax collector, also known as Levi (Matthew 9:9)
6. The other son of Zebedee (Matthew 4:21)
9. Also goes by 'Simon' (Matthew 4:18)
10. Shares his name with another disciple (Matthew 10:3)

Down

1. Known for doubting Jesus (John 20:27)
2. One of the sons of Zebedee (Matthew 4:21)
5. The tenth listed disciple (Mark 3:16-19)
7. Philip led this person to Jesus, also known as 'Bartholomew' (John 1:45)
8. Jesus found him on the way to Galilee (John 1:43)
11. Peter's brother (Matthew 4:18)

Learning the Names of the Disciples

 ministry-to-children.com/twelve-disciples

Written by Reader Submitted Last updated May 31, 2011 Leave a Comment Filed Under: Uncategorized May 30, 2011

This ministry idea shared by one of our readers, Linda M Howard from First Baptist Church Tyrone, GA.

I do have something I would like to share with you so you can share it with others. I wanted my class to learn the disciples but couldn't find any 'help' when searching the internet. So I decided to put them in alphabetical order and I was amazed at how easy it was then. This is the results:

A ~ Andrew

B ~ Bartholomew

J ~ James, James, Judas, Judas, John

M ~ Matthew

P ~ Peter, Philip

S ~ Simon

T ~ Thomas

They loved learning this and wanted to say them every time we met. One asked if they could learn the Books of the Bible in Alphabetical order! If you want to use Thaddaeus, you can add him in the "T" list and take out one Judas.

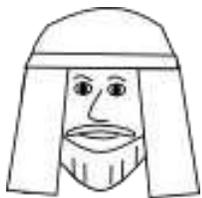
Hope this will be as much fun for others as it was for us.

Reader Interactions

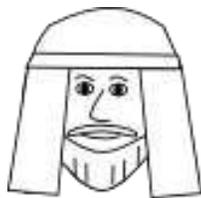
Twelve Disciples Coloring Activity

Jesus' disciples were twelve men he picked to travel with him and learn from him.

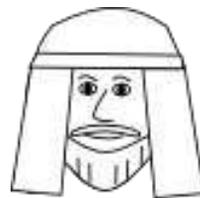
1. Color the twelve disciples and read their names.
2. Peter and Andrew were brothers. Draw a circle around both of them together.
3. James and John were brothers. Draw a circle around both of them together.
4. Peter, John, and Matthew all wrote books of the Bible. Put a check mark next to each of them.
5. Judas turned against Jesus and betrayed him. Draw a big X to cross out Judas.



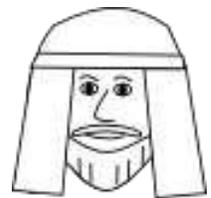
Peter



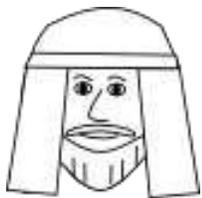
Andrew



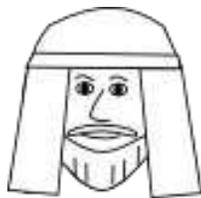
James
(brother of John)



John



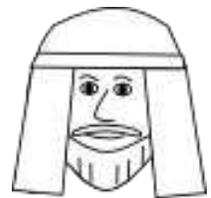
Philip



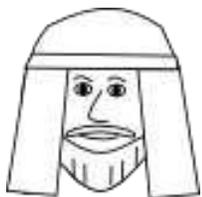
Bartholomew



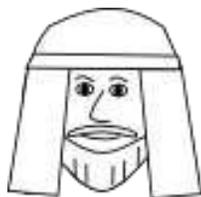
Thomas



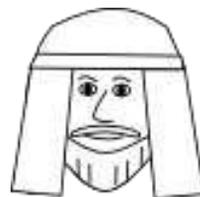
Matthew



James
(son of Alphaeus)



Thaddeus



Simon



Judas

A disciple is someone who learns from Jesus. How can you learn from Jesus?

“Fishers of Men”

Children’s Sermon Object Lesson on Matthew 4:12-23



Children’s Message: Fishers of Men

Following Jesus and Encouraging Others to do Likewise

Main Objective: For young children, it might seem strange to hear Jesus promise His disciples that they will “fish for people.” This message explores that concept by explaining to students how God wants us to bring others to the knowledge of His salvation and family. We want to express to kids the importance of a life lived for and with Christ, and what a blessing it is to share with others!

Law/Gospel Theme: Jesus came to live among us and die for us to take away the guilty stain of our sins. He called His first disciples, who were willing to leave everything and follow Him. We should also be willing to do whatever it takes to follow Christ, and we should be eager to share the good news with others and “fish for people”!

Object Lesson Props: Fishing equipment, such as nets, rods, bait, tackle, etc; pictures of fishing boats or old fishing methods.

- Don’t forget you can watch our teaching example of this [children’s message](#) on [YouTube](#). Get new object lessons on our website every week.
- See the [Bible craft](#) and [Sunday School lesson](#) that accompany this children’s sermon.
- Compare the [“Fishing for People” children’s message](#) from Sermons4Kids

Bible Passage: Matthew 4:12-23

Message: Note: As with most messages, the details of how you choose to communicate this are adaptable and should cater to timing as well as to your audience and student needs. Use what best suits you and those you teach.



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Children's Sermon "Fishers of Men"

from Matthew 4:12-23

Greet the children, bringing up some fishing equipment.

Hello, children of God! You know what? I think I would like to do some fishing. Have any of you ever been fishing before? What do you need to do when you fish? I have with me some equipment that people sometimes use when they go fishing. (*Hold up items as you discuss*)

So here is a fishing "rod": you put some kind of "bait" on the end, and then you hold it until a fish comes along and bites at it. Then you turn this crank and try to reel it in! Here's another kind of item you might use...it's a net. This kind of tool might make it easy to scoop up fish if you had a lot of them in one spot. Sometimes people use really big nets to pull in fish. This was probably how people used to fish in the times of Jesus, in fact. They had huge nets that they would toss into the water to see what they could pull up. Here are some pictures of boats that might help people catch fish.

So why are we talking about fishing? Well, here's another question: have you ever been fishing for *people*? Wait, how does that work?? Can you catch people in a net?? (*pretend to "catch" one of the students*) That seems strange...

But you know what, in today's Gospel lesson, Jesus invited His disciples to be fishers of men. He met a man named Peter, who had a fishing boat. Jesus began to preach from the middle of the lake, right on this boat!

Then He told Peter to put his nets down to catch fish...Peter tried to explain that he hadn't caught any fish all night, but he followed the directions of Jesus and put his net down again. When he did, he caught more fish than he could even carry! This made him realize that Jesus was something very special, was SomeONE very special. Peter bowed before Jesus. He was willing to do whatever it might take to follow this



teacher. Peter left his fishing boat and his old job in order to become a disciple. Jesus told Peter and his brother Andrew that they would become “fishers of men.” This meant that He was going to use the former fishers in a special way. They would be gathering more followers for Jesus, and would serve people and help people just like Jesus did.

Would you like to be a fisher for disciples? You can! Instead of sitting by a lake or scooping up fish in a pond, you can be a fisher by telling others about Jesus. You can share His love by loving others. Jesus wants us to tell everyone about Him and “make disciples” for Him. We can be fishers of friends! This is an amazing blessing and privilege that we have from God. We can still work at regular jobs, of course. But we can also spread the love of Jesus and “catch” other people to be part of God’s family! We need to be willing to follow Him, and encourage others to do the same. Why don’t we say a prayer about that now?

Children’s Prayer Moment

(Have kids repeat each line)

Dear God,

Thank you for the love of Jesus

Help us to follow Him and know what that means.

Help us share His love with one another.

Thank you that we can be disciples, too.

Thank you for your love.

We love you, God!

In Jesus’s name, Amen!



Matthew 4:12-23 (NIV)

Jesus Begins to Preach

¹² When Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, he withdrew to Galilee. ¹³ Leaving Nazareth, he went and lived in Capernaum, which was by the lake in the area of Zebulun and Naphtali— ¹⁴ to fulfill what was said through the prophet Isaiah:

¹⁵ “Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali,
the Way of the Sea, beyond the Jordan,
Galilee of the Gentiles—

¹⁶ the people living in darkness
have seen a great light;
on those living in the land of the shadow of death
a light has dawned.”^[a]

¹⁷ From that time on Jesus began to preach, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.”

Jesus Calls His First Disciples

¹⁸ As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. ¹⁹ “Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will send you out to fish for people.” ²⁰ At once they left their nets and followed him.

²¹ Going on from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John. They were in a boat with their father Zebedee, preparing their nets. Jesus called them, ²² and immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.

Jesus Heals the Sick

²³ Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people.

[Matthew 4:12-23 NIV](#)



Fishers of Friends! Craft Ideas for Following Jesus & Fishing for People

These Bible crafts teach kids about their role in telling friends about Jesus. See more Bible crafts, activities, and coloring pages on our website.

Fishers of men? What can this mean? As we discuss with children the importance of loving and following Jesus, we will also communicate the blessing of sharing the Gospel good news with others around us. In this way, we can join with Peter in making new disciples and “fishing for friends.” These crafts use the idea of fishing as an opportunity to create some fun reminders of our call to share the faith and serve Christ. Go fish!

Don't miss the [children's sermon](#) & [Sunday School lesson](#) that inspired these crafts. You can watch a [video demonstration](#) of this craft on YouTube

Bible Verses or Craft Captions:

I will be a fisher of friends!

Jesus calls us to be fishers of men...share His love with others!

And he said to them, “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.” –Matthew 4:19

God loves you...and so do I! Share the good news!

I can be a follower of Jesus, and I want to tell others about Him

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit... -Matthew 28:19



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Craft: “Fishers of Men Boat”

You will need:

- Paper or notecards
- Scissors
- String or pipe cleaners
- Markers or decorating materials
- Hole punch or tape

Procedure:

1. Cut the paper plate in half.
2. Decorate the half-plate to look like a boat, adding color, stickers, or writing.
3. Place a “sail” on top of the boat with a pipe cleaner and paper, if desired.
4. Add a verse caption or note on the boat.
5. Cut fish shapes out of paper. Write the names of friends who need prayer or attention.
6. Punch holes in the fish as well as the boat. String the fish onto the boat so that they dangle and can be “reeled” up and down.



Craft: “Fishing for Friends” Rod

You will need:

- Paper or cardstock
- Pipe cleaners, ribbon, or string
- Toilet paper or paper towel tubes
- Scissors
- Hole Punch
- Decorative materials (markers, fabric paint)



Procedure:

1. Cut fish shapes out of the paper.
2. Decorate the fish, writing down names of people that need prayer or people who need to hear the good news of Jesus.
3. Decorate the tube, adding the verse caption as well as color or stickers.
4. String the fish and attach them to the tube using punched holes or tape.
5. Remember to pray for the “fish” and follow Jesus!



Craft: “Caught in a Net”

You will need:

- Paper or cardstock
- Scissors
- Decorative materials (markers, crayons, colored pencils)
- Paper bags



Procedure:

1. Decorate your paper bag to look something like a fishing net. Cut the top off, draw lines, or crumple it to look rugged!
2. Add verse caption and title, if desired.
3. Cut the paper into fish shapes.
4. Write the names of people who need prayer onto the fish, and decorate if desired.
5. Let the fish “jump” in and out of the “net.” Remember to pray for and share God’s love with those in your bag!





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You can reach us directly editor@sundayschool.works

Best Sunday School Curriculum & Resources

Let's make Sunday School great again! Here are some of the best resources to help you get started:

1. [Sunday School Lessons](#)
2. [Coloring Pages for Sunday School](#)
3. [Sunday School Crafts](#)
4. [Bible Games for Sunday School](#)



We are proud to partner with Ministry-To-Children.com to share all the best free online [Sunday School curriculum](#) for kids. Don't miss their latest [children's ministry](#) ideas!