

# Jesus Calls His Disciples

Matthew 4:18-22; Mark 1:16-34; Luke 5:1-11

## PPT Title

### Jesus Calls His Disciples

**Main Point:** We must each chose whether we will follow Jesus.

**Key Verse:** "Come. Follow Me," Jesus said. "I will make you fishers of people." - Mark 1:17



**Say:** Forgiveness from sin is a wonderful gift. Everyone longs to know true forgiveness for their sins. When John the Baptist announced that Jesus was the Lamb of God **who came to take away the sins of the world**, people began to follow Jesus (John 1:29).

The people who began to follow Jesus were called His **disciples**. A disciple is a person who follows another person and his teaching. Becoming a disciple of Jesus is usually a step-by step process. It's learning through faith to trust and follow Him one step and one event at a time.



Peter, Andrew, James, and John were all fishermen. Fishing was their job. You may enjoy an afternoon of fishing. These men were professional fishermen. Every day they let down their nets, caught the fish, cleaned the fish, and sold them. Day after day, they did these same things over and over again. Jesus walked right up to them, and offered to turn their routine into adventure.

*One day Jesus was standing by the Sea of Galilee. The people crowded around Him and listened to the word of God. Jesus saw two boats at the edge of the water. They had been left there by the fishermen, who were washing their nets. He got into the boat that belonged to Simon (Peter). Jesus asked him to go out a little way from shore. Then He sat down in the boat and taught the people.*

*When He finished speaking, He turned to Simon (Peter). He said, "Go out into deep water. Let the nets down so you can catch some fish." - Luke 5:1-4*

**Ask:** Do you think Simon Peter will LISTEN to Jesus? How long had Peter been awake trying to fish? *All night.*



**Say:** Remember, Peter had JUST washed his nets. If he let them down into the sea again, the nets would be full of salt water, and Peter would have to wash them all over again. Peter told Jesus that he had been up all night trying to fish and that he didn't catch anything. BUT, because **Jesus** told him to put his net down into the deep water, Peter trusted Jesus and then obeyed!

**Application:** Often times, God will tell us to do something that may be out of our way or seem too hard at the time. However, we must always be like Peter, obeying and trusting Him, because God is Lord. There is blessing in obedience, and even if you don't see it immediately, it is always better to obey God, no matter what He tells you to do. God always rewards those who trust Him.

**Say:** Listen what happened next: *Simon (Peter) answered, "Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets."*



*When they had done so, they caught a large number of fish. There were so many that their nets began to break. So they motioned to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. They came and filled both boats so full that they began to sink. - Luke 5:5-7*

When Peter saw the MIRACLE that Jesus did, Peter fell at His feet. He said, "Get away from me, Lord. I am a sinful man." (Luke 5:8) Peter realized that JESUS WAS GOD, and Peter worshipped Him - right there in that smelly boat filled with fish.

**Application:** You can worship God anywhere at anytime!

**Say:** This was a huge step for Peter in becoming a disciple of Jesus. **When Peter realized that Jesus was God, everything changed!**

Jesus told Peter not to be afraid, and from that time forward instead of catching fish, Peter would now catch men. This would be a huge change for Peter; he had been a fisherman all of his life. It's what he knew how to do. Can you imagine Jesus telling you to drop everything you know very well to follow Him doing something very different?

From other scriptures, we know that Peter had a wife. It could be that God knew that Peter would be reluctant to follow Jesus because of his responsibilities to care for his family. But Jesus took away that fear by showing Peter that He was the great Provider. This huge catch of fish would bring in more money that Peter could've imagined for a day's work.

**Application:** There is no life more adventuresome than a life completely given to God. When Jesus Christ takes over, things get exciting! Being a true follower of Jesus Christ is the height of an extreme life!

## **FOLLOWING JESUS**

**Say:** Let's see what we can learn from this miracle:



**Following Jesus begins with seeing yourself as a helpless sinner.**

This is very important, and there are many people who have difficulty with this point. In our human nature, we want to believe that there is something good about us. We are told to "believe in ourselves." But the Bible says each one of us has sinned (Romans 3:23).

**Ask:** How many times would a person have to steal a car to be considered a car thief?  
*One!*

Likewise, it only takes ONE sin to be a sinner. A sin is any wrong action or any wrong thought (Isaiah 59:7, Matthew 15:19). The GREAT news is, Jesus came to save SINNERS. He came to find the LOST. He came to heal the SICK (Luke 5:31-32).

**Following Jesus means that you have FAITH - you trust Him to provide everything you need.**

Phillipians 4:19 says, "My God will meet all your needs. He will meet them in keeping with his wonderful riches that come to you because you belong to Christ Jesus." Everyone needs forgiveness from sin. Jesus provided that. Everyone needs his or her physical needs taken care of; Jesus provides. Jesus even provided the way of ETERNAL LIFE to those who put their faith and trust in Him. When we lack faith, it is often because we don't trust that God will provide exactly what we need! Jesus PROVES to us that He is our faithful Provider. Faith is based on knowledge and experience. We know that we can trust God because of what the Bible teaches and because of how we've seen Him work in the past.



### **Following Jesus means LISTENING to Him and seeing that He is God!**

Jesus didn't just tell Peter to be His disciple. Jesus SHOWED him that He could be trusted that He would provide. Look back to the story: Jesus had the disciples catch so many fish that TWO boats began to sink. God supplies ABUNDANTLY more than we could ever ask or imagine!

### **Following Jesus means saying YES to Him and NO to other things.**

Whenever you say YES to something, you are essentially saying NO to something else. When your parents said YES to marrying each other, they said NO to everyone else. When you say YES to buy something at the store, you are saying NO to buying another item. Jesus wanted Peter, James, and John to say YES to follow Him and NO to fishing. Their boats, nets, lines, and hooks were familiar to them and made them feel successful, safe, and secure. Jesus would show them that HE alone would be their All-Sufficient One. The Bible says that they left everything and followed Jesus.

**Note to Teacher:** Often times, our greatest problem will come in that area in which we are most skilled, most knowledgeable. For Peter, this was his skill as a fisherman. Jesus had to show Peter that He knew more than this veteran of the Sea of Galilee did, so that Peter could find Jesus the Master and Teacher. Whatever it is that you find yourself good at, whatever it is that you trust in, is that which you must forsake to follow Christ.

### **Following Jesus means that we must LISTEN, OBEY, and do things HIS way!**

Jesus came to save the lost and to heal the sick. If we are going to follow Jesus, then we must listen, obey, and be careful to do things His way. Peter and his friends had to leave behind fishing as their career. All fishermen know that nighttime is the best time to catch fish. Once the sun comes up, fish are harder to catch. Yet it was during the day that Jesus told these men to lower their nets, and huge amounts of fish were caught. When you are a true disciple of Jesus, He may tell you to do things differently than you did before. LISTEN to what He's saying to you!

**Application:** Are you willing to be His disciple? **Ask:** What is a disciple? *A disciple is a person who follows another person and his teaching.*



**Say:** We are going to see large crowds of people who follow Jesus, but only a few remain as His true disciples. True discipleship has a cost. A true disciple follows Jesus no matter what the cost.

Jesus had just chosen these men to follow Him and be His disciples. Jesus' disciples are going to **be with Jesus**. The more they are with Jesus, the more they will **believe and trust** in Him. The more they believe and trust in Him, the more they will become like Him!

#### **PPT Verse**

**Key Verse:** "Come. Follow Me," Jesus said. "I will make you fishers of people." - Mark 1:17

#### **PPT Main Point**

**Main Point:** We must each chose whether we will follow Jesus.

**Note to Teacher:** The following are optional descriptions of how all twelve of the disciples were called by Jesus.

**The calling of Simon (Peter), Andrew, James and John.** Jesus' calling of his first disciples is one of the most remembered stories of the Bible. The event is recorded in all four gospels, although it is described slightly differently in each of them. The first four disciples called were two pairs of brothers - Simon Peter and Andrew and James and John, the sons of Zebedee.

In the gospel of John, Andrew and another disciple of John the Baptist, possibly Philip, are introduced to Jesus and invited to come along with him. After spending some time with Jesus, Andrew runs to his brother Simon (Peter) and announces that he has found the Messiah. Jesus then looks at Simon and declares that his name shall be "Cephas" (which means Peter or rock). This choice of names for him at first seems surprising as Peter is often impulsive, boisterous and prone to constant mistakes. He is remembered for his self-confident claims to always follow Christ, after which he denied him three times. Peter was changed after Christ's resurrection and after Pentecost, he became the leader of the disciples, the first to perform a miracle, an inspiring and fearless preacher of the gospel. Peter was the author of two letters and as an old man was martyred by crucifixion upside down.

Jesus gave the nickname "Boanerges" which means "sons of thunder" to James and John due to their fiery temperaments or perhaps their glowering faces. Certainly both James and John were rebuked by Jesus on several occasions. James and John, together with Peter were Jesus' closest disciples, his inner circle, and on several occasions were taken off with him apart from the rest. John is believed to be the author of the gospel of John and many scholars also attribute the book of Revelation to him. He is also referred to as the "disciple Jesus loved."

These four men, Andrew, Simon Peter, James and John, were not strangers to Jesus when he called them away from their nets. They had probably heard his preaching or at the very least heard of him. It is likely that they worked together in a small fishing business. As businessmen, they were not poor, but by following Jesus they were required to leave all they had. Their allegiance was to be to him alone. They would be dependent on the gifts and hospitality of others for all their needs.

**The calling of Levi (Matthew).** One of Jesus' disciples was a shocking choice. The four fishermen were certainly not influential leaders in the community, but they at least held respectable jobs. Levi (or Matthew, as the gospel of Matthew records- most Biblical scholars think these two men are the same person) was a despised tax collector. In calling Levi, Jesus made a symbolic gesture -- God's love is available for all, even for one so hated as this. Tax collectors in Jesus' time were considered contemptible and corrupt. These Jews were hired by the Romans to collect taxes from their fellow Jewish neighbors. They received their salaries by extorting more taxes than the Roman government required, pocketing the excess for themselves. The more they demanded, the more rich they became. Tax collectors were considered by other Jews to be both traitors and thieves. Getting rich was probably at the top of Levi's (Matthew's) list, yet Jesus obviously saw something in Levi that others did not. We learn from this that God does not judge by the same standards man does. We also learn that God comes to those who need Him the most.

**The calling of Philip and Nathanael (Bartholomew).** In the gospel of John 1:43-51, Jesus also calls Philip and Nathanael (also called Bartholomew) to be disciples. Nathanael at first responds to his friend Philip's exuberance about discovering the Messiah with scorn... "Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?" (John 1:46). But Jesus sees Nathanael sitting under a fig tree and declares him to be a "true Israelite." This demonstration of Jesus opens the eyes of Nathanael who declares Jesus to be "the Son of God...the King of Israel."

**Simon the Zealot.** Little is written in the gospel accounts of the remaining disciples. Simon, the zealot is thought to have been connected with a fanatical nationalist group

whose guerrilla activities were designed to drive out the Roman occupation forces. In reality, they often provoked many bloody reprisals. Most of the zealots found their greatest political and religious support in the Galilean hillside and it is believed that Simon resided near the Sea of Galilee.

**Judas Iscariot.** Judas Iscariot is known to have been the treasurer of Jesus' band of followers. Judas is notorious for his betrayal of Jesus for 30 pieces of silver and his subsequent suicide. The gospel accounts do not attempt to analyze the motive of Judas' actions. This has been the object of much speculation and discussion among Biblical scholars. Some thoughts are: that Judas was the only disciple not from Galilee thus he always seemed to be the "odd man out," that Judas was a Zealot, the most strident of the group and that he misinterpreted Jesus' Messiahship. He gradually grew disillusioned with Jesus' perceived "inaction" thus deciding to take matters into his own hands and believing he would force Jesus to declare his Messiahship during Passover when the support and crowds were greatest. Judas' conception of the Messiah did not include Jesus being put to death. Once the plot was set in motion, however, there was not stopping it.

**Thaddaeus (also called Judas, not Iscariot, son of James).** Little is known about this disciple. He was possibly the grandson of Zebedee.

**Thomas.** Thomas was also a fisherman. Thomas is perhaps best known for his pessimistic and doubting response to the story of the resurrected Jesus which he did not at first witness. Even today those who are skeptical are referred to as "Doubting Thomases." After Christ's death, Thomas' many journeys led him around the eastern world where he built many churches.

**James, Son of Alphaeus, or James the Less.** Little is known about this disciple. It is possible he was related to Matthew and Thaddaeus.

The number twelve, the number of the tribes of Israel, has always had great importance in the Jewish faith. Choosing twelve disciples had symbolic significance for the people to whom he preached. The location of the commissioning of the disciples also had symbolic significance. In Mark 3:13-19 we read that the appointment took place on a mountain. The Jewish people considered mountains to be places of prayer and divine revelation. Jesus commissioned the twelve disciples to share his ministry, to "proclaim the message and to have authority to cast out demons" (Mark 3:14). He gave the twelve special instructions and defined the relationship they were to have with him. This signified a shift in their responsibilities. No longer were they just required to learn and be students; now they were Jesus' apostles, his authorized agents, representatives and "messengers," ones sent with a special commission. They were sent out to preach the message Jesus had been sharing with them. The word "apostle" was also used to describe Paul, Barnabas and several others who also went into the world preaching Jesus' message as his authorized agents.

These twelve were certainly Jesus' closest friends, but there were hundreds of people, including many women, who followed him, learned from him, and supported him in his ministry.

The list of the twelve names varies slightly among the Gospel accounts, but every list begins with Simon Peter and ends with Judas Iscariot. Biblical scholars have several theories to explain the differences, including that some may have been known by more than one name just as we today may have several names. The exact names of the twelve are not the most important point - the fact that these twelve represented the continuation of Jesus' ministry to fulfill his mission on earth is the main focus. Today the church is appointed to carry out Jesus' mission. Even young children can be disciples of Jesus through telling family and friends about Him, participating in service, worshiping, and caring for others.

*(Source: Invitation Bible Studies for Elementary grades, Bible Zone #3, #10, #11, Who's Who in The Bible by Joan Comay and Ronald Brownrigg)*