

# Many Follow Jesus

Grades  
**1-2**

## DISCIPLES

LUKE 5:1-11; 6:12-16; 8:1-3

### What's happening in this story?

The stories of Jesus calling followers demonstrate how he broke down society's barriers to invite people into community and vocation. In these passages Jesus first calls Simon Peter—a fisherman. He then chooses twelve disciples from among those following him. Finally, we are told Jesus also welcomed Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Susanna, "and many others" as followers—unlikely disciples for the time not only because they were women but also because of their backgrounds. Together, these stories capture the wide spectrum of Jesus' followers and the inclusive spirit with which he calls people to join his work.

### What does this story mean for kids?

This story helps introduce the topic of how Jesus breaks down barriers and looks past how the world thinks about power and influence. To that end, Jesus is also inviting kids into a life of discipleship. Help them consider how they can be disciples like those in the text—not by leaving everything they know, but by following Jesus here and now.

### Why this theme?

These stories of diverse people becoming disciples illuminate the fact that discipleship is accessible to everyone—adults, kids, males, females, and regardless of social standing, ability, or any other characteristic.

### AGE LEVEL TIP

Kids this age have a small concept of the world and see it as just their home and community. It will be important to help them understand that when they see a globe or a map, it represents the entire world and all the people God created who share it.



### GENERAL SUPPLIES

- Markers
- Pencils
- Scissors
- Glue sticks

### LESSON SUPPLIES

- Paper towel tubes (1 per kid)
- Paper cups
- Blanket
- Basket
- Ping pong balls (12)
- Chenille stems (1 per kid)
- Sticky notes
- Whiteboard with markers

## Do some kids arrive early? Try this.

Invite kids to use markers to decorate paper towel tubes and think about things they could tell others about Jesus. They can hold the tubes up to their mouths like megaphones to give others messages about Jesus.

## Circle up with kids for an opening conversation.

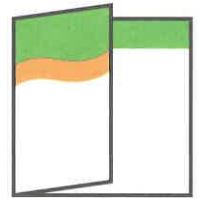
Write the words *love* and *serve* on a whiteboard. **What are some different ways that our church loves and serves others?** Allow kids time to respond. **Who does these things?** Kids write names or draw pictures of people on sticky notes and put them on the whiteboard. **Our church family works together to love and serve others. Jesus needed helpers too, so he called people to follow him as disciples.**

Pray together: **Dear God, help us to follow Jesus as his disciples as we love and serve others by what we say and do. Amen.**

## Pass out leaflets and pencils.

Invite kids to follow the alphabet letters using pencils to connect the dots. Ask kids what they made. **Find the first letter of your name. Draw a line from the letter**

**to the heart in the center.** Kids continue to find the rest of the letters in their first name and draw a line from each one to the heart in the center. **Write your name on the line, and trace over the letters in the word *disciple*.** Kids take turns reading the sentence with their name until everyone is named as a disciple. Collect their leaflets until Respond.



## Gather kids around the screen where you'll watch the video.

Let's see what happens when Ada wants to be called to be a disciple.

View Episode 8, "Disciple Requirements," on the Year Gold Winter PreK–Grade 2 DVD.

Ask kids these questions about the video:

- **What is Ada doing at the beginning of the video? Why?**
- **What surprised you about who Jesus calls to follow him?**
- **Who do you know who follows Jesus?**
- **Where do you learn to be a disciple of Jesus?**
- **Ada's friends helped her see that ordinary people can follow Jesus. How can you help others follow Jesus too?**



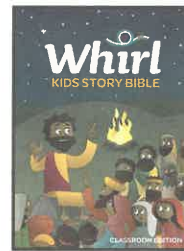
## Open your Whirl Kids Story Bibles.

**Let's find our story for today!** Help kids find "Jesus Calls Disciples" on page 186. Before you read, invite kids to look for the men and women who followed Jesus.

Read the story and Ada and Otto's questions and comments on each page.

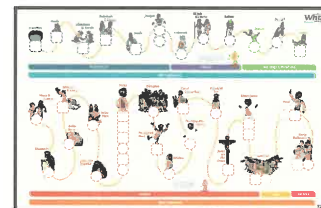
Ask these questions after you read the story:

- **Who was trying to catch fish?**
- **What happened when Jesus got into the boat?**
- **Why do you think the fishermen went with Jesus?**
- **What can you do to follow Jesus?**



## Gather near the Wall Chart to place today's sticker.

Point out the Testament (New), Bible section (Gospels), and character image (disciples). **Today's Bible story is about Jesus calling disciples to follow him. Let's add a sticker to remind us of the disciples catching people instead of fish** (net of fish). Point to the corresponding images of the disciples and the net of fish on page 187 in the Whirl Kids Story Bible.



## Play together!

**Jesus told Peter, James, Andrew, and John to put down their fishing nets and follow him. They would catch people instead of fish!** Ask kids to stand in a line one arm's length apart holding paper cups. Place a blanket on the floor at one end of the line and a basket of ping pong balls at the other end. The first kid puts a ball in their cup. Pass the ball from cup to cup by tossing and catching with both hands on the cup. Use the tune of "Row, Row, Row Your Boat" and sing or say together:

**Pass, pass, followers  
Right on down the line.**

**Follow Jesus everywhere  
Disciples all the time!**

When all the balls are on the blanket, kids stand around the edges, raise it, and shout, **"Look how many people we caught today!"**

### BIBLE BIT

Jesus spent much of his time teaching on or near the shores of the Sea of Galilee. Fish, fishing, and fishermen are mentioned often in the gospels.

### WATCH IT AGAIN

**Ada says she has a "disciple answer" ready for Otto's question. What do you think she means?**

### OUR CHURCH

Find out who calls for volunteers in your faith community. Is it a staff person or a volunteer? Write thank-you notes to those who look for volunteers.



# RESPOND 10

## Pass out leaflets, scissors, glue sticks, and chenille stems.

Unfold and tear off leaflet square. Keep the smaller panels nearby.

1. Hold up today's square and point to the map in the middle. **This map shows us the world that God created. The men and women who followed Jesus went around the world calling other people to join them as disciples.**
2. Point to the four pictures at the top of the leaflet panel. **What do you see in each picture?** Allow kids time to respond. **How are the people you see different from us? How are they the same?**
3. **Cut out the pictures and glue them in the spaces in the corners around the map.**
4. Give each kid one chenille stem. **Bend and twist your stem to make a person.**
5. **Let's use your person and visit each place around the world.**
6. **What could you tell these people about Jesus?** Have kids take turns in pairs or small groups sharing their responses.
7. **We can all tell people about Jesus wherever we go.**

# LAUNCH 10

## Circle up with kids for a quick review.

**Jesus asked Peter, Andrew, James, and John to follow him so they could catch people instead of fish. Other men and women joined them as disciples. What does it mean to catch people?** Ask kids to hold up their chenille stem people. Say together, **"We can follow Jesus and catch others to come with us too!"**

## Pass out leaflet panels and markers.

Write your church's name, address, and worship time(s) on the whiteboard for kids to copy. **Let's invite others to join us at church. Color the shapes and bubble letters. Give the invitation to someone you want to worship with us next week.**

## Send kids out with a blessing.

Circle up with kids. **God blesses all of us. And that means me** (place a hand on your chest). **And that means you** (place your other hand on the shoulder of the kid next to you). Each kid passes the blessing by repeating those words and actions. When the blessing makes it back to you, say, **Go and bless the world.**

Thank kids for coming today. Remind them of the Family Square on the other side of the leaflet.