



COMMUNITY
BIBLE STUDY
CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

GOD'S LOVE IS GREAT

Preschool Teacher Lessons

Year 3 - Lesson 20

UNIT 4: GOD REVEALS HIS LOVE THROUGH JESUS
Jesus' Ministry

LESSON 20: Jesus' Helpers Become Fishers of Men

Scripture: Matthew 4:18-22, Mark 1:16-21, Luke 5:1-11

Story Overview: While walking by the Sea of Galilee, Jesus called four fishermen—Peter and his brother, Andrew, and James and his brother, John—to be his disciples. They left their boats and fishing nets to become Jesus' special helpers.

Aim: To teach the children that Jesus is calling them to be His special helpers just as He called His disciples.

Memory Verse: *"Let us love one another, for love is from God."* 1 John 4:7
(sung to "Old MacDonald")

Craft: Nylon Net Bag with Fish

Note to teacher: Please use this printed story as a guide only. Pray for God-given creativity as you share His story.

Long Bible Story:

What are these men doing? (*Show picture of men catching fish in a net.*) They're catching fish. How many of you have ever caught a fish? There were many men in the land where Jesus lived who owned boats and took them into the deep, deep water and put out big nets. They waited for fish to swim into the nets.

Peter and Andrew were brothers who fished together. James and John were also brothers and fished with Peter and Andrew. Almost every day these fishermen took their boats out to catch fish. It was hard work to be a good fisherman. At the end of the day, Peter and the other brothers cleaned their boats and nets. Many times the nets tore and needed to be repaired.

One day as the fishermen sat on the shore repairing their nets, a big crowd of people gathered to see and hear Jesus preach. Jesus told them all about God, He made sick people well, and did many other amazing things that no one else could do! The crowd of people pushed and shoved to get closer to see Jesus. As this happened, Jesus stepped back farther and farther until He was almost in the water. Jesus saw the fishermen and asked Peter if He could step into his boat to speak to the large crowd. He then asked Peter to push the boat out from the shore. Jesus sat down in the boat and preached to the people. Now all the people could hear Him as well as see Him.

When Jesus finished preaching to the people about God, He said to Peter, "Simon Peter, go out into deeper water and put your nets out to catch some fish." Peter didn't want to go out and put the newly

cleaned and repaired nets into the water again. He was tired. "Master," Peter said to Jesus, "my brother Andrew and I fished all night and caught no fish. But because You said so, we will put out the nets." So Peter and Andrew sailed their boat into the deep water and put out their nets. When the brothers did what Jesus told them to do, they could hardly believe their eyes! So many fish were caught in the net that it was too heavy to pull in, and it started to tear. Peter called to James and John, who were nearby in their boat, telling them to hurry and come help them with the heavy net overflowing with fish. As they worked together, the boats were quickly loaded with so many fish that both boats were about to sink!

When Peter saw all the fish, he realized that Jesus could make the nets full of fish. He fell on his knees before Jesus and asked Him to forgive him for not believing in His word. Peter wanted to be with Jesus all the time. He wanted to help Jesus and get to know Him better. As the boats came back to shore, Jesus asked Peter, Andrew, James, and John to be His disciples. A *disciple* is one who follows Jesus and obeys Him. "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men," Jesus said to His helpers.

These fishermen left their boats and nets to become fishers of men. Jesus didn't mean they would actually catch men in nets. Jesus would teach them how to tell people about God and to bring men, women, and children to Him. Now they were part of God's forever family and would teach others about God. They would show their love for others, because they felt God's love through His Son—Jesus.

Short Bible Story:

Peter and Andrew were fishermen. They were brothers who fished together. James and John were also brothers and fished with Peter and Andrew. The Bible tells us that once they fished all night and caught no fish. They were cleaning their boats and repairing their nets.

As they sat on the shore repairing their nets, they saw a large crowd of people following Jesus. People followed Jesus because He told them all about God. The crowd pushed and shoved to get closer to see Jesus. As this happened, Jesus stepped back farther and farther until He was almost in the water.

Jesus saw the fishermen and asked Peter if He could step into his boat to speak to the large crowd. Now all the people could hear Jesus as well as see Him. When Jesus finished teaching, He saw that the boat was empty and that Peter caught no fish. Jesus told Peter to take his boat out into the deeper water and put out his nets.

"Master," Peter said to Jesus, "Andrew and I fished all night and caught no fish. But because You said so, we will put out the nets." When they did what Jesus told them to do, they could hardly believe their eyes! So many fish were caught in the net that it was too heavy to pull in, and it started to tear. Peter called to James and John to hurry and help them with the heavy net. As they worked together, both boats were quickly full of fish.

As soon as the boats came back to shore, Jesus asked Peter, Andrew, James, and John to be His special helpers. Jesus said, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men." Now they were part of God's forever family and would teach others about God and the special love God shows us through Jesus.

Life Application:

We can also become fishers of men by telling our fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, and friends all we learn about Jesus. As we share with them what we know about Jesus, they can become part of God's forever family, too. Let's say our Bible verse, 1 John 4:7: *"Let us love one another, for love is from God."*

TEACHING IDEAS

Storytelling Ideas

- Use a toy boat and toilet tissue figures.
- Mark out a boat on the floor using masking tape. Have the kids sit in the “boat” as you tell the story.
- Children share ways they can be disciples (inviting someone to church, sharing what they’ve learned at CBS, etc.).

Interest Centers

- As children arrive, direct them to a table where they can trace and cut out fish from construction paper. Put fish into a large net or a nylon net bag, such as one that oranges come in. Explain that in Jesus' day, fishermen did not use fishing poles; they used large nets to catch fish.
- For younger children, provide flannel fish; allow children to place the fish on the flannel board.
- Provide "special effects" such as fishing poles, fishing nets, live goldfish, bait, etc.
- Place different amounts of goldfish crackers in containers or jars. Have the children guess the number of goldfish in each container. (Use different colored lids and note how many crackers are in each container. (Remind the children NOT to remove the lids.)
- Have fish cutouts for each child to decorate with sequins, etc.
- Draw a giant fish on white paper and have the kids use crayons to decorate the fish by drawing scales on it.
- Put children’s names or simple activities on fish shapes. Attach a paper clip to each fish. Make a rod from string, dowel and a magnet. Have the children “go fishing.”

Games

- **Fishers of Men:** One child pretends to be Peter and says, “Who would like to be fishers of men?” All the children get in line and march behind him or her, pretending to row a boat with arms. When Peter calls out, “Jesus loves you!”, all the children run (carefully) to their chairs. First one back and seated is the new Peter.
- **Go Fish:** Play the game of “Go Fish” with playing cards. (Game cards could be made from finding different colored fish and making stickers out of them to put on black cards. Kids could call out “red fish,” “blue fish,” “spotted fish,” etc. Give 5-6 fish cards to each child. The objective is to get rid of all the cards.)
- **Hide-and-Seek:** Play hide-and-seek with fish shapes cut from colorful paper.

- **Fill-the-Basket Relay:** Set up a relay using Swedish fish (or goldfish) and plastic spoons.
- **Follow the Leader:** Play Follow the Leader game, with the leader doing different motions.
- **Big Fish, Little Fish:** Use jump ropes to form two circular "fish nets" on the floor on opposite sides of the room. Choose two children to be fishermen, and explain that Jesus had many friends who were fishermen who caught fish and sold them in the market for people to eat. Explain that in this game, when the teacher calls out, "Big fish, little fish, swim, swim, swim!" everyone is to run from the fishermen. If a fisherman tags someone, he/she must go and stand inside one of the fish nets. When the nets get too crowded, the teacher will call out, "Big fish, little fish, swim away free!" Then everyone will escape and play again. Play for several minutes. Change fishermen often.
- **Disciple Tag:** Choose one child to be a "disciple." Have the other children scatter around the room. When the disciple tags someone, that person will become a disciple, too. Then both disciples will try to tag the other children. Continue until all the children have become disciples. After the game, talk about what Jesus' disciples did and what people who follow Jesus today can do.