

WEEK 2: A SAVIOR WORTH FOLLOWING

MEMORY VERSE OF THE MONTH:

Matthew 28: 5-6 “The angel said to the women, ‘Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen, just as He said. Come and see the place where he lay.’”

OPTIONAL POST VIDEO DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

What is a disciple?

A follower of Jesus

Why was Jesus able to explain the Old Testament Scriptures?

Because He is God.

Why did the Pharisees hang around Jesus?

They wanted to know if Jesus was following the rules.

Why do you think Jesus used Parables, or stories, to teach the people about the Kingdom of God?

(Answers will vary.)

Who did the people think that Jesus was? Who did his disciples think he was?

People thought Jesus was a rabbi, or a teacher. Some people weren't sure who he was! Jesus' disciples figured out that he was the Messiah.

THIS WEEK'S LESSON:

Use your Bible to tell the story of Jesus calling his disciples from Matthew 4:18-22, using this script.

SAY: When the time came for Jesus to begin his ministry, he decided to gather some people together to help him. One day, as he was walking along the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers fishing. Their names were Simon Peter and Andrew.

As they were casting their nets into the water to catch fish, Jesus called, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." What would you think if you were fishing and a stranger told you something like that? *(Allow children to answer.)*

The Bible tells us what the brothers did. *(Read Matthew 4:20 from your Bible.)* This was a big deal! Imagine if your job was working at a store. Each day you would go to work and help people find what they needed in the store. Then, one day, a customer comes up to you and says, "Leave this job and follow me." Would you quit your job immediately and follow that person? Probably not. But Peter and Andrew could tell there was something very special about Jesus. They dropped everything to follow him.

After Jesus called Peter and Andrew, he saw two other brothers fishing on a boat with their father. Their names were James and John. When Jesus called them to follow him, do you think they came? Not only were they busy doing their jobs, they were also helping their dad. What do you think happened?

Let's read to find out! *(Read Matthew 4:21-22.)* Wow! These two sets of brothers were willing to leave everything behind to follow Jesus.

Jesus called eight more disciples after Peter, Andrew, James and John. Their names were: Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James, Simon, Thaddaeus, and Judas. These were all different kinds of men. Some were fishermen, one was a tax collector, one was a political rebel (a Zealot). But they all came when Jesus called them. They stayed with him for three years and helped him accomplish the things he came to earth to do.

More than that, these men were some of the first to spread the good news about Jesus, after he returned to heaven. They even helped to start the church. And almost all of these men gave their lives for their faith in Jesus. Whatever they saw in this man caused them to stay loyal to him their entire lives. When Jesus asked his disciples who they thought that he was, Peter answered: "You are the Messiah."

Even though being Jesus' disciple wasn't always easy, his closest friends knew that they could trust him. They didn't always understand what he was teaching, and sometimes they were afraid of what was happening, but they followed Jesus anyway. After he returned to heaven, they believed in him so deeply that they were willing to suffer persecution and even give their lives for him. They knew that he was the Savior who had come to establish the Kingdom of God!

Jesus called twelve disciples during his earthly ministry. We are also his disciples if we have trusted Jesus as our Savior. Today we're going to learn a verse that talks about what it takes to be a disciple of Jesus.

Read Matthew 16:24.

"Then Jesus told his disciples, 'If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.'"

Explain unfamiliar words and concepts:

DENY HIMSELF — this means I choose God's way instead of my own.

TAKE UP HIS CROSS — this means I accept God's plan for me and don't let hard stuff keep me from following Jesus.

FOLLOW ME — Jesus invites us to follow his example as we get to know him better and live for him.

Consider sharing what you have had to give up in order to follow Jesus.

SAY: As we learned earlier from the video, many people followed Jesus around. Some were fans, like the large crowds of people and others were opponents, like the Pharisees. But his closest friends were his disciples. Jesus invites us to be his disciples too! When we believe that Jesus died on the cross and rose again to pay the punishment for our sins, we can be his disciples—or followers. During the next few weeks, we'll learn more about what Jesus did for us and even more about why he's worth following.

FAMILY ACTIVITY: MUSTARD TREE

Here's an activity for your family to do together. Before you begin. Pray together and ask God how your family can participate in the Kingdom of God on Earth.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

A large paper or papers taped together, Markers, tape, scissors, paper to draw and cut out leaves.

INSTRUCTIONS:

In one of his parables, Jesus compares the Kingdom of God to a mustard seed—it will start small, and one day it will be in full bloom! God is continually renewing and restoring his Kingdom on earth, and he calls us to join him! We can build God's Kingdom by loving our neighbor, being thankful for what God has given us and trusting his plan during hard times.

Create your own mustard tree. Draw the trunk and branches of a tree on a piece of paper or poster board. Cut out leaf shapes from another paper. Keep the blank leaves and tape in a small basket or bowl near your mustard tree, so leaves may be easily posted.

Add leaves to your tree anytime! You'll be amazed at how often leaves are added as your family becomes more aware of what everyone is learning about God and how he is active in every aspect of your lives. Your family will have a beautiful visual representation of the ways God is working in your lives and how you are participating in his Kingdom.

Here are some ideas of what to write on your leaves:

- Write prayer requests.
- Write service ideas you can do as a family (loving your neighbor): doing yard work for an elderly person, taking a meal to someone who is sick, volunteering to help at an event at your church, etc.
- Write things you are thankful for.