GOD WITH US

WEEK EIGHT

FOLLOW ME: JESUS INVITES US TO FOLLOW HIM

November 4th, 2026

DAY 1

1. Begin your study time with prayer and read Matthew 4:18-22 and Mark 1:16-20. What sticks out to you about how quickly these disciples left their nets to follow Jesus?

2. What are the "nets" in your life that Jesus might be calling you to leave?

3. How do you think the families of these fishermen reacted to their sudden departure?

4. What does this interaction say about the cost of discipleship?

5. Write out this week's memory verse on a notecard or a piece of paper and post it somewhere you will see often (ex: bathroom mirror, desk, bedroom, backpack, etc).

MEMORY VERSE

"And He said to them, 'Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men'."

- Matthew 4:19

I'M PRAYING ABOUT:

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GOD WITH US

DAY 2

1. Begin your study time with prayer and read Luke 5:1-11. Why do you think Jesus chose to perform this miracle *before* calling these men to follow Him?

2. What does Peter's reaction reveal about his understanding of who Jesus is and what He just did?

3. What does the phrase "fishers of men" mean?

4. How can we become "fishers of men" in our everyday lives?

5. Write out this week's memory verse below.

DAY 3

1. Begin your study time with prayer and read Matthew 9:9-13 and Luke 5:27-32. Why was Matthew (Levi) considered a traitor by his fellow jews?

2. What does Jesus's invitation show us about the heart of God?

3. How do the Pharisees react to Jesus eating with tax collectors and sinners? How does Jesus respond?

4. Who are the modern day tax collectors and outcasts in our society today?

5. Write out this week's memory verse below.

GOD WITH US

DAY 4

1. Begin your study time with prayer and read John 1:35-51. Jesus asks the first two disciples “What do you seek?”. How would you answer this question if He asked you?

2. Andrew’s immediate reaction was to go and find his brother to bring him to Jesus. What can we learn from this reaction?

3. How does Jesus respond to Nathanael’s skepticism?

4. What does this teach us about dealing with doubts? Write down any doubts you may have about Jesus and begin to seek out answers to your doubts.

5. Write out this week’s memory verse below.

DAY 5

1. Begin your study time with prayer. Which of the disciples do you identify with most? Why?

2. The disciples came from very diverse backgrounds. What does this tell us about the kind of kingdom that Jesus wants to build?

3. In what specific area of your life is Jesus calling you to deeper obedience, trust, or repentance?

4. What steps can you take to start living the way Jesus is calling you to?

5. Write out this week’s memory verse below.

GOD WITH US

FOLLOW ME (CALLING THE DISCIPLES)

JESUS INVITES US TO FOLLOW HIM

November 4th, 2026

Weekly Bible Reading Plan

- **Matthew 4:18-22**
- **Luke 9:23-36**
- **Luke 18:22-30**

Series Theme Verse

Hebrews 1:1-3 NASB | God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, **2** in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. **3** And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

Matthew 4:18-22 NASB | Now as Jesus was walking by the Sea of Galilee, He saw two brothers, Simon who was called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. **19** And He *said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men." **20** Immediately they left their nets and followed Him. **21** Going on from there He saw two other brothers, James the *son* of Zebedee, and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and He called them. **22** Immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed Him.

Luke 9:23-26 NASB | And He was saying to *them* all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me. **24** For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it. **25** For what is a man profited if he gains the whole world, and loses or forfeits himself? **26** For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when He comes in His glory, and *the glory* of the Father and of the holy angels.

Luke 18:22-30 NASB | When Jesus heard *this*, He said to him, "One thing you still lack; sell all that you possess and distribute it to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." **23** But when he had heard these things, he became very sad, for he was extremely rich. **24** And Jesus looked at him and said, "How hard it is for those who are wealthy to enter the kingdom of God! **25** For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." **26** They who heard it said, "Then who can be saved?" **27** But He said, "The things that are impossible with people are possible with God." **28** Peter said, "Behold, we have left our own *homes* and followed You." **29** And He said to them, "Truly I say to you, there is no one who has left house or wife or brothers or parents or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God, **30** who will not receive many times as much at this time and in the age to come, eternal life."

Ice Breaker

Which Disciple do you relate to most?

We will print this sheet for you to hand out to your groups. Have the kids list three things about their personality, then review the sheet to see which disciple they relate to most and why. Have them all share out loud in a roundabout style.

Disciple	Core Personality Archetype	Key Traits & Behavior
Simon Peter	The Impulsive Leader	Bold, outspoken, and fiercely loyal, but prone to acting before thinking. He was the passionate, protective "rock" of the group.
Andrew	The Relational Connector	Quiet, observant, and inclusive. He preferred working behind the scenes and excelled at introducing others to the group.
James (Son of Zebedee)	The Intense Zealot	Ambitious, intense, and deeply devoted. Nicknamed a "Son of Thunder" due to his fierce, sometimes volatile temperament.
John (Son of Zebedee)	The Passionate Devotee	Co-nicknamed a "Son of Thunder" for his early fiery nature, he matured into a highly empathetic, deeply loyal, and reflective individual.
Philip	The Pragmatic Thinker	Practical, process-oriented, and analytical. He was culturally adaptable but sometimes struggled to see the big picture beyond logistical limitations.
Bartholomew (Nathanael)	The Skeptical Searcher	Honest, direct, and slightly cynical at first. He didn't hide his doubts but possessed deep personal integrity once convinced.
Matthew (Levi)	The Detail-Oriented Misfit	Highly organized, structured, and observant. As a former tax collector, he was comfortable handling data but lived as a social outcast.
Thomas	The Honest Skeptic	Introspective, analytical, and highly cautious. He refused to blindly follow trends and demanded empirical proof to settle his anxieties.
James (Son of Alphaeus)	The Quiet Faithful	Modest and deeply reserved. Often called "James the Less," he worked consistently without demanding attention or status.
Thaddeus (Jude)	The Inquisitive Follower	Thoughtful and gently inquisitive. He focused on deeper spiritual meanings and valued clarity over superficial concepts.
Simon the Zealot	The Political Radical	Passionate, intensely driven, and revolutionary. He brought high energy and fierce conviction to his beliefs.
Judas Iscariot	The Calculating Strategist	Pragmatic, ambitious, and financially minded. He served as the group's treasurer but ultimately allowed greed and self-interest to guide his choices.

Connection:

The disciples came from different backgrounds, just like we do. Jesus wants a relationship with us, and our background doesn't matter. He wants to pull us out of darkness and make us new. He then uses us in unique ways to build His kingdom and bring Him glory.

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

1. What stuck out to you from the message?
2. Who do you follow? Why do you follow them? Where are they directing you?
3. Jesus asks everyone to follow Him. Where is Jesus taking those who follow Him?
4. What was the cost for the disciples following Jesus? What is the cost for you to follow Him?
5. Do you have any prayer requests?

LEADER GUIDE- Pete speaking

The choice to follow someone can be made in an instant, but to continue following them and let them truly influence our lives, we need to know whether they are worth following. We need to determine the intentions of the people we follow. Do the people we follow want what is good for us, or are they just looking for us to improve their lives or increase their status? When we need someone to help us or listen to our struggles, are they there? The reality is, we all follow someone or something, but you must ask where they are taking you.

When Jesus started His ministry, He asked people from different social backgrounds and professions to follow Him. These men responded by dropping everything that had once defined them to follow Jesus. When Jesus asks us to follow Him, He promises to take us somewhere. Jesus offers His followers eternal life, guidance to live with His peace and joy, right living, and a purpose: to make Him known. Jesus asks everyone to follow Him, but most say no. This week we will explore how He called those men back then and how that invitation is still available to anyone who counts the cost and steps out in faith by saying yes.

1. What stuck out to you from the message?

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2. Who do you follow? Why do you follow them? Where are they directing you?

Leader follow-up:

WHO DO YOU FOLLOW?

- Everyone follows someone or something. Social media influencers, friend groups, sports, wisdom, ideas, a movement, etc.
- Many kids don't have socials, so reframe this to show them they can follow anything. Ex: family members, friends, sports teams, ideas, etc. Put yourself in their shoes of what influenced you at their age.

WHY DO YOU FOLLOW THEM?

- You can use a write-down method like this. We asked this at camp, and it was really effective. Ultimately, we want to show the difference between good and bad influences.
- I will have sheets for you to use in your groups.

Who/what are you following?	Where is it leading you?

WHERE ARE THEY DIRECTING YOU?

- If someone does not lead you to Jesus and His truth, you are following them away from Christ.

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3. Jesus asks everyone to follow Him. Where is Jesus taking those who follow Him?

Leader follow-up:

- **Matthew 4:19 NASB |** And He *said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men."
- **Romans 10:11 NASB |** For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes in Him will not be disappointed."

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4. What was the cost for the disciples following Jesus? What is the cost for you to follow Him?

Leader follow-up:

Luke 9:23-26 NASB | And He was saying to *them* all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me. **24** For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it. **25** For what is a man profited if he gains the whole world, and loses or forfeits himself? **26** For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when He comes in His glory, and *the glory* of the Father and of the holy angels.

The disciples dropped everything to follow Jesus. Jobs, life at home with family, friend circles, basically their old life.

- Allow the kids time to respond to the second half of this question. You can even have them write down first and then do a roundabout to share. To prepare your own heart for this... What do you need to leave behind right now?
- At this age, most kids would have to give up their community, and many aren't willing to do that.
- Other things that can influence them negatively might include social media, video games, sports, substances, etc. (Make sure to preface that some of these things aren't bad, but when they dictate our lives and pull us away from Jesus, they become an issue).
  - The rich young ruler is a good example of someone unwilling to give these things up**. Matthew 19:16-30**

ADDITIONAL FOLLOW-UP QUESTION:
Why would we follow Jesus? What makes Him Worthy? This is another question to follow up with the kids.

- He is worthy for so many reasons; hopefully the teens can recall some of His attributes from last years God Is series. Here are some main points, though
  - Ultimate sacrifice
  - The resurrection- showing His authority and power over death, from which we can glean hope
  - Perfect character- think of the attributes we learned of
  - Call to abundant life with Him- it's not about rules with Him (although many feel that way); He wants us to seek Him, and we see beautiful transformation in ourselves
- Do you picture a life following Jesus to be extraordinary?
  - Old life (ordinary) -> Jesus -> New life (extraordinary)
  - This world is trying to fit us in a mold
  - Jesus wants you to understand your identity in Him and recognize that you can make an impact by being who He created you to be. How extraordinary that He desires a relationship with us!

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5. Do you have any prayer requests?

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Challenge:

Hand out the homework/digging deeper.

Upcoming Events:

11/7 Fall Community Clean Up
12/9 Youth Christmas Party
12/11 Gingerbread Building Contest
1/26- 1/27 High School Winter Retreat
2/19 Middle School Lock-In