



**WEEK FOUR**  
**THE GOSPELS**

Jesus tells twelve men to follow Him, and they become His disciples.



**REMEMBER THIS:**

“Come and follow me,  
Jesus said.”  
**MATTHEW 4:19, NIrV**



**SAY THIS:**

Who can you follow?  
**I CAN FOLLOW JESUS.**



**DO THIS:**



Add two dolls or action figures to bath time. Tell your child to bathe his/her doll/action figure and you are going to follow what he/she does when you wash your doll/action figure. Thank your child for showing you how to bathe your doll/action figure. Talk about how God sent Jesus to show us how to love people. When we follow Jesus, He always leads us the best way.

**BASIC TRUTH:**

**JESUS WANTS TO BE MY FRIEND FOREVER.**

**YOUR PRESCHOOLER DOESN'T HAVE TO "LIKE" IT**

By Jennifer Walker

Several years ago, my family helped an African family of six assimilate into American culture so they could pursue their studies.

Interestingly, the hardest adjustment for them was not electricity, driving laws, or the weather, but the constant question, “Do you like this?” One night, we were gently reminded of something valuable: There is freedom that comes with permission to NOT have to ‘like’ everything. To this family, it didn’t matter what they liked or didn’t like as long as they accomplished what they set out to do.

You may not be hosting a family from a foreign country, but how many times did you feel that your preschooler had to “like” the way things were done that day? From putting on a winter coat to having a “nap opportunity” that they desperately needed (that you desperately needed!). As parents, we constantly struggle with the pressure of making sure everyone likes every decision we make, and that can be exhausting.

The truth is, if we can teach our kids how to face the things they do not like, we prepare them to experience more out of life. We prepare them to push through the hard things to get to the good things. To do the things that don’t feel good in the moment but that are good in the long run. And along the way it

helps them to know how to be gracious, patient, and kind.

**What to say:**

“You don’t have to like it but you still have to do it.”

**What to do:**

Carry on even if they do not like it.

The non-optional events of life happen anyway. We do not have to “convince” them to like it all. The nap ensues, the meal happens, the five-point car seat restraint is secured. And then in your mind, as you may be fielding a hundred toddler questions, a tantrum or a “sit in,” pray:

*“God, please show me Your will and give me the strength to keep that in place even when I know my kids may not like it in the moment.”*

Although it may not seem like it at the time, they will appreciate being given permission not to “like” everything in life but to know how to do it anyways. And, as a parent, that gives you permission to not have to please everyone all the time.



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grace  
**KIDS**

**March 22, 2020**

**Toddlers/Early Pre-K (Ages 1-3)**

**Bible Words:** "'Come and follow me,' Jesus said." Matthew 4:19, NIV  
The Twelve • *The Gospels*

**Bottom Line:** You can follow Jesus.

**Basic Truth:** Jesus wants to be my friend forever.

### **Parent Tip**

Tell the story BIG. Really try to put on a show. Do voices and try to bring the characters to life. Really go into detail about fishing—do some pretending. Kids love imaginative play. When it comes time to count, really help them. Kids at this age are really trying to learn to count, so count to 12 and model it well for them, even if they can't do it, it's still good for them. You will be surprised how many might be able to do it—at least through 10. Just engage them as much as your can. Make it a big deal that the 12 friends in this story chose to follow Jesus and that we must follow Jesus just like they did.

### **Story Time**

One day Jesus walked by the big blue Sea of Galilee. He saw some fishermen in their boats. They were **throwing** their big fishing nets out into the water. Jesus knew two of these fishermen.

"Peter! Andrew!" Jesus called. Peter and Andrew looked to see who was calling their names! When they saw Jesus, they pulled their nets into their boat. They hurried to see Jesus.

When Peter and Andrew came to the beach, Jesus said, "**Come** and help Me tell people about God."

Peter and Andrew obeyed. They went with Jesus. They wanted to learn more about Him. They wanted to help others learn about Jesus, too. Now Jesus had two helpers.

Later Jesus and His two friends saw two other fishermen. "James and John!" Jesus called. "Come with Me!"

Right away, James and John went, too. They were glad to go with Jesus. Now Jesus had **four** helpers.

On another day, Jesus walked by a man named Matthew. Matthew was at work. "Follow Me, Matthew," said Jesus.

Matthew got right up. He left everything! Now Jesus had FIVE friends to help Him! On other days, Jesus asked other people to be His helpers—until He had 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, **12** helpers.

Jesus told His 12 helpers many things about God. Then He sent them to different towns so that they could tell other people about God. Jesus' friends did just what Jesus said to do. They told other people about God!

"The disciples followed Jesus and saw Him do so many amazing things! They saw Him make sick people better. They saw Him feed people who were hungry. They saw Jesus be kind and loving to everyone. They watched Jesus. They followed Him. And when Jesus went away, the disciples did what Jesus had done. And that's what we can do, too. We can follow Jesus and do what He did!

***[Bottom Line]*** You can follow Jesus.