

WEEK 2 LESSON GUIDE

Miraculous

BIG IDEA

Jesus calls us
to follow him.

BIBLE

A Miraculous Catch of Fish:
Luke 5:1–11; Isaiah 6:1–8

ABOUT THIS WEEK

Fish often travel in schools or groups because they've learned to trust each other and know things are easier as a group. This week, we'll look at the miracle of Jesus providing Simon Peter, Andrew, James, and John with boatloads of fish. Jesus did something miraculous to build trust in these men, and he does the same for us because **Jesus calls us to follow him.**

LARGE GROUP TIME

Welcome back to our second week of *Miraculous*! Isn't it amazing to learn about all the cool things in the ocean that God made? Those underwater creatures are incredible, but guess what? Sometimes they're dinner for bigger animals—yes, even for us humans!

Today's story is about people who used to catch fish for their jobs, but something miraculous happened when they met Jesus. He gave them a totally new purpose in life! Get ready to dive into this awesome story about how Jesus forever changed these fishermen's lives!

WHAT? What are we talking about today?

ACTIVITY | Deep Sea Fishing

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** For this activity, fill a small kiddie pool or large plastic tub with a bunch of [plastic fish](#) and water (at least half full). Give each team a bucket and a [small fishing net](#). Have a player from each team run to the pool and "catch" a fish in their net and bring it back to their team bucket, then pass the net to the next player. See which team has the most fish after two minutes. Feel free to substitute the supplies with things you have available (like using ping pong balls instead of fish, cups instead of nets, and packing peanuts instead of water).
- That was so many fish. What a catch! In today's Bible story, we will learn about how Jesus did a miracle involving catching many fish.

ACTIVITY | Find The Class Clownfish

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** For this activity, pick one person to come to the front of the room and be the guesser. They must close their eyes and turn around. Then you will choose a "clownfish" from the group (but the guesser cannot know who you chose). Turn the guesser around so they can see everyone. Everyone will begin to move around (walking in place, doing jumping jacks, doing stretches, dancing). The clownfish will change their movements, and everyone has to copy their movements, without making it too obvious who the clownfish is.

Give the guesser a time limit or three guesses to identify the clownfish. Play several rounds with new guessers and clownfish.

✂ **ACCESSIBILITY HACK:** Give the “clownfish” just two movements to go back and forth between instead of having to think of different movements.

- In a school of fish, the class clownfish is the one who makes us all laugh. We can’t help but follow what they’re doing because it’s so funny.
- **Was it easy to figure out who the clownfish was?**
- Well, Jesus might not have cracked jokes (or maybe he did, who knows?) but when people got to know him, they couldn’t help but follow. We’ll learn more in today’s Bible story.

POLL | Swimming Against The Tide

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Have everyone stand up and spread out around your space. Ask one question at a time. After each question have everyone go back to standing before asking the next question. The kids will be pretending to swim. If you say the name of someone they would follow, they should swim to the right side of the room. If they would probably not follow, they will swim to the left side of the room.
- **Let’s say you have an important decision to make. Whose instructions would you follow?**
 - Your grown-ups
 - An older sibling
 - A younger sibling
 - A teacher
 - A sports coach
 - A ministry leader
 - A friend from school
 - A famous person on the internet
 - A stranger
- It’s a good idea not to follow someone you don’t know or trust. Generally, we follow the people we know who give us good advice and look out for us.
- In today’s Bible story, we’ll learn that some people followed Jesus as soon as they met him. But we’ll see that they had no reason not to.

SO WHAT? Why does it matter to God and to us?

SCRIPTURE | Luke 5:1–11 (A Miraculous Catch of Fish)

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Like in Week 1, talk to kids as a marine biologist at an aquarium, sharing fun ocean tidbits and connecting them to the Bible story. Your diving gear could include wearing all black (sweats are okay), goggles, a snorkel, and flippers. Optional: Prepare a simple [net](#) or a large sheet to pretend it’s a net.
- ✂ **ACCESSIBILITY HACK:** Examine the needs of your kids with disabilities and have different Bibles ready that accommodate them, like large print, audio, Braille, children’s, or illustrated. It may be as simple as printing the Scripture in an extra large font size each week or playing a dramatized audio version of the Bible on your phone using a Bible app.
- Welcome back to the Miraculous Marine Institute, where we study the miracle of ocean life. You’d be amazed at how much order there is in each marine ecosystem. For example, animals like sea otters and orcas are fiercely protective of their young, and the babies know to follow their parent’s directions to be safe from predators. Pretty neat, huh?
- Speaking of people following a leader, I have another story to share with you. It comes from the Bible, in Luke 5. Let me set the scene. The sea-ne, if you will. Get it? Hey, what do you expect? I’m around ocean animals all day.

- Close your eyes. Imagine we are near the water. Do you smell the salty water? There's also a fishy smell, isn't there? It's fish. Can you hear the birds, the water sloshing? Imagine the sound of people yelling about their catch of the day. "Wow, what a catch!" Some of them are groaning because they caught nothing all night. "Better luck next time, I guess."
- Listen more closely. Someone else is talking. Why, it's Jesus! Jesus, God's own son, is right here on the beach, teaching to a large crowd of people. Let's lean in a little closer to hear what he's saying.
- **Check out Luke 5:2–4.**
 - Jesus saw two boats on the water's edge. Jesus then got in one of the boats that belonged to a fisherman named Simon. Jesus asked Simon to put the boat a little from the shore. Then Jesus continued to teach the crowd, and everyone could see and hear Jesus so much better.
 - When Jesus was done speaking, He told Simon to take the boats into the deep water and let down their nets for a catch.
- **Now, let's read Luke 5:5.**
 - **What tools do we need to go fishing?** In Bible times, they didn't use a fishing pole to catch fish—that would take way too long to catch one fish at a time. People didn't fish just for fun back then. They fished to earn a living. So they would use a net and they would throw it out to catch a bunch of fish at one time. People still do this today but with more advanced gear to reel the nets in.
 - These fishers would usually fish all night to get the most fish. That's exactly what Simon and his crew had been up to. They had been out all night long, working hard. They threw the net into the water all night and pulled it out. Nothing. Throw. Pull. Repeat. Still nothing! Not one single fish.
- **Let's check out Luke 5:6–7.**
 - Something about Jesus made Simon trust his words. He chose to try what Jesus told him to do and throw in his nets one more time.
 - So, they go out. They throw their nets in, probably assuming they won't get anything at all. But something happens, and it is miraculous. They catch so many fish that their nets begin to break. They had to call out to their friends to bring another boat and help them with all the fish!
- **We are moving on to Luke 5:8–10a.**
 - Simon realized at that moment that Jesus was no ordinary man. He realized something miraculous just happened. He then fell to Jesus' knees and said, "*Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!*"
 - And it wasn't only Simon who saw this miracle—but everyone who was with him, including James and John, Simon's fishing partners.
- **Let's read Luke 5:10b–11**
 - **What did it mean that Jesus would now have them fish for people? Did Jesus actually mean they would use a fishing net to catch people?** Probably not. Jesus invited Simon and his friends to join him and help more people know and follow God.
 - **How would you have reacted if you were one of the fishermen?**
 - These men made a living fishing and just caught the most fish ever. They had more fish to sell than they ever could imagine! I'm sure they would have made more money that day than they ever have in one single day.
 - But what did they do? They left everything. They left their boats, their nets, their equipment, all the fish, everything. And they followed Jesus. And the best part of the story is that Jesus invites all of us to follow him, too.
- Well, thanks for dropping by and chatting with me. I'll be around if you want to talk about more miraculous happenings from the Bible (and the ocean).

BIG IDEA | Jesus calls us to follow him.

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** You will need six plastic clam shells ([like these](#)) and ping pong balls to be the pearls. You can

secure the clams closed with tape or rubber bands. You can also use clamshell to-go containers ([like these](#)) instead. Write one word from the Big Idea with a permanent marker on each “pearl.” Place the clams at the bottom of a large clear plastic container and invite a few kids to come up and dig for the clams, taking the pearls out of the clams. Level it up by lining the bottom of the container with sand and adding water (you will use this for the Big Idea every week this month). Once all the “pearls” are found, put them in order and say the Big Idea together.

- **Have you ever heard the phrase “pearls of wisdom?”** It’s a saying we use to describe helpful advice given to us by someone because they are so precious, like pearls. Just like our Big Idea!
- **Jesus calls us to follow him.**

STORY | When I Decided To Follow Jesus

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Share your story of when and how you chose to follow Jesus for the first time. Talk about the people or circumstances that helped you make that decision and what has changed in your life as a result.
 - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Invite preteens to share their story of when and how they chose to follow Jesus for the first time.
- Your story of following Jesus will probably not look like mine. But we all have the opportunity to meet Jesus and choose to accept his invitation to follow.
- Even if you have been coming out to church for a while, we all get to choose whether or not we will be Jesus’ followers. Jesus called his disciples, but it was their choice to leave everything behind and follow him.
 - **Do you follow Jesus?**
 - **What made you choose to do so?**
 - **If you are still deciding, what are some questions you have?**
- Wherever you are today, that invitation from Jesus never expires. **Jesus calls us to follow him** and waits for us to do just that.

ACTIVITY | Catch Of The Day

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Play [this video](#) (or something like it) to help kids see what net fishing looks like today. Then play a game where two teams have nets (the cargo net of your car trunk works nicely), and they have to fill it up with as many objects from around the room as they can (make sure you let them know which items are off limits, or provide a box of acceptable objects). Once it’s full, the team must haul the net from one side of the room to another. Determine the winning team based on who got there first and who has the most items in their nets. For more information on how to legally use copyrighted material for educational purposes, [read this!](#)
- Great job filling up those nets. Imagine your nets had been filled with fish ... that catch must have been the talk of the docks.
- Once they witnessed the miraculous catch of so many fish, they knew instinctively that whatever Jesus had to offer would be far greater than what their lives had been about so far. They didn’t know it yet, but their lives would get even more challenging than ever now that they were following Jesus.
- But that didn’t matter. They knew that following Jesus meant leaving other important things behind, but they were happy to follow. Following Jesus would lead to an even more important “catch of the day” when they became fishers of people.
- **What is one way you can be a fisher of people?**
- Just like Jesus called his first disciples to follow, **Jesus calls us to follow him**, too.

SCRIPTURE | Isaiah 6:1–8

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Read this passage or invite a volunteer to read.
- **Does anyone know who Isaiah was?** He was a prophet, or a messenger of God. In this passage of Scripture, we see that not only was Isaiah chosen by God, but he chose also to follow.
- In verse eight, the voice of God is heard saying, “Whom shall I send?” In other words, who will go and do

what needs to be done? Who will carry God's message to the people? Who will follow God?

- And Isaiah answers, "Here am I. Send me!" Isaiah wasn't an accidental follower of God. He made a deliberate choice to listen to God's voice and help people learn the truth about God's words.
- When Jesus told Simon and his fisher buddies to follow him, they knew they were choosing to listen and obey every command from Jesus and to walk alongside him as he taught God's words to them. And just like God did with Isaiah, Jesus would send out his followers, too, so that they could be the "fishers of people" Jesus promised when he first called them.
- In the same way, **Jesus calls us to follow.**

VIDEO | *Miraculous*, Episode 2

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Play this week's episode of [Grow TV](#).

NOW WHAT? What does God want us to do about it?

REFLECTION | Big Idea Deep Dive

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Play some ocean sounds like [this](#) as you discuss the Big Idea with kids and have them reflect on the prompts given below.
- Let's dive deeper into what we learned today.
- **What part of today's Bible story is the most memorable to you? Why?**
- Our Big Idea for today is **Jesus calls us to follow him**. The fisher friends in today's Bible story left everything behind to follow Jesus. James and John even left their father right here in the boat to go with Jesus.
- **Would you be able to give up everything to follow Jesus?**
- This might be the case for some of our families that Jesus calls to share about God in different countries. For most of us, we can follow Jesus right where we are. In any case, Jesus is always with us, so no matter where he calls us, we are never alone when we follow him.
- But the Bible story makes one thing clear—we can't follow Jesus if we continue to hold on to the things that make it hard to follow Jesus. For Simon and company, that meant they had to leave their careers and families behind. For us, it might be something else.
- Maybe it's ditching not-so-great habits that make it hard to have a relationship with Jesus. Maybe it's changing our attitudes about Jesus so we can learn and grow how he wants us to. Maybe it's stuff that we want to spend more time with than with Jesus.
 - **Can you think of something in your life that might get in the way of following Jesus?**
 - **Is there something Jesus might be asking you to let go of and follow him instead?**
- Sometimes we want to hold on to things that can interfere with us following Jesus. But when we follow Jesus, he gives us more than what we were holding on to in the first place!
- **What does it look like for you to follow Jesus?**

RESPONSE | Mural Of Miracles

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Add to the mural you started in Week 1 using the [printable](#) provided. If you're in a portable space, you can roll up the paper and unpack it again next week. You may choose to show a video of beluga whale sounds (like [this one](#)) before kids respond and share. For more information on how to legally use copyrighted material for educational purposes, [read this!](#)
- ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** This week, set aside time to talk with preteens about the next steps in their decision to follow Jesus. You may also talk with them about how following Jesus and being "fishers of people" go hand in hand.
- **Did you know that the Beluga Whale can follow sounds?** They not only imitate a bunch of sounds, but they

also use echolocation, using clicking sounds to send and receive messages, avoid obstacles, and follow each other. What a marine miracle!

- **On your whale handout, write or draw one way you can follow Jesus. Who can help you with this?**
- Add your whale to the mural to remember how **Jesus calls us to follow him**. Let's try saying the Big Idea in our very best whale voice. **Jesus calls us to follow him!** Jesus, we *whale-y* love you!

MEMORY VERSE | Psalm 77:14 (NIV)

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Learn the memory verse together using any combination of the resources provided: [memory verse coloring page](#), [sign language motions](#), or choose from [this list](#) of our favorite memorization techniques!
- **"You are the God who performs miracles; you display your power among the peoples."**

PRAYER

- Jesus, thank you for calling us to follow you. Just like your friends did, we want to be able to let go of anything that keeps us from following you. Help us to keep following all the ways you show us how to love God and love people each day. Amen.

SMALL GROUP TIME

DISCUSSION

- **SCRIPTURE QUESTIONS**
 - **Why did Jesus step into Simon's boat?** *So he could teach the large crowd.*
 - **What miraculous thing happened?** *After fishing all night and catching nothing, when Jesus told Simon and his friends to cast their nets once more, they caught so much fish that they had to ask for help bringing them in.*
 - **What did Jesus invite Simon and the other fishermen to do?** *To follow him and fish for people.*
 - **Read Isaiah 6:8. Does God still look for people to send today? How do you know?**
- **APPLICATION QUESTIONS**
 - **How can we be "fishers of people" today?**
 - **What are ways we can show we are followers of Jesus?**
 - **What kinds of miracles—big or small—do you see happening in your life because of Jesus?**

ACTIVITY | Caught By Jesus!

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** For this activity, provide scraps of tissue paper in different colors. Invite kids to cut them into six fish shapes (pro tip: have them put all the pieces of tissue paper together and cut them at the same time). On each fish, have them write one word of the Big Idea. Then have them glue them to the inside of a clear plastic cup to make the words visible (we recommend using Mod Podge or craft glue). Afterward, they can use a permanent marker to draw criss-cross lines around the cup to resemble a net. To make it last longer, they can use a sponge brush to add another layer of Mod Podge over the paper. See a worked example [here](#).
 - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Have preteens draw an ocean scene, including the words of the Big Idea. Once complete, have them fold and cut like the instructions given [here](#).
 - ✂ **ACCESSIBILITY HACK:** Have kids create a simpler craft. Print fish outlines like [this](#) onto cardstock and have kids glue pre-cut pieces of tissue paper, put dot stickers, use dot markers, or use drawing utensils to decorate their fish. Then, have them glue pre-cut pieces of [net](#) on top of their paper.
- Simon and his friends didn't only catch a lot of fish because of Jesus. They caught the words of Jesus, "Follow me," and got a new purpose in life.
- **Jesus calls us to follow him** and gives us the same opportunity to draw closer to God!