

Focus: Following Jesus

Materials:

- Prayer Altar: Cross, Candle, Chasuble on stand (priest's vestment) and Altar Cloth
- CD-Toddlers 20 Favorite Bible Songs
- Bible: The Bible for Children
- Let's Go Fishing game
- Book: 100 Bible Stories/100 Bible Songs

Gathering (have children sit on the floor-“Criss-Cross Applesauce”)

Say: Good Morning everyone, my name is _____. Last week we talked about Jesus taught others about God and it wasn't always easy. This week we are going to hear about Jesus telling his followers that they will be fishing for men.

Opening Prayer

Together we make the Sign of the Cross (do in reverse so children can mirror).

Say: Now let's put our hands together and bow our heads.

Let us pray.

Loving God, help us to learn more about your Son Jesus so that we can tell others the good news of your love. In the name of Jesus we pray.

Amen.

Song/Movement

Isn't He Wonderful? track: 9, from Toddler 20 Favorite Bible Songs

Play music, encourage children to stretch or move to the music (clapping, stamp feet march in place to the beat), turn to each other and shake hands, saying hello, etc.)

Isn't He wonderful, wonderful,
wonderful!
Isn't Jesus my Lord wonderful!
Eyes have seen, ears have heard

It's recorded in God's Word
Isn't Jesus my Lord wonderful!

Repeat all

Memory Verse

Say: Now let's take a moment together to learn a verse from the bible.

Don't be afraid

Have the children repeat the verse after you a couple of times.

Say: Jesus tells Simon Peter to not be afraid because of his mistakes. God loves us for all we are and because he loved us first.

Sometimes Jesus asks us to do things that are hard or asks us to change our hearts, he only asks us to do what he asks everyone to do. He asks us to remember him in our prayers and to be kind to others because he asked us to.

When we make mistakes, we can say we are sorry to God and it helps make us friends with Jesus again.

Gospel Story

Say: *Today we are reading from the Gospel of Luke.*

Have children make sign of the cross on their forehead, mouth and heart saying. *“Lord, open my mind, my lips and my heart so that I may learn it, speak it and love it.”*

Read: The Bible for Children, pp. 232-234, *The Fishing Trip*

After the reading say: *The Gospel of the Lord*

Children respond: *Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ*

Discussion Starters:

- *Why does Jesus get into Simon Peter’s boat?*
- *What does Jesus tell Simon to do?*
- *What happens when they lower the nets into the water?*
- *Why was Simon Peter upset?*
- *What does Jesus tell Simon?*

Reflection on Reading:

The story in today’s gospel tells us of the miraculous catch of fish and Simon Peter understanding he is the presence of God. This encounter is so powerful that Simon down before Jesus. Jesus tells Simon Peter, “Do not be afraid, from now on you will be catching people.” Simon accepts Jesus’ call to follow him. He leaves everything and follows Jesus.

When Jesus said that Simon Peter would be catching people, Jesus meant that he would tell everyone the Good News about Jesus and they would want to know more about Jesus and become followers of Jesus too.

Gospel Activity

Activity 1:

Fishing for Followers of Jesus

Use the Let’s Go Fishing game to ‘fish’ for ways to follow Jesus. When they catch a fish have them say a way they can follow Jesus. Each fish has a sticker on the bottom: Orange = Caring, Pink = Sharing, Green = Helping.

Fishermen have to be prepared. They have to make sure they have the right tools. What can you do to be prepared to follow Jesus? Pray/talk to Jesus. Come to church. Listen to stories about Jesus. Look for people who need help—a classmate that forgot his snack, a friend who is getting picked on by others, a parent that is cleaning or doing the laundry...etc...

Activity 2:

100 Bible Songs: Read the story Jesus Calls His Disciples pg 110 and play the song, "I Have Decided to Follow Jesus" Disc 2 Track 3

Complete the weekly bulletin as a group-let the children color them if there is extra time

Closing Prayer

(Children respond: "I Believe!")

Ask: *Do you believe in God, who wants us to follow Jesus?*

Do you believe in Jesus, who teaches us about God?

Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, who gives us the courage to do what God wants?

Sending Forth

Say: *When we go back to church remember to take a quiet moment to say a thank you prayer to Jesus for teaching us the ways of God, the Father.*

Lining Up/Closing Song

Play "Father, We Thank Thee" track 13 from Toddler 20 Favorite Songs while children put away any materials and lineup. Hand out weekly bulletins. Remind them it is important that they return to their family quietly so that we may all listen and pray together in church.