


the
Jesus 
Storybook
Bible
Curriculum

Let's go!

Jesus is tempted in the desert and chooses his helpers,
from Matthew 4; Mark 1; Luke 4–6

☉ Please see the curriculum Introduction .pdf for more guidance on praying with your group and on Scripture memory.

☉ The total allotted time per lesson is 45 minutes. This is the minimum amount of time it would take to complete the whole lesson. The time can easily be extended to increase the lesson to as much as 1.5 hours. If you have more than the allocated 45 minutes, please use the extra time to extend the time for activities, to learn the memory verse, and to pray.

☉ The “Notes for Teachers on the Text” section is intended as explanation of the Bible text and advance preparation for you only; it is not expressed in terms or language the children could understand.

The Jesus Storybook Bible Curriculum
By Sally Lloyd-Jones and Sam Shammas

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Recap of the Previous Story

3 min. 

- ☉ Welcome the children and ask them to sit in a circle.
- ☉ Briefly recap the main point of the previous story: “Last time we read about Jesus’ baptism. His baptism was a sign that the rescue had begun. We also memorized a verse about this rescue.”

☉ Ask them to recite together the verse they learned at home about the story. “John 1:29 — ‘Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!’”

☉ To lead into the theme of today’s story, say: “In today’s story Jesus needs to find some helpers. The helpers’ job was to follow Jesus, learn from him, and tell others about him.”

Activity Introducing the Story

10 min. 

Aim: To expend energy and introduce the idea of following someone.

Materials: None.

1. Say: “Jesus chose 12 men to be his helpers. They are usually called Jesus’ 12 disciples. ‘Disciple’ is just another word for helper or follower.”

2. Announce that you are going to play “Follow the Leader.”

3. Ask everyone to stand up and to start walking in a circle. Ask a willing child to be the leader. Ask the leader to start marching instead of walking. Ask everyone else to follow the leader. They should copy exactly the way the leader moves. The leader can lead the children anywhere in the room. Everyone else follows in a line behind the person in front of them.

4. Comment appropriately; e.g., “Copy everything you can about the leader”; “Follow the way the leader is moving their arms”; “Look carefully at the way the leader is ... and follow it”; etc.

5. After a while, ask the leader to go to the back of the line and have the next child in line take a turn to be leader.

6. Say they can pick any movement and actions they like for everyone else to follow; e.g., jumping, skipping, hopping, waving their hands in the air while walking, etc.

7. Keep emphasizing that they need to watch carefully and follow the leader in every way possible.

8. Toward the end of the allocated time, ask everyone to sit back down in the circle.

9. Say: “In our story today Jesus chooses 12 men to be his disciples or followers. Their job was to follow Jesus and learn from him. Are you ready to meet the disciples in today’s story?”

Join the children in the circle and announce the title of the story. Read aloud pages 208–213 from *The Jesus Storybook Bible* or listen to CD2 track 12.

Notes for Teachers on the Text

What does Satan tempt Jesus with? Three things: bread; safety; power. In every situation, what is Satan doing? There's nothing wrong with eating bread or wanting safety. There's nothing wrong with wanting to rule the world, if you're the Son of God. But Satan is offering Jesus the rule of the world *now*, before the cross. The devil is offering Jesus the kingdom without suffering—"All this I will give you... if you will bow down and worship me" (Matthew 4:9). Satan is basically saying, "These are good things. Get them right now." Often, the real temptation, the real enslavement, is not to bad things, but it's the good things that we turn into the best things. It's the good things that we put in the place of, or before, God.

The word "disciple" means a serious follower of a spiritual leader. In that sense, we can read the calling of the Twelve as a lesson for all of us who want to be Jesus' disciples. Notice that:

☉ Jesus called those he wanted, as God did with Israel (Deuteronomy 7:7–8): "The LORD did not set his affection on you and choose you because you were more numerous than other peoples.... But it was because the LORD loved you." Jesus' disciples are called out of sheer love and grace. There is no indication that they were "top of their class." The rest of the narrative of Mark reveals this again and again: they were slow (Mark 4:13); and hard-hearted (Mark 8:17). They were called on the basis of grace, not their merits. We are a chosen people, not a "choice" people. God's love for us is not based on our performance and strengths.

☉ Jesus didn't disciple people one-on-one in a series of appointments. He created a new "family." We must see ourselves being called into a community, not just an individual relationship with Christ.

☉ Jesus brings together Matthew (a tax collector and Roman collaborator) and Simon the Zealot (someone working for the overthrow of the Roman establishment). To come into a relationship with Christ is automatically to be brought into a new family with people who you might not associate with ordinarily.

☉ Jesus calls the Twelve in order to send them out to do essentially what he was doing himself—preach and do deeds of deliverance. Just as God chose Israel to be a "kingdom of priests" (Exodus 19:6), so the disciples were called to preach the gospel and do Jesus' ministry of mercy. We cannot come to Jesus only to have our needs met, but to serve him in the world as agents of the kingdom.

Understanding the Story

15 min.



Aim: To understand that Jesus was tempted in the desert and chose his disciples.

Materials: 2 identical sets of large cards with a missing word written/printed on each (see below); crayons; copies of the handout (the last page of this document).

1. At the end of the story, say: “Jesus chose those 12 men to be his disciples or followers. But before he did that he was in the desert. Let’s see how much you remember from the story.”
2. Assign half the circle as team 1 and the other half as team 2, and give a set of cards to each team. Ask the children to spread the cards out in front of them on the floor so that they can see what is written on all the cards.
3. Explain the game (even though you have played this before, it is worth repeating the instructions again): You are going to call out the main events in the story, but there is a word that will be missing. Each team must decide together which card has the missing word. One person from the team should then run with the missing-word card to the center of the circle and say the word aloud (they should take turns doing this around the circle). The team that gets their player to the center first with the correct card gets to answer a bonus question as a team.
4. Read aloud the story in the table below, pausing where there is an ellipsis (. . .). Allow the teams to choose the missing-word card, and two players to run to the center and say the word. Ask the bonus question to the team that gets there first and use the comments. Then ask the players to leave their cards on the floor in the center of the circle and sit back down. Say “Ready?” before moving on to the next part of the story.

STORY	MISSING WORD	BONUS QUESTION AND COMMENTS
After Jesus was baptized, he went straight out into the . . .	DESERT	Can you remember who baptized Jesus? Say his name all together as a team. Yes, it was John.
But Jesus was not alone. The old enemy was there, the one who lied to Adam and Eve as a . . .	SNAKE	Did Adam and Eve believe the snake’s lie? Stand up if you think no. Stand up if you think yes. Correct, they did believe the lie. Sit down.
He lied to Jesus too. But Jesus wasn’t like . . .	ADAM	Jesus and Adam were told lies, but they did not do the same thing. Raise your hand if you think Adam believed the lie. Correct, hands down. Raise your hand if you think Jesus believed the lie.
Jesus did not believe the lie. Jesus wasn’t like Adam; Jesus was a new kind of . . .	MAN	How was Jesus different from Adam? Who thinks they know? Correct, Adam did not trust God; Jesus did. In other words, Adam sinned and Jesus never did.

STORY	MISSING WORD	BONUS QUESTION AND COMMENTS
Jesus left the desert and one day he was by the Sea of ...	GALILEE	The Sea of Galilee is called a sea, but actually it is what ...? Raise your hand if you think it is an ocean. Raise your hand if you think it is a lake. Yes, it is a lake. Hands down.
Jesus saw some ...	FISHERMEN	What were the names of these fishermen? Say them all together. Yes, Peter, Andrew, James, and John.
The fishermen were mending their ...	NETS	Again, what were the names of these fishermen? Say them all together.
Jesus called to them and told them to ...	FOLLOW	What is another name for a follower of Jesus? Say it together. Yes, disciple.
They dropped their nets and immediately followed Jesus.		Announce: "The End!"

5. Say: "Jesus chose 12 men to be his disciples or followers. In the first game you followed the leader. What does it mean to be a follower of Jesus? Correct, these men followed Jesus and learned from him. They obeyed Jesus. They also told others about Jesus. Are you a follower of Jesus? Raise your hand if you are. Thank you, hands down. Do you want to tell others about Jesus? Raise your hand if you do. Thank you, hands down."

6. Give each child a copy of the handout and a crayon. Say: "On your paper you can see a picture of four of Jesus' helpers. What were Jesus' helpers called and what did they do? To get the answers, fill in the missing words by unscrambling the letters you see beneath the blank spaces. You can work in pairs. You have 2 minutes. Ready?"

7. Give the children 2 minutes; then ask someone to read the answers aloud. You may also want to write the answers on a blackboard to help those who are struggling.

For larger groups: You may want to divide the group into smaller circles, each with a teacher. Each circle will then need to be divided into two teams, each team with a set of cards. Each teacher can then facilitate the activity, checking for understanding.

Drawing the Story to a Close

1 min. 

Say: “Jesus knew the rescue plan and he began by choosing 12 men to be his disciples.”

Say: “The disciples followed Jesus, learned from him, obeyed him, and told others about him. Jesus wants us to do that too.”

Jesus in the Story

2 min. 

Ask: “What did we discover about Jesus from today’s story?”

Get a few children to share their answers aloud, commenting appropriately; then ask everyone to write an answer in the space on their handout.

Praying about the Story

5 min. 

Pray aloud, asking God to help you and the children to be disciples of Jesus. Thank him that he will help you follow, learn from, obey, and tell others about Jesus.

Ask the children to think of one way they can follow Jesus this week and to pray that God would help them to do it.

A Verse from the Story to Learn at Home

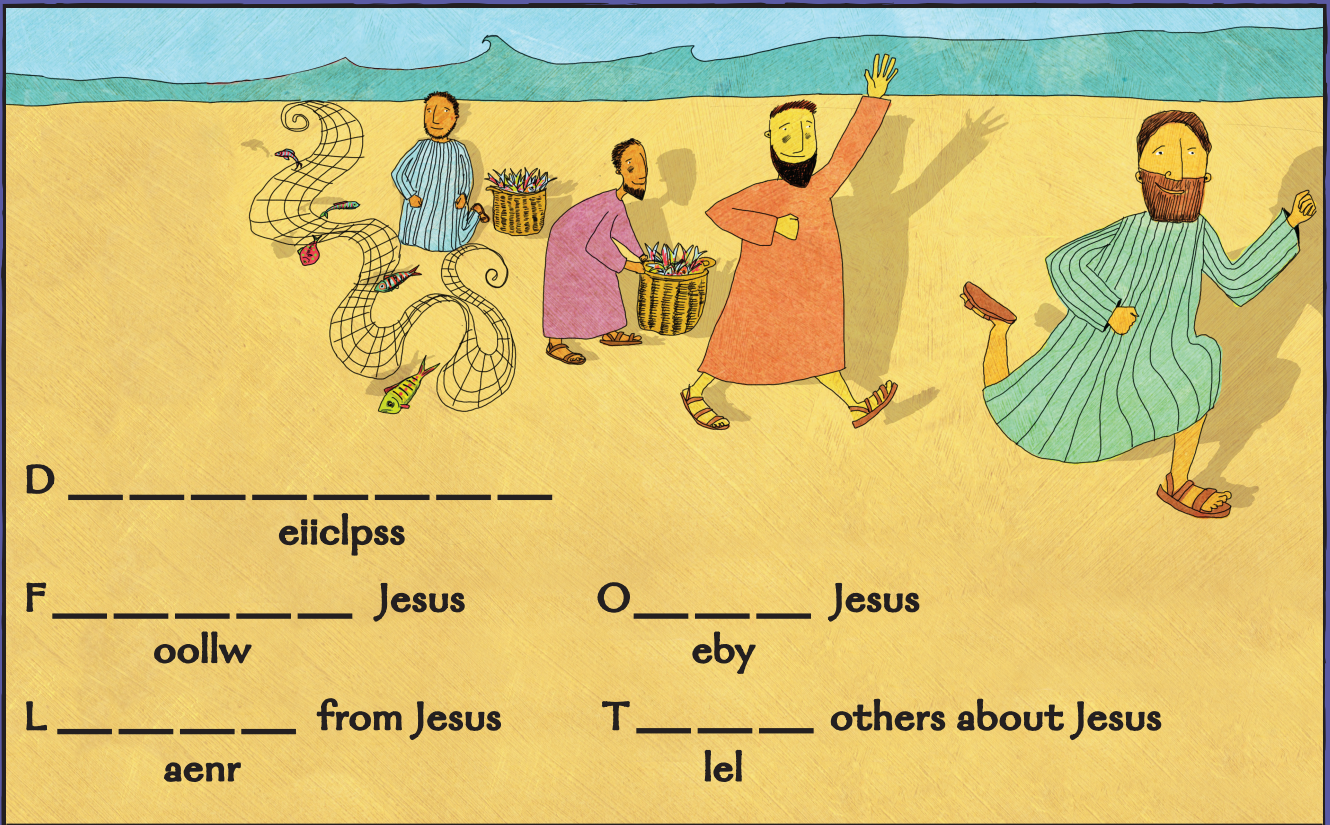
2 min. 

☉ Introduce the verse: “Jesus chose his disciples to be a part of the rescue plan. The verse we memorized was a great description of that rescue plan, so we are going to make sure we know it.”

☉ Announce the verse: “So, your verse to practice at home is John 1:29 — ‘Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!’”

☉ Read the verse out loud together as a group. If you have time, you may want to check understanding by asking why this verse is a great description of the rescue plan.

☉ Remind the children to give the handout to their parents and to memorize the verse for next time.



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☉ Jesus in the Story

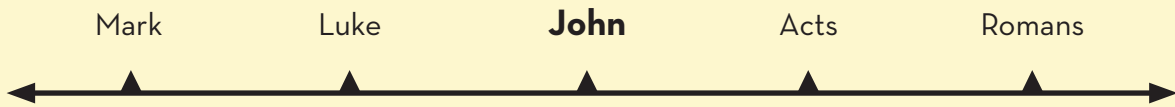


What did you discover about Jesus from this story?

Jesus

☉ A Verse from the Story to Learn at Home

Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!
 (John 1:29)



Notes for parents: From the story we learned that Jesus chose 12 disciples to follow him. We too must follow Jesus. Please help your child to memorize the verse and the Scripture reference for next time. Please review with them the place of the book of John, using the diagram above. www.jesusstorybookbible.com