



MEMORY VERSE

Hebrews 4:16

Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

TODDLER

Jesus Chooses Us to Follow Him

Luke 5:1-11

PARENT DEVOTIONAL

Jesus understood and knew the value of time in regard to relational influence. He strategically chose 12 men—fishermen and tax collectors alike—to carry the gospel to the nations after His ascension. Through His Son, Jesus, God the Father was revealing Himself to the apostles not just for their benefit, but for the good of all mankind. For three years He traveled, laughed, and lived alongside these men. While they received the gift of His time, they also received the gift of knowing Him personally. The investment of time, love, and truth Jesus made in the apostles had a return far greater than even the apostles themselves could imagine.

What was the result of such intimate and personal knowledge of God? Human society was turned upside down. God revealed Himself through Jesus. This had such an impact on the world that Rome, the ruling world empire and the most powerful kingdom the world has ever known, eventually had to abandon its polytheism. They were forced to recognize and even proclaim that Jesus is indeed God.

The good news that Jesus brought spread like wildfire throughout the known world. It confronted evil, toppled governments, and transformed people from self-centered to others-centered individuals. In fact, the way mankind measured time was affected. Nearly all of the calendars were recalibrated to start measuring time according to when Jesus was born. One of the most telling examples is seen in the effect the good news had on Jesus' followers. According to church history and tradition, only one of these men died a natural death (and this was while he was in exile for his faith). The rest of Jesus' apostles died martyrs' deaths at the hands of various governments rather than renouncing the name of Christ.

Read the biblical account of Jesus calling his first disciples in Matthew 4:18-22. Before you begin to read the account, ask God to show you something about Himself that you've never noticed before. Ask Him to reveal Himself to you through His written Word.

Once you've finished reading, take a few minutes to write down your observations from Scripture. Looking at your own life, what do you think would be the hardest thing to walk away from? Why do you think Jesus asked these men to immediately follow Him rather than to follow in a few days, a week, etc.? What is God asking you to walk away from so you can fully follow Him today? How is God revealing Himself to you today?

"I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better" (Ephesians 1:17).

Lord God, glorious Father, may You give me the Spirit of wisdom and revelation today, so that I may know You better. Amen.

TODAY'S LESSON

Luke 5:1-11

Jesus chose 12 apostles and prepared them to go and tell others about Him. Today He calls each of us to follow Him as well.

READ IT AT HOME!

You can read today's story in your *Jesus Storybook Bible* on page 208, "Let's go!"

EXPERIENCE THE STORY

Take a net with you to the beach or go fishing with your child this week. Talk about how Peter was a fisherman, how Jesus performed a miracle by filling up Peter's net with fish, and how Jesus invited Peter to come and follow Him.

MISSIONS FOCUS

Pray for the fishermen who work on Hawaiian waters and followers of Jesus who are sharing God's love with them. Seafarers from the Philippines, Vietnam, Indonesia, and other countries around the world leave their families for 2-3 years to come and work as fishermen in Hawaii. While they are here, they do not have access to basic medical care. To share God's love with them, followers of Jesus give their time and skills to help them: doctors, dentists, nurses, and other medical professionals work together with local churches (like Waipio Baptist Church, Dong Tam Church, and UABC) to set up a mini-clinic on Pier 31. Pray that these fishmen will come to know of Jesus' great love for them and choose to become a follower of Jesus.



You can learn more about this ministry & watch videos of the seafarers in action by scanning this QR code:

TODAY'S RESPONSE ACTIVITIES:

FISH IN THE SEA

When Jesus lived on earth, He showed us what God's Good Kingdom is like. One way He did this was through miracles. Jesus told Peter to throw his nets out again, even though Peter hadn't caught anything all night. Peter listened to Jesus and caught more fish than his nets or boat could hold. After this, Jesus invited Peter to follow Him. We used watercolors to paint on a piece of white construction paper today. The paper had fish drawn on it with white crayon. At first, we couldn't see any fish, but after we started painting--we saw all of the fish in the sea. This art project reminded us of Jesus' miracle to fill Peter's nets with fish!

DOUGH FISH

We used play doh to fill in pictures of fish. As we did this, we talked about how God created fish--making each one different.

CATCH THE FISH

We passed a toy fish around the circle while music played. Whenever the music stopped, whoever was holding the fish went to sit in the middle until the next fish was caught.

FISH BOOKS

We explored books about fish together.

EXPLORE AT HOME

FOLLOW THE LEADER

Jesus invites us to follow Him! This means we love Jesus and share His love with others. Practice the idea of following by playing a game of Follow the Leader around your home or yard. Whenever someone begins their turn has the leader have them say, "Come, Follow Me!"

BOATS AND FISH

Play with boats and fish during bath time or at your water table. Talk with your child about how fishermen use boats to go out and catch fish. Peter was a fishermen. Jesus invited Peter to follow Him and fish for people (this means to go and tell others about Jesus).

BOOKS ON TOPIC

Read books like *Rainbow Fish* or *One Fish, Two Fish* (any books you have about fish or boats) with your child this week. As you prepare to read, remind your child about this week's story.

ACT OUT THE STORY

This is a great story to act out. Grab your net (or a pillow case) and have your child play Peter while you play Jesus. Then reverse roles. You could make fish out of wads of paper, or pretend stuffed animals are fish--get creative. You could use chairs to make a boat, pretend your couch is a boat, or use a Rubbermaid tub as a boat. The more into the story you get, the more your child will get into it. Make a big deal about the nets and boat filling up with fish. Also make a big deal about Peter leaving his nets behind and following Jesus.

VERSE PRACTICE

Practice Hebrews 4:16 with your child by singing it to the tune of Barney's "I Love You, You Love Me."

DID YOU KNOW

· If young students were considered to be the cream of the crop, the rabbi would accept the student as his disciple (student) by saying, "Come, follow me."

· When Jesus called the first apostles He said, "Come, follow Me."

BLESSING

Open a Bible and read Colossians 2:6: "So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him."

(Insert your child's name), I pray that you will come to know Jesus early in your life and follow Him all of your days.



16 Ruth 1:16
But Ruth said, "Do not urge me to leave you or to return from following you. For where you go I will go, and where you lodge I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God my God."

How hard do you think it was for Ruth to leave her country, her language, and her family?

Ask God to help you His will for your life over your own comfort.

20 2 Chronicles 7:14
If my people who are called by my name will humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.

What does it mean to humble yourself and seek after God?

Thank God for His mercy, goodness, and love for us.

24 2 Timothy 4:2
Preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching.

What is something you can do to help you be more ready to share the Truth of Jesus with others?

Ask God for an opportunity to share His love and story with someone this week.

28 2 Corinthians 12:9
But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

How is the world's view of our weaknesses different from how God describes them in this verse?

Ask God to empower you to trust Him in your weakness.

17 Proverbs 10:1
A wise son makes a glad father, but a foolish son is a sorrow to his mother.

What does it mean to be wise or to be foolish?

Ask God to help you to be wise.

21 1 Peter 4:7
The end of all things is at hand; therefore be self-controlled and sober-minded for the sake of your prayers.

How should the hope of Jesus coming again impact the way we pray today?

Ask God to help you live for the things of His Eternal, Good Kingdom.

25 Psalm 90:12
So teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom.

How can you number your days when you don't know how many you have?

Ask God for a heart of wisdom.

29 1 Peter 3:14
But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled

Have you ever suffered for doing the right thing?

Ask God to help you do the right thing no matter what.

18 Luke 14:27
Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple.

What does it mean to be a disciple (or student/follower) of Jesus?

Pray and ask God to help you trust and obey Him with every part of your life.

22 Proverbs 3:5
Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding.

How are relationships with people you trust different from relationships with people you do not trust?

Thank God for being totally trustworthy.

26 Hebrews 12:14
Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord.

God has set us apart for His good work. How have you experienced this truth in your life?

Ask God to help you live a holy life for Him.

30 Jeremiah 32:27
Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh. Is anything too hard for me?

Is it easy or hard for you to believe that nothing is too hard for God to handle?

Ask God to help you believe in His power.

19 Isaiah 54:17
No weapon that is fashioned against you shall succeed, and you shall refute every tongue that rises against you in judgment. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD and their vindication from me, declares the LORD.

How does this passage help us know how to deal with discouragement in a way that honors God?

Thank God for His help for you when you face discouragement.

23 James 3:18
And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

When was a time you were a peacemaker?

Ask God to help you and your family be peacemakers for God's glory.

27 Deuteronomy 31:6
Be strong and courageous. Do not fear for be in dread of them, for it is the LORD your God who goes with you. He will not leave you or forsake you.

How does knowing God is always with you help you be brave in following Him?

Ask God to make you strong and courageous in following Him.

31 Psalm 16:1
Keep me safe, O God, for in you I take refuge.

What does it mean that God is a refuge?

Ask God to help you remember that you are always safe in Him.

HEBREWS 4:16

Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

