

Jesus Calls Disciples (Matthew 4:12-22) Sunday School Lesson

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Kids have a place in the work of God's Kingdom. In this lesson on service, children will learn how Jesus served his disciples and included them in his mission. This Sunday School lesson is based on [Matthew 4:12-22](#). The printable PDF below includes all the lesson plan, coloring page, worksheets, and activities described on this page. [Leave a comment](#) to let us know how the lesson went in your church!



**Jesus served his
disciples by
teaching them**

In Matthew 4:12-22 Jesus begins his preaching ministry and calls his disciples.

As Jesus called his disciples, he was also committing himself to become their servant leader. This lesson shows Jesus' humility and dedication to his disciples helped them learn how to serve. Use this lesson in Sunday School or Children's Church.

TARGET AGES: 9 – 13 Older Elementary. You may need to simplify this lesson when working with younger children.

CURRICULUM UNIT: This lesson is part of the Servanthood for Kids: The Life of Jesus. You can use it as a stand-alone Sunday School lesson or you can teach the whole curriculum in any order.

OBJECTIVE: To identify Jesus' twelve disciples and learn that humility is one of the biggest qualities of a servant of Jesus Christ.

MAIN IDEA: Jesus was a true servant for his disciples because he equipped and taught them how to become leaders of the church.

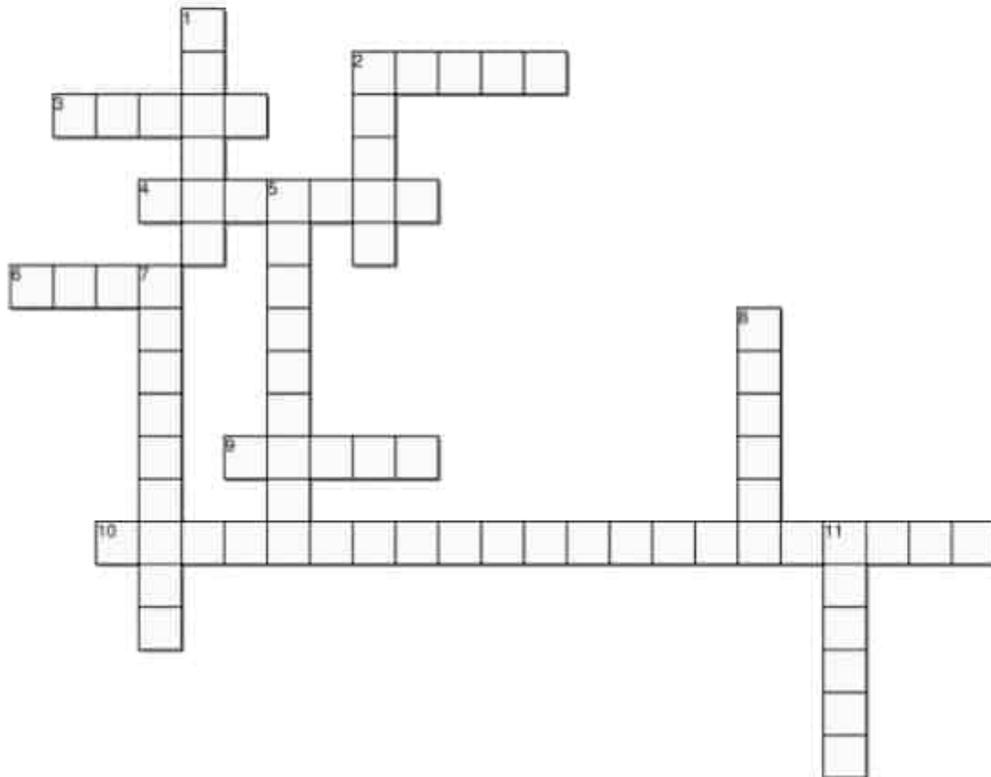
SCRIPTURE PASSAGES: *Matthew 4:12-22, Matthew 9:9, Mark 2:14, John 1:43 & 49-50, Matthew 10:2-4*

MATERIAL(S): Notebook paper, writing utensils, activity sheet ([click to download](#))

Prepare your heart with this [personal Bible study devotional on Matthew 4](#)

Name: _____

The Twelve Disciples



Created on TheTeachersCorner.net Crossword Maker

Across

2. The disciple who betrayed Jesus, first name only (Matthew 10:4)
3. Also goes by 'the Zealot' (Matthew 10:4)
4. The tax collector, also known as Levi (Matthew 9:9)
6. The other son of Zebedee (Matthew 4:21)
9. Also goes by 'Simon' (Matthew 4:18)
10. Shares his name with another disciple (Matthew 10:3)

Down

1. Known for doubting Jesus (John 20:27)
2. One of the sons of Zebedee (Matthew 4:21)
5. The tenth listed disciple (Mark 3:16-19)
7. Philip led this person to Jesus, also known as 'Bartholomew' (John 1:45)
8. Jesus found him on the way to Galilee (John 1:43)
11. Peter's brother (Matthew 4:18)

Introduction (15 minutes)

OPENING PRAYER: "Lord, today we accept your call of service on our lives. Teach us how to serve by studying Jesus' selection of his disciples and their willingness to follow him. Amen."

PREVIOUS LESSON REVIEW: Play a "True or False" game with the class to review what they have learned about Jesus' life as a servant. Pass out blank pieces of paper and writing utensils. Consider presenting the winner with a small prize. Suggested questions include:

1. Jesus was born in Jerusalem. (False, he was born in Bethlehem)
2. Jesus had brothers and sisters. (True)
3. Jesus was baptized. (True)
4. Satan tempted Jesus for 20 days in the desert. (False, it was 40 days)
5. Jesus' parents were John and Mary. (False, they were Joseph and Mary)
6. The word "baptize" means to sprinkle someone with water. (False, the meaning is "full immersion")
7. Jesus was 12-years-old when his parents forgot him at the temple. (True)
8. Satan tempted Jesus with water in the desert. (False, he was tempted with bread)

At the end of the game say, "This game teaches us that it can be easy for people to get minor details about Jesus wrong. But, if we keep reading the bible so we know the truth about our Savior. It's very important to read our bibles!"

Matthew 4:12-22 New International Reader's Version (NIRV) Children's Translation

Jesus Begins to Preach

¹²John had been put in prison. When Jesus heard about this, he returned to Galilee. ¹³Jesus left Nazareth and went to live in the city of Capernaum. It was by the lake in the area of Zebulun and Naphtali. ¹⁴In that way, what the prophet Isaiah had said came true. He had said,

¹⁵"Land of Zebulun! Land of Naphtali!

Galilee, where Gentiles live!

Land along the Mediterranean Sea! Territory east of the Jordan River!

¹⁶The people who are now living in darkness
have seen a great light.

They are now living in a very dark land.

But a light has shined on them." (Isaiah 9:1,2)

¹⁷From that time on Jesus began to preach. "Turn away from your sins!" he said. "The kingdom of heaven has come near."

Jesus Chooses His First Disciples

¹⁸ One day Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee. There he saw two brothers, Simon Peter and his brother Andrew. They were throwing a net into the lake, because they were fishermen. ¹⁹“Come and follow me,” Jesus said. “I will send you out to fish for people.” ²⁰ At once they left their nets and followed him.

²¹ Going on from there, he saw two other brothers. They were James, son of Zebedee, and his brother John. They were in a boat with their father Zebedee. As they were preparing their nets, Jesus called out to them. ²² Right away they left the boat and their father and followed Jesus. **New International Reader’s Version (NIRV)**

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Sunday School Lesson (15 minutes)

1. Explain to the students that after Jesus was tempted in the desert by Satan he began choosing specific people to mentor and teach.
 - Ask, “Who can tell me how many disciples, or followers, Jesus picked? Can you name any of them?” Turn to *Matthew 4:18-22*. Read the passage and list the first four disciples on the board (Peter, Andrew, James, and John).
 - Ask, “What do we know about these men from the scripture passage (fishermen, brothers, left immediately, etc)?” Point out that these first four disciples were all fishermen, a very humble job in Jesus day.
 - Look up the rest of the disciples’ names by turning to *Matthew 9:9* (Matthew), *Mark 2:14* (Levi, another name for Matthew), *John 1:43,49-50* (Philip and Nathanael, another name for Bartholomew), and *Matthew 10:2-4* (Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Zealot and Judas Iscariot).
2. Say, “Let’s brainstorm for a moment: Why was it necessary for Jesus to personally teach disciples during his life on earth (because he was going to heaven and the disciples would have to lead the church as his appointed leaders)?”

Make the distinction that Jesus didn’t pick the disciples because they were perfect – for example, Peter denied him and Judas betrayed him – but because they had hearts that were ready and willing to serve. Say, “God doesn’t care about our status, popularity, or physical characteristics. He cares about our desire to serve him! Do you have the desire to serve God?”

Activity Sheet (10 minutes) *See attachment* Pass out the “Twelve Disciples” crossword sheet to review the lesson. Consider allowing students to work in pairs or small groups.

Optional Activities: If you need to extend this lesson, we recommend the following free activities from our website:

- [D is for Disciple Coloring Page](#)
- [12 Disciples Activity Sheet Printable](#)
- [Bingo Review Game of 12 Disciples Names](#)
- [Activity – Put the Disciples names in Alphabetical Order](#)
- Watch the 5 minute [video from Jelly Telly](#) where Jesus picks his disciples
- Compare our [Sunday School Lesson on Fishers of Men](#)

Conclusion (5 minutes)

RECAP: Jesus chose his disciples not because they were more intelligent, gifted or prosperous than others but because they had willing hearts to follow him and serve. Service is not about what we can do from our own strength but what God can do when we are humble and submit to his will.

CLOSING PRAYER: “God, humble our hearts as we serve you this week, and give us the opportunity to tell others about Jesus as we serve. Amen.”

Servanthood Lessons in the Life of Jesus

This lesson is part of a 10 unit curriculum for older children (age 9 – 13) that follows the life of Jesus and explains how he was a model of serving others.

[Total: 2 Average: 5/5]