

Choose Me! Following Jesus

LJ05

Bible Verses: Matthew 4:18-22, Mark 1:16-20, Luke 5:1-11

This plan covers the stories of Jesus choosing and calling His disciples. Hopefully, the children will see that Jesus still chooses and calls people to be His disciples today – us! They will have opportunities here to respond to that call i

What Do I Do?

Warming Up

 Game

Before the session, write some jobs on the sticky labels. Don't be too obscure – things like postman, nurse, doctor, teacher, vicar are ideal.

Choose a child to play the game. Stick one of the job labels onto their forehead (not in their hair!!!) – make sure that they don't know what it is. You and the rest of the group should then give clues until they guess what their job is.

So, for example, if the job was 'postman', you could say, 'You get up early in the morning', 'You walk a lot', 'You deliver letters'.

With younger children you can alter the game in two ways. Firstly, instead of writing the job down, send the child out of the room whilst you tell the rest of the group what the job is. Secondly, you can have a list of clues for each job already prepared so that the group don't have to come up with them.

The Point: Just for fun, introduces the idea of jobs.

Equipment

Reasonably large sticky labels, pens

Who Would You Choose?

Teaching Time

20 mins

 Story

This activity *may* suit churched children better than un-churched (although you might be surprised!).

Write JESUS in big letters in the middle of the first sheet of paper. Ask the children what it says. Ask the children to shout out some of the things that Jesus did – write them down (older children could maybe write them themselves).

On a second piece of paper write JESUS' HELPERS. Ask the children to suggest what qualities Jesus' helpers might need to have. It would be good for you to have list of qualities as back-up in case they're not sure – things like 'able to travel, willing to do what they're told, clever, good at speaking to people', etc. Write these down.

Read the story, 'Jesus chooses His disciples' beginning on page 308 of the Beginner's Bible. Don't forget to show the amusing pictures!

At the end of the story, ask if the children think that fishermen and a tax collector (who was basically a criminal) match up to the ideas they wrote down earlier. Why or why not?

What was the most important thing that Jesus was looking for? [A willingness to drop everything and follow Him.] Make sure

that the children understand that it wasn't what the disciples were doing before that made them special: it was the fact that Jesus chose them.

Ask the children if they would like to be chosen by Jesus. Why or why not? Tell the children that it wasn't just these 12 men who were Jesus disciples – anyone who follows Him can be called that – even us!

The Point: To tell the story and to show that Jesus wants to choose us so that we can follow Him too.

Equipment

The Beginner's Bible (Candle Books), flip chart pad, marker pens

12 Disciples

Take Away

15 mins

 Craft Ideas

This item can be shared with your group using the QR code:

This activity will work well with the following Teaching Time activities: all

See separate instruction sheet.

The Point: To give the children a reminder of who the 12 disciples were.




Equipment

Long strips of paper – ideally about 60cm long and 10cm wide, scissors, pencils, felt tip pens

Fishy Fishy

Take Away

20 mins

 Craft Ideas

This item can be shared with your group using the QR code:

This activity will work well with the following Teaching Time activities: all but especially 'Gone Fishing!'

Let the children create small fish out of the modelling clay. Let them be as creative and individual as they like! The fish should be two dimensional rather than three – they need to have a flat back so that the magnet can be put on later.

Make sure the children scratch their initials onto the back so that there is no confusion when they come out of the oven. Cook according to the manufacturer's instructions.

Stick or glue a small magnet onto the back of the fish.

The Point: To provide a link back to the story.



Equipment

Modelling clay that can be hardened in the oven (Sculpey or Fimo are good), small magnets (preferably self-adhesive).

Choose Me!

Take Away

45 mins

 Food And Cooking

This item can be shared with your group using the QR code:

This activity will work well with the following Teaching Time activities: all

If you don't have cooking facilities, you can still do this activity by buying ready-made gingerbread men from the supermarket and simply decorating them as detailed later on.



To make the gingerbread men (makes 10):

Ingredients

350g / 12oz plain flour

175g / 6oz light soft brown sugar

100g / 4oz butter

1 medium egg

4 tablespoons of golden syrup

1 teaspoon bicarbonate of soda

½ teaspoon of ground ginger

Method

Pre-heat the oven to 180°C / 350°F / Gas Mark 4

Put the flour, butter, ground ginger and bicarbonate of soda in a mixing bowl. Mix it all together with fingertips until crumbly. Add sugar, syrup and egg and mix until it forms a firm pastry mix.

Using the rolling pin, roll out the pastry to about 5mm thick. Make sure the surface and the rolling pin are well dusted with flour. Cut out the shapes with a man shaped cutter.

Place the cut out biscuits on a greased or non-stick baking tray and place in the pre-heated oven for 10-15 minutes.

When the biscuits are cool, decorate with the writing icing. Each child should write their name on the man with writing icing to remind them that they are one of the people that Jesus chooses.

The Point: To reinforce the teaching.

Equipment

Mixing bowls, rolling pins, man shaped cutters, baking trays, plain flour, light soft brown sugar, butter, eggs, golden syrup, bicarbonate of soda, ground ginger, writing icing pens.

Why Me?

Response

10 mins

✝️ Worship and Reflection

This activity is based on journaling.

Get the children to find a place where they are comfortable and won't be distracted by others. You can play some quiet music if you think that would help.

Ask them to think back to the story they heard earlier. Ask them to imagine being in that story and hearing Jesus ask them to follow Him. Ask them to spend a few minutes in the quiet asking God why He would want to choose them. Smaller children will get fidgety quite quickly, so don't feel you have to spend ages being quiet – 5 minutes might be plenty!

They can write down or draw anything that comes to mind. Reassure them that it's ok if they didn't think they hear anything – sometimes it's enough just to spend a few minutes quietly concentrating on God.

The Point: To give space for God to speak to individuals.

Equipment

Paper, pens, quiet music.

On The List

Response

10 mins

Activity

If you haven't already created person shapes with the disciples' names on in earlier activities in this session, spend a few minutes doing that with the children now. See how many of the names they can get. Put each name on a separate person shape and stick on your display board.

Remind the children that Jesus also wants us to be His disciples. Make sure that everyone has access to a person shape and a pen. Invite them to spend a few minutes thinking about whether they would like to follow Jesus too.

If they do, they can write their name on a person and come and stick it on the board. Don't pressure any children that don't want to – it's absolutely their choice to make in their own time.

Some children may already be following Jesus and this would be simply a recommitment. Some children may do this for the first time.

The Point: To give the children an opportunity to respond.

Equipment

Lots of cut out person shapes, some kind of display board, pens.

Fishers Of Men

“Come with me, and I will teach you to catch people.” Matthew 4:19

Write each word of the memory verse and the reference on a different fish shape and put them into the pool. Put a small magnet on each fish – you can buy self-adhesive magnetic tape which is ideal. Make fishing rods by tying a magnet to one end of a piece of string and a cane to the other.

(Alternatively put a small blob of blu-tac on each fish and a blob of blu-tac on the end of the fishing lines.)

Let the children take it in turns to go fishing. See if they can un-jumble the words to create the memory verse.

The Point: To learn scripture.

Equipment

Inflatable paddling pool, 12 card fish shapes with magnets on, garden canes, string, magnets.
