

## Children's Lenten Lesson #1: Jesus Calls People

### Resources you might want to have for this lesson:

Bible

Children's Story Bible that has illustrations of stories in the lesson.

Computer or tablet to watch videos

Colorful paper strips to make a paper chain

Tape or glue stick

Calendar pages for March and April

Markers or pencils

Paper cut out in the shape of a footprint

### Gathering

Talk about Lent:

*What do you know about the season of Lent?* (Hear answers)

Here are some things to remember about the season:

The season of Lent is the six week period before Easter.

It lasts 40 days, not including Sundays.

It reminds us of the 40 days that Jesus spent in the wilderness before he started his ministry.

Many people focus on prayer, giving, and fasting during the season of Lent.

Watch the Videos about Lent:

As the leader, you might want to freshen up your knowledge of the season of Lent by watching these short videos. If you are leading older children, you might consider letting them watch the videos as well.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m3L3c23Mfc0&list=PL1528D994CEED04DE&index=3>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xo1mjuj1NA0>

Activities about Lent:

To help count down the days until Easter, provide materials for the children to make one of the projects below.

- Calendar countdown – Have copies of the months of March and April for each child to have a copy. First, ask them to find Easter Sunday on the calendar. Ask them to draw a star or some other picture on that date. Starting with Saturday (the day before Easter), ask the children to write a number on each day, counting backwards up until the current day you are doing this activity. When finished, they will know how many days until Easter. Each day after this, they can put a big X through the day counting down the days until Easter.
- Paper chain countdown – Cut out forty paper strips that could be used to make a paper chain. Demonstrate to the children how to tape or glue the paper strips so that they interlock and make a chain. The children can take off a link every day until Easter Sunday. (No link is removed on Sundays during Lent.)



Talk about reading the Bible:

If you have enough Bibles for each child, let them hold their own Bible while you go through the following questions.

Questions to ask the children:

*There are many smaller sections in the Bible. What do you call them? (Books)*

The book we will be reading from during Lent is the book of Mark.

All the books in the Bible are in one of two large collections called Testaments.

*What are the two testaments called? (Old & New)*

*Can you look and see which Testament the book of Mark is located using the Table of Contents?*

See if you can find the book of Mark.

## Scripture

The book of Mark begins with the story of Jesus being baptized. This is one of the first stories we have about Jesus as an adult. Very quickly after Jesus is baptized he begins his work. The very first thing he does is begin to call people to follow him.

Read Mark 1:16-20

You may want to watch this video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bAeyW-BV5cY>

Read Mark 2: 13 - 17

You may want to watch:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pBnkNXHu7HA>

## Questions

Spend some time talking with the children about the two stories using the questions below. Give them time to think and answer. The questions do not have a Yes or No answer, so allow time for the children to wonder about what is happening in the story. Think of this as a conversation, more than a question and answer activity.

*In these stories what was Jesus doing?*

*Who did Jesus talk to along the way?*

*What did he ask Simon, Andrew, James, John, and Levi to do?*

*Why do you think they did what Jesus asked?*

*What questions do you think they had of Jesus?*

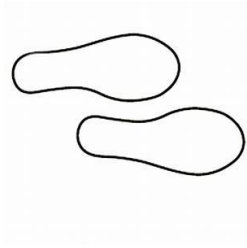
*How do you think their life was different after they started following Jesus?*

*Think of a time when you are playing a game, reading a book, or doing something you really love to do. Now imagine someone coming along as asking you to stop that activity and go with them. How do you feel about that? What do you think you would do?*

*Jesus was calling these folks to follow him. How do you feel Jesus calls you to follow him?*

## Seeking Understanding

- **Follow the Leader** – Play a game of follow the leader, giving each child a chance to be the leader. After everyone has had a chance to lead, talk about the game and how it is similar or different from the Bible stories.



➤ **Make Footprints** - Have footprints cut out for each child to have one or two. Ask them to draw a picture or write words on the footprint of ways they feel Jesus could be calling them.

Close with this prayer or let a child lead the group in prayer.

God, we thank you for the stories about Jesus that we read today. Help us to follow Jesus just like Simon, Andrew, James, John, and Levi did. Amen.