

# CHURCH SCHOOL BIBLE STORIES

## - JANUARY 2023 -

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### **Come, Follow Me**

**A story based on Matthew 4:12-23**

Peter and his brother Andrew were fishers. They went out in their boat and caught fish in their net each day. Their net was so big.

Sometimes Peter and Andrew had to wait all night before they caught any fish. While they waited, they told stories that they had heard about a new teacher named Jesus.

One night, as Peter and Andrew were fishing, Jesus walked by. Jesus waved and called out, "Peter! Andrew! I need friends to help me. Come with me and you can help me teach people about God."

Peter and Andrew looked at each other. Wow! Jesus wanted their help! They put down their nets right away and followed Jesus.

Jesus walked further down the beach and saw two other fishers, James and John, fixing their fishing nets. Again, Jesus said, "James! John! I need friends to help me! Come! Follow me!"

What do you think James and John did? They went with Jesus, too.

Jesus and his new helpers, called disciples, travelled everywhere together, telling people about God's love.

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## Favour

Based on Matthew 5:1–12

“Come sit with me,” Jesus said to his disciples. “I need to ask you a favour.” The disciples and others gathered around Jesus and sat on the hillside. They were eager to hear what Jesus wanted to tell them and ask of them.

“The world needs your help. The world needs to know about my love. So, I need you to share it with everyone. But there’s a catch,” Jesus said.

The people looked at him with wonder and a tiny bit of fear. The crowd began to mumble and stir. “A catch?” said an older woman. “What does he mean?” asked a young boy.

“Well, I love people a lot, so this should be easy,” a teenager said excitedly.

“No, it’s not going to be easy,” Jesus replied. “The world is going to reject you when you start helping me. You will be persecuted, and people will not say nice things about you. But it’s oh-so-important work, and I need your help.”

“Um, Jesus, I’m not too sure about that,” one of his disciples said hesitantly. “Yeah, people are going to talk ugly about me? I’m not cool with that one bit,” a voice in the crowd lifted up.

“Fear not!” Jesus said. He was quite fond of saying that.

“You will be greatly rewarded for this work. You will be called Blessed. I will be so very proud of you, and so will our God. The Spirit will be with you and will help you because it’s an important favour I’m asking of you.” Jesus looked at the crowd excitedly and saw blank stares. The people were unsure. But then, the smallest voice cried out, “Okay, Jesus! What do you need me to do? I’ll help you!”

And Jesus smiled. He always knew that the little children would be the leaders.

“Thank you, my blessed, beloved child. I’m so grateful for you,” Jesus said as he stood up, looking for the person attached to the voice he’d heard. But he couldn’t find the child. So, he continued, saying: “I need you to always put the other person before yourself, and I need you to hurt when

the world hurts. I will comfort you. I will save you a place in the reign of God. I need you to be hungry for righteousness because the world isn’t a fair place, and we need to work to make it fair. I need you to be full of mercy, and I’ll make sure the Spirit keeps you filled with mercy to spare. Can you please be honest? An honest heart is the one that will see God. And, oh...peace. The world needs peacemakers. I need you to always work for peace, my dear children. Even when the world throws ugly things your way, be peaceful. Always seek peace. And spread love. You can never spread too much love. I’ll show you how to love, so all you need to do is follow my example, and the world will be full of love.”

“Sounds good to me,” the small voice said, and the crowd began to nod their heads in agreement. The people thought that this was important work, and they were up for the challenge. The world needed them, and they were ready to go out and help Jesus.

“Oh, thank you, my beloveds! I am blessed because I get to call you my friends. And the world is blessed because it gets to learn about me through you. So, thank you. Thank you. Thank you.”

Jesus stood up, threw out his hands and said, “Go! Now. You can do this. The world is waiting. And remember, you are never alone. I am always with you.”

The people got up to leave, and Jesus stood at the top of the hill, watching them walk away out into the world. Jesus was in the middle of saying a prayer of thanksgiving for everyone when he felt a thud at his feet. He looked down to see the smallest child with the biggest smile hugging his legs. Jesus bent down and patted the child on the back. The child turned and ran away yelling with a hug and a smile. Jesus could barely make out the words, but he thought he heard, “Here I come world! I can’t wait for you to meet my Jesus!” And Jesus smiled.