

Following the leader is definitely something preschoolers love and understand. What they need to learn is that throughout life there will be countless choices of leaders they can follow. We want them to know who the best leader is to follow. And that is Jesus! Jesus is the best leader we can follow!

**WEEK 1 Story Focus: John told people that Jesus is special.** We will start the month with someone who wanted people to know who the best leader is. His name is John the Baptist, and he spent his life teaching people that the best leader was coming and they should follow Him.

**WEEK 2 Story Focus: Jesus says, “Follow Me.”** Then Jesus came, and boy did He change everything! Week two, we will see how Jesus turned Andrew, Peter, James, and John from fishermen into faithful disciples with just two words. “Follow me.” Those men chose to follow Jesus, and their written words still help others follow Jesus to this day.

**WEEK 3 Story Focus: Everyone can follow Jesus.** We will see in week three that anyone can follow Jesus— even disliked, not so honest, tax collectors like Matthew. The choice Matthew made to follow Jesus changed him forever. When he walked away from his tax table, Jesus replaced his love for money with a love for people

**WEEK 4 Story Focus: I can follow Jesus.** It wasn't just Andrew, Peter, James, John, and Matthew that followed Jesus, as we will see during week four. Jesus asked twelve men to follow Him, and they did. We know them as the Disciples. Those twelve men followed Jesus everywhere. They watched, learned, and were changed. And, they went on to help others—lots of others—follow Jesus too. We can all follow Jesus

**WEEK 5 Story Focus: When I follow Jesus, I can love everyone.** So, what happens when we follow Jesus? Well, when we follow Jesus, we learn how to love people the way Jesus loves people. That means during week five, we will learn that we can love everyone and what that love looks like for preschoolers.

By the end of this month, when we ask preschoolers who can you follow, our prayer is that they will answer, I can follow Jesus. Why? Because Jesus loves us, and He will always lead us in the best way.

# March 22, 2020

**Bible Story Focus:** I can follow Jesus.

The Twelve • *The Gospels*

**Memory Verse:** “‘Come and follow me,’ Jesus said.” Matthew 4:19, NIV

**Key Question:** Who can you follow?

**Bottom Line:** I can follow Jesus.

**Basic Truth:** Jesus wants to be my friend forever.

## 10:30-11:00 SOCIAL: Providing Time for Fun Interaction

1. Follow Directions

2. Disciple Bin

11:00-11:10 Clean Up

11:10-11:30 Bible Story and Memory Verse

11:30-11:50 GROUPS: Creating a Safe Place to Connect

3. Craft Stick Review-Bible Story Review

4. Dance Party-Activity

5. Jesus and the Disciples-Craft

6. Prayer

11:50 Clean Up and Snack

### **Social: Providing Time for Fun Interaction (Small Groups, 15 minutes)**

Activities that encourage preschoolers to enter the classroom and begin engaging with peers and Small Group Leaders by providing age appropriate and hands on fun while introducing new concepts they will hear in the day's Bible story.

*Prepare to offer the following activities as your 4-5-year-olds arrive. Let one or two teachers lead activities in different areas of the room while another teacher greets parents and kids at the door.*

#### **1. Follow Directions**

**What You Need:** "Feet" Activity Page, cardstock, and floor tape

#### **What You Do:**

*Before the Activity:* Copy "Feet" Activity Page onto the cardstock. You will need 10-15 copies of the Activity Page. Tape the feet on the floor in a pathway around the room all facing different directions.

*During the Activity:* Invite the children to walk the path and face the direction of the feet. Repeat several times.

#### **What You Say:**

*Before the Activity:* "Let's FOLLOW the path!"

*During the Activity:* "The feet are facing different directions. While you are walking the path be sure to FOLLOW the feet by putting your feet on the feet on the floor."  
(*Demonstrate.*)

*After the Activity:* "Great job FOLLOWING the path! Today we are going to hear a Bible story about how people followed Jesus."

## 2. Disciple Bin \*\*

**What You Need:** medium-sized tub, rice, several small random preschool safe items, 12 Little People® figures, and an empty egg carton or muffin pan (with 12 cups)

### **What You Do:**

*Before the Activity:* Place the rice into the tub. Hide all of the items and figures in the rice. Place the open egg carton or muffin pan next to the tub.

*During the Activity:* Count the compartments in the carton or the tin with the children. Encourage the children to place their hands into the tub and pull out the figures and place one in each compartment of the carton or muffin pan. Continue the activity until all of the compartments are filled with the Little People figures.

### **What You Say:**

*Before the Activity:* “There are people inside our tub!”

*During the Activity:* “There are 12 people. Let’s pull out all of the people and put them in each space of the tin. (*Carton.*) There are 12 spaces. Let’s count them. (*Do activity.*) Are you ready?” (*Pause and continue activity.*)

*After the Activity:* “Nice work! We found all of the people. Today we are going to hear a Bible story about 12 people who followed Jesus!”

**Transition:** Move to Worship and Story by counting to 12 as you walk to the story area.

## **Bible Story and Memory Verse**

### **Groups: Creating a Safe Place to Connect (Small Groups, 25 minutes)**

Create a safe place to connect through activities that are written to reach every learning style while reinforcing the bottom line that was introduced during the Bible Story and applying it to real life experiences. In addition, these activities provide preschoolers with an opportunity to build relationships with their Small Group Leader.

*Offer as many of the following activities as your time, facilities, resources, and leadership allow. You may want to lead one activity at a time. Or, offer two activities at once and allow half the kids to participate in each. Then switch groups and repeat the activities.*

### **3. Craft Stick Review-Bible Story Review**

**What You Need:** “Disciples and Jesus” Activity Page, cardstock, craft sticks, clear tape, and scissors

#### **What You Do:**

*Before the Activity:* Copy the Activity Page onto the cardstock and cut on the dotted lines. You should have 12 disciples and one Jesus cutout. Tape each cutout to a craft stick to create puppets.

*During the Activity:* Give each child a disciple, and keep the Jesus puppet yourself. Lead the children around the room while holding up the puppets.

*After the Activity:* Retell the Bible story.

#### **What You Say:**

*Before the Activity:* “Let’s be Jesus’ disciples!”

*During the Activity:* (Give the children the puppets and lead them around the room.) “I will pretend to be Jesus and you can be Jesus’ disciples. The disciples were Jesus’ best friends. When Jesus said, ‘Follow me,’ they did! FOLLOW ME!” (Continue activity.)

*After the Activity:* “The disciples followed Jesus, and so can we! **Who can you follow? [Bottom Line] I can follow Jesus!**”

#### 4. Dance Party-Activity

**What You Need:** Music player and the monthly song

**What You Do:**

*Before the Activity:* Turn on the music.

*During the Activity:* Play the music and encourage the children to dance in a line while playing following the leader. Repeat so that everyone gets a turn to be the leader.

**What You Say:**

*Before the Activity:* "Let's dance!"

*During the Activity:* "When you hear the music, start dancing while we play 'Follow the Leader.' Follow me!" (*Do activity.*)

*After the Activity:* "Great job! We can ALL follow Jesus! **Who can you follow? [Bottom Line] I can follow Jesus!**"

## 5. Jesus and the Disciples-Craft

**What You Need:** “Jesus” and “Disciples” Activity Pages, cardstock, 24 inch sentence strips (one per child), scissors, and glue sticks

### What You Do:

*Before the Activity:* Copy the “Jesus” Activity Page onto cardstock and cut in half (one half page per child). Copy the “Disciples” Activity Page onto cardstock and cut along dotted lines (one set of 12 disciples per child). Fold a sentence strip for each child accordion style five times 4 inches apart (to create six sections). Set the “Jesus” half page, a folded sentence strip, and a set of disciple pictures at each spot at the table. Set the glue sticks in the center.

*During the Activity:* Point out the picture of Jesus on their half page. Then talk about His friends, the 12 disciples. Show the children how to glue each of the 12 disciples onto the sentences strips in each section created by the folds. The folds have created six sections on each side of the strip. Children will glue the disciples on the front and back of each folded section. When finished, help the children glue the back flap to the half page to the right of Jesus. Make sure the back flap is firmly attached so that when the child pulls on the sentence strip, he or she will see the disciples following Jesus!

*After the Activity:* Make sure each child’s name is on his/her page, and set aside to dry until pick up.

### What You Say:

*Before the Activity:* “Today we learned about Jesus’ 12 special friends called the disciples. Did they follow Jesus? (*Pause.*) Yes! See the page in front of you? I see Jesus but not His friends. Let’s glue the disciples to our long sentence strip so we can add them to the page with Jesus!”

*After the Activity:* “You can take this home and tell your family all about the disciples who chose to follow Jesus! We can follow Jesus, too. Tell me: **Who can you follow?** [*Bottom Line*] **I can follow Jesus.**”

## 6. Prayer

**What You Need:** Paperclip “Memory Verse Card” in your Bible at Matthew 4:19.

**SMALL GROUP LEADER (SGL):** “It’s prayer time.

*(Open the Bible and lay it open in front of the children.)*

“Our Bible story today was about 12 men called the disciples. Jesus told all of the men to follow Him. And they did! They became Jesus’ closest friends and they followed Jesus everywhere He went.

“Are the 12 disciples from our story the only people who can follow Jesus?”

*(Pause for response.)*

“Noooooo. Everyone can follow Jesus! [Child’s name] can follow Jesus and *(repeat with each child’s name)*. So, tell me: **Who can you follow?**”

**CHILDREN and SGL:** *[Bottom Line]* “I can follow Jesus!”

**SGL:** “Yes, you can! You can follow Jesus just like the disciples did. And the Bible verse we have been learning will help us remember that Jesus wants us to follow Him. I’ll read it one time and then we can say it together with the motions.

*(Turn the pages of your Bible to the Memory Verse Card.)*

“Come and follow me,’ Jesus said, Matthew 4:19.

*(Close Bible and lay it down.)*

“See? Jesus wants us to follow Him, too! Let’s stand up and say that together with the motions.”

**CHILDREN and SGL:** “Come *(motion toward yourself with hand)* and follow me *(march)*,” Jesus said *(hands to mouth like yelling)*, Matthew 4:19.” *(Open hands like a book.) (Repeat the verse with motions a few times.)*

**SGL:** “Wow! You are so good at saying that verse!

*(Give each child a high five.)*

“Let’s sit down so we talk to God.”

“Jesus asked 12 men to follow Him, and they became His closest friends, the disciples. Jesus wants us to follow Him, too! I want to pray that we will all follow Jesus.

“Now, would anyone like to pray before I pray?”

*(Give each child who wants to pray the opportunity to do so.)*

### **Prayer**

**SGL:** “Dear God, thank You that my friends *(name each child)* get to come to church and hear about how much Jesus loves them. Thank You that they get to hear that Jesus wants to be their friend forever. I pray that *(name each child)* will follow Jesus, because He is the best friend we could ever have and He will always lead us the best way. We love You, God. In Jesus’ name, amen.”