

Follow me and do what you do best — Christian ed at home

Adapted from an article by **JOELLE BRUMMIT-YALE** in the **Presbyterian Outlook**



Scripture: Mark 1:14-20

Materials: blank paper, markers or crayons, a ruler and scissors

(Recently)... we celebrated Martin Luther King Jr., one of the most prominent civil rights leaders from our nation's past, and the inauguration of a new president who will lead us into the future...it's natural to consider what makes someone a good leader. Rarely, though, do we think about the traits of a good follower. Followers seem secondary to leaders. They are often thought of as those wanting to emulate or support the leader's vision. But what if followers were considered just as important as leaders?

In this week's ...reading, we see Mark's account of Jesus calling his first disciples. While Jesus could have selected anyone to join his inner circle, he focuses on two fishermen. They have special gifts and skills that Jesus wants them to use to share God's good news. Just like these fishermen, we each have unique traits that God can use to bring about God's kingdom on earth. In this lesson, your family will explore each person's gifts and consider how they might contribute to God's work on earth.

Introduce

- Begin the time with your children by playing Follow the Leader. Choose one person to serve as the leader. Tell everyone else that they must do whatever the leader does. For example, if the leader walks across the room, they have to follow the leader across the room. Play a few rounds of the game, switching leaders after five minutes or so until each person has had a chance to be a leader.
- When you finish the game, talk about what each experience was like. How did it feel to be the leader? How did it feel to be a follower? Which did you prefer? Which was more challenging? Be sure that each child has a chance to talk through their experiences, so that everyone has a clear idea in his head of what it means to play each role.

Prepare

Prepare to read the lectionary passage. Share with your children that this event takes place after Jesus' baptism. Jesus is announcing that it is time for the people to hear God's good news, so he begins looking for people to help him share his message.

Read

Read Mark 1:14-20 aloud to your children. Have them to focus in on the people who Jesus asks to be his followers, Simon and Andrew. Note that they are fishermen.

- Ask them to brainstorm what special skills fishermen might need.
- If your children are younger or are unfamiliar with fishermen, you can share some ideas. You can note that fishermen need to know how to use special equipment like nets. The need to be strong and to work together to pull in nets filled with fish. They need to be aware of where fish might be living and how to best lure them to their nets, which mean paying attention to the rhythms of the sea.
- Then, ask them to consider the reasons why these men are fishing. They are working to catch food for their families and for their communities.

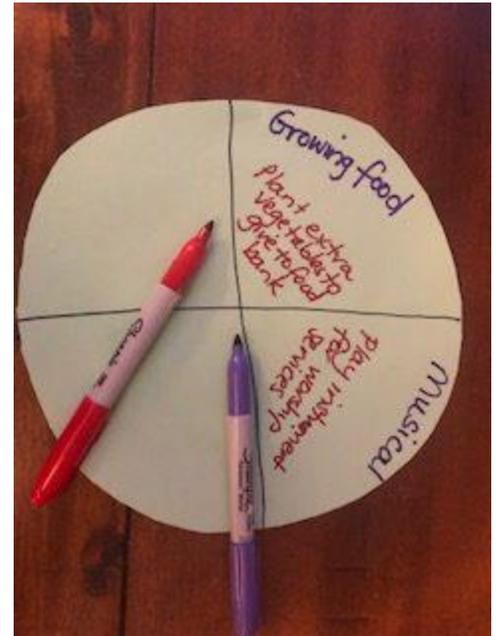
Wonder

- After exploring the unique job of the fisherman, ask your children to consider why Jesus selects these particular people to be his first followers. In other words, based on what they have discovered about fishermen, why are Simon and Andrew good candidates to help Jesus?
- Encourage their "wondering" about this idea, even if they aren't able to come up with concrete answers. Note that they may not know exactly why Jesus chose these two people to follow him, but Jesus knew that they were the right ones to serve as his first disciples.
- God always knows who to call as followers because God knows the special gifts, talents and skills each person has. And in being God's followers, we are also leaders. Jesus tells the fishermen they will "fish for people." They will help bring Jesus' message to people by using their skills, thus making them leaders.

Do

Prepare for the activity portion of the lesson by gathering a few materials: blank paper, markers or crayons, a ruler and scissors.

- Give each child a piece of paper and ask her to cut a large circle out of it.
- Then, using the ruler and a marker or crayon, she should draw lines dividing the circle into four equal segments, like a pizza cut into four slices.
- Ask each child to think about the special gifts, talents and skills that they have. Younger children may have difficulty understanding the concept of a “gift” or “talent.” Instead, you may ask them to consider what they really enjoy doing or think they are particularly good at.
- Have her write or draw one in outer part of each of the four sections of the paper circle.
- Then, encourage her to consider how she might use each of these gifts to continue Jesus’ work on earth. If she has trouble thinking of ideas, you could share some that might resonate with her. For example, if your child is artistic, he may create visual representations of themes in a biblical text or a sermon to share with others.
- Ask your child to write or draw the actions she comes up with in the circle next to its corresponding gift.



After completing the activity, talk about ways your children can put their ideas into action while also observing COVID-19 safety. They may already be using their gifts to lead. If so, celebrate this and ask them to renew their commitment to their ministry.



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