

Jesus Calls Friends

Matthew 4:18-22

WEEK 6



Follow It!

POINT ➡ WE'RE FRIENDS WITH JESUS.

Designate roles of Peter, Andrew, James, and John, making sure every child has a role. (Multiple children may play the same roles.) Have the Peters and Andrews stand together, with the Jameses and Johns sitting together across the room. Open your Bible to Matthew 4, and show children the words. SAY: **God's special book, the Bible, says some interesting things about Jesus' first disciples—the people he called to be friends and helpers. And ➡ WE'RE FRIENDS WITH JESUS, too! I'll pretend to be Jesus, and as I call you to follow me, do exactly what I do.**

One day Jesus walked beside the Sea of Galilee, and he saw two brothers, Peter and Andrew, throwing a fishing net into the water. Instruct the Peters and Andrews to pretend to throw a net. Jesus said, "Come, follow me." Peter and Andrew left their nets at once and followed him. Have the Peters and Andrews follow you as you hop. Farther up the shore, Jesus saw two

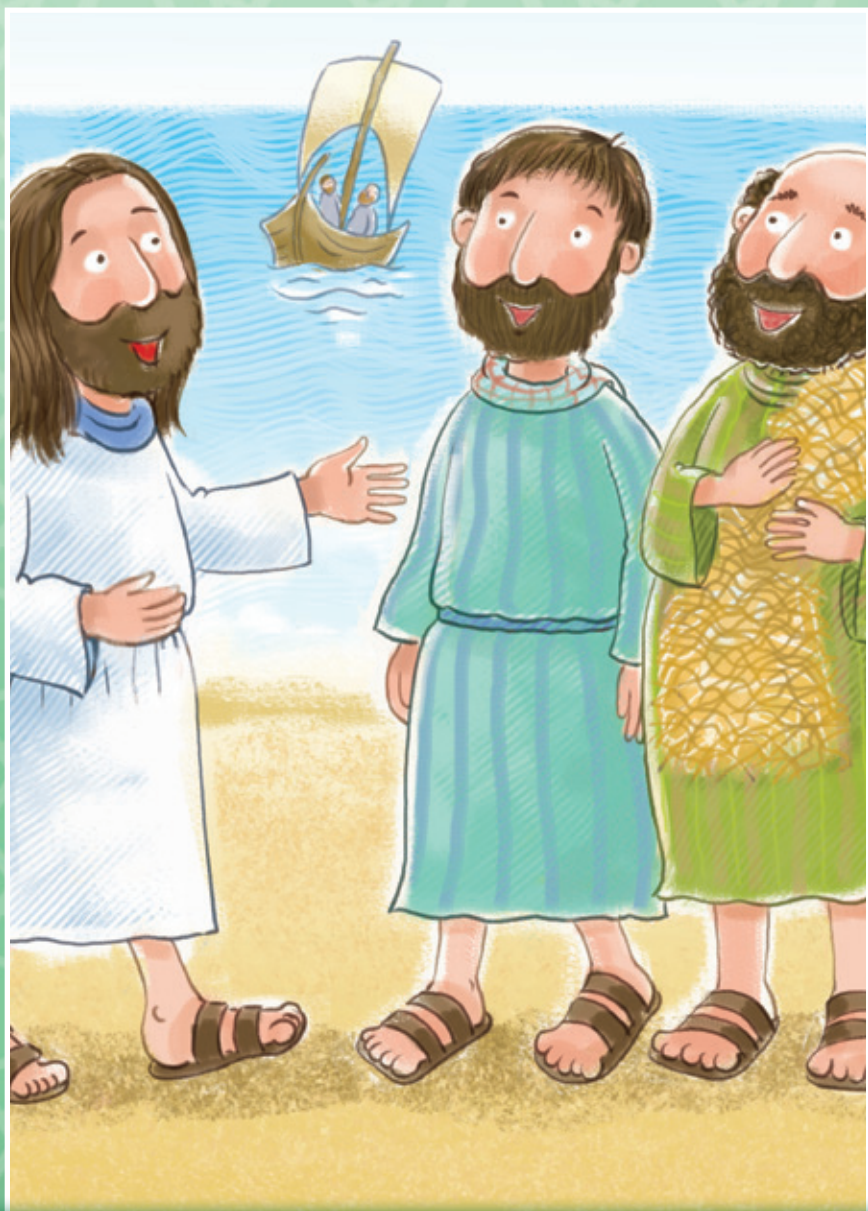
other brothers, James and John, sitting in a fishing boat. Instruct the Jameses and Johns to pretend to be in a boat fishing. Jesus called James and John to come, too. They followed him right away. Have everyone follow you as you gallop, march, and tiptoe around the room.

ASK: **What was the most fun part of following me?**

What's fun about following Jesus?

SAY: **Being friends with Jesus was so exciting that Peter, Andrew, James, and John dropped everything to be his friend. And Jesus wants us to be his friends, too! We're excited when ➡ WE'RE FRIENDS WITH JESUS.**





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Toss It!

POINT ➡ WE'RE FRIENDS WITH JESUS.

just what Jesus' fishermen friends did, and we can do it when we tell other people why we like being Jesus' friend.

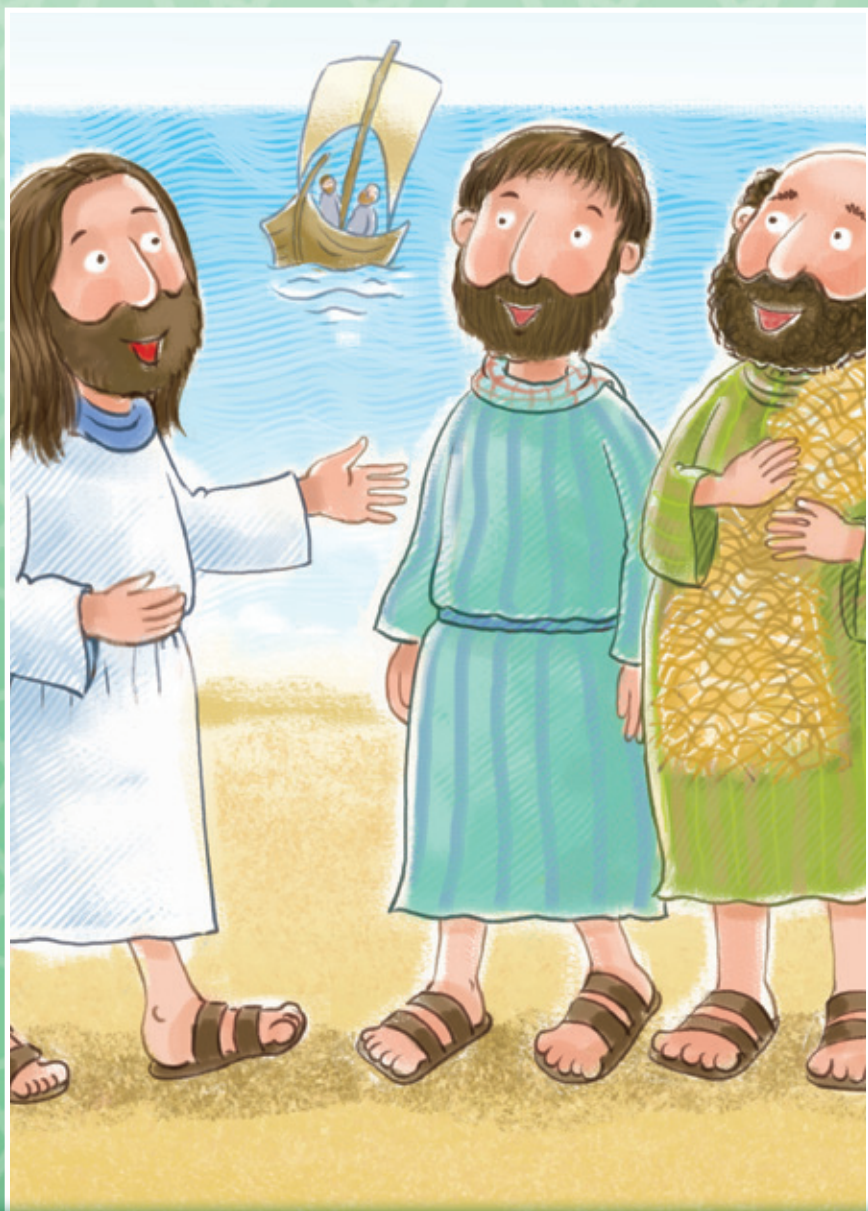
Have children create fish with *Buzz Boing Putty* (shapes can be rough) and then sit in a circle on the floor with their fish. Set out some paper in the middle of the circle to be a sea. SAY: **The friends Jesus called to follow him that day—Peter, Andrew, James, and John—were all fishermen. Jesus told them to stop catching fish in the sea. He told them to start fishing for people instead by helping the people know Jesus.**

One at a time, let's toss our fish into the sea—the middle of our circle—to show how the disciples gave up fishing to follow Jesus. As you toss your fish, name one thing that would be hard for you to give up to follow Jesus.

ASK: **How can you "fish for people" by helping them know Jesus?**

What can you tell someone about Jesus this week?

SAY: **When ➡ WE'RE FRIENDS WITH JESUS, we want to help other people be his friends, too! That's**



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POINT ➔ WE'RE FRIENDS WITH JESUS.

Lead kids in singing ● "You Are My Friends" (John 15:14) (track 7) with the CD.

SING:

You are my friends if you do what I command. *(Point to others.)*

Tell everyone what an awesome God I am. *(Make talking "mouths" with your hands.)*

(Verse)

Friends are friends when it's daytime or it's night *(wave hands, then pretend to sleep),*

And God is a friend who will be there all the time. *(Point up, then point to wrist.)*

We can talk to him, and he will listen. *(Make talking "mouth" with your hands, then cup ears.)*

God will always be right by your side *(put arms straight against side),*

'Cause he says,

(Chorus)

You are my friends if you do what I command. *(Point to others.)*

Tell everyone what an awesome God I am. *(Make talking "mouths" with your hands.)*

You are my friends if you do what I command. *(Point to others.)*

Trust me and love me; you'll always be my friends. *(Hug yourself.)*

(Repeat verse; then repeat chorus.)

You are my friends if you do what I command. *(Point to others.)*

Tell everyone what an awesome God I am. *(Make talking "mouths" with your hands.)*

You are my friends if you do what I command. *(Point to others.)*

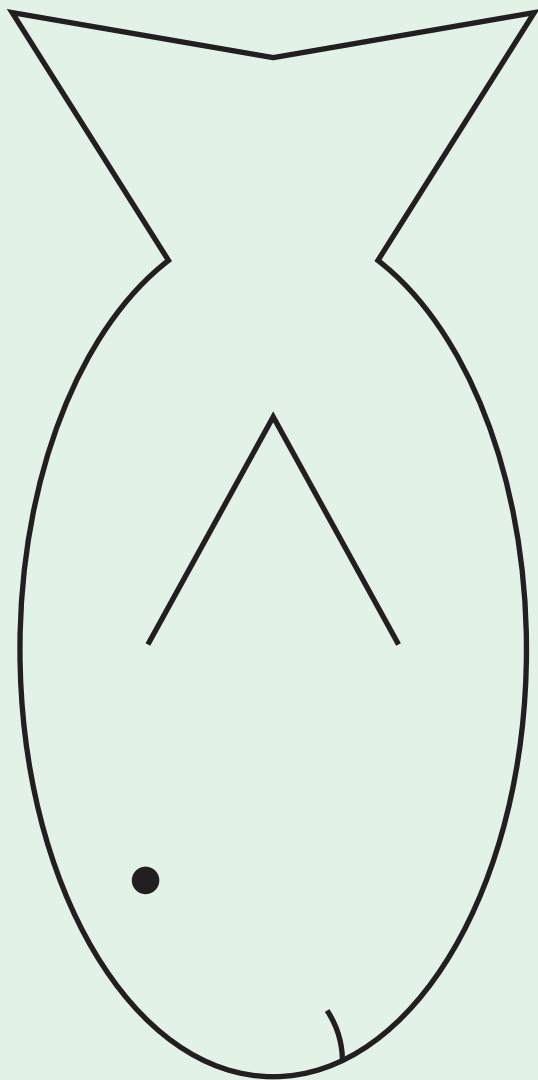
Trust me and love me; I'll always be your friend. *(Hug yourself.)*

"You Are My Friends" (John 15:14) by Jay Stocker. © 2008 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.

ASK: **Jesus says we show that we're his friends when we obey him. What's one way you can obey Jesus this week?**

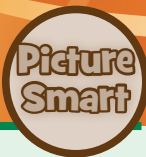
What does Jesus do that shows you he's a good friend to you?

SAY: When ➔ **WE'RE FRIENDS WITH JESUS,** he does wonderful things for us! And we can show we love him by doing what he says, just like his friends in the Bible did. He's happy when we're good friends who show we care about him!



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Make It!

POINT ➔ WE'RE FRIENDS WITH JESUS.

Hand out paper and crayons. Help kids trace the fish on the back of this card. Let kids color their fish as they like. Print children's names on the backs of their fish.

ASK: If you've ever gone fishing, tell about that time.

If you've never been fishing, tell us something you know about it.

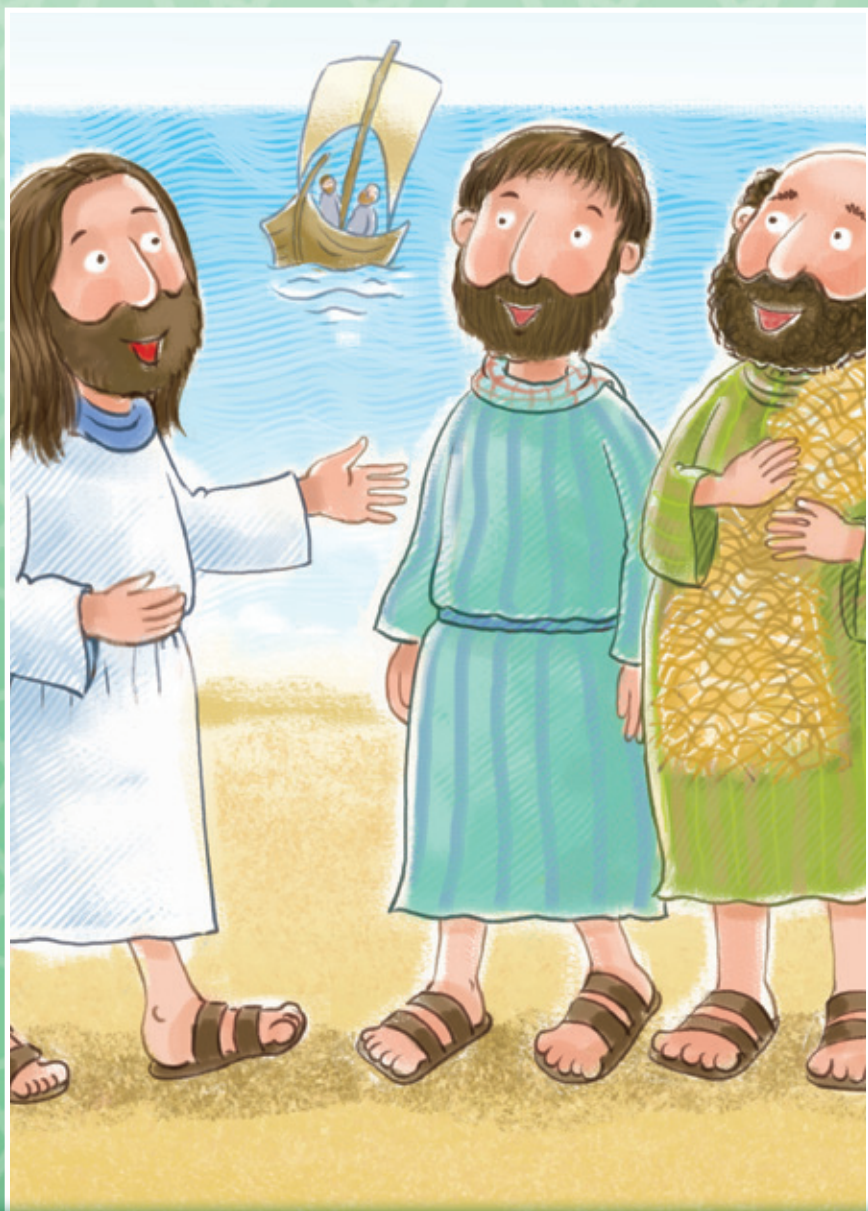
SAY: Jesus told his friends that telling people about him is like fishing. When we put a hook in the water to catch a fish, the hungry fish wants to get the worm. Fish need food. People need Jesus. When we tell people about Jesus, sometimes they realize they need him and they want to know more. Eventually they love him like we do. Then they're caught as friends of Jesus! And unlike a poor fish that gets caught on a hook, it's a good thing to be caught for Jesus!

Gather kids in a circle. Collect their fish, mix them up, and place them in the center of the circle like fish

in a pond. Give each child a turn to fish by placing a loop of tape on the child's pointer finger. Have the child get on hands and knees next to the pond, close his or her eyes, and reach out with the fishing finger to try to catch a fish on it. When the child catches a fish, have that child stand and name one person to tell about Jesus. Let each child take a turn.

ASK: How is telling people about Jesus like or unlike catching a fish?

SAY: Jesus taught his friends to fish for people by telling them about his love. ➔ WE'RE FRIENDS WITH JESUS. We "catch" people for him by telling friends about his love.



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Pass It!

POINT ➡ WE'RE FRIENDS WITH JESUS.

Make a fish from *Buzz Boing Putty*.
Gather kids in a circle.

SAY: Jesus said, "You are my friends if you do what I command."
➡ **WE'RE FRIENDS WITH JESUS.**
That means we want to do the things he has told us to do.

I'm going to play some music for you. While you hear the music, pass this fish around. When the music stops, whoever is holding the fish can give a command, telling everyone else something to do. For example, you might tell kids to hop on one foot or rub their heads.

Play ● "You Are My Friends" (John 15:14) (track 7) on the **CD** while kids pass the fish. (It's okay if it gets smushed in the process. Kids can reshape it between turns if they like.) Stop the music at a random point.

Have the child holding the fish give a simple command. If kids need help thinking of a command, offer these suggestions: jump up and down three times, scratch your head, tickle your neighbor, laugh really loud.

Repeat the activity several times.

SAY: You had fun telling each other things to do. Jesus told us to do things, too. He told us to follow him, to be kind to others, to fish for people, and to tell others about him.

ASK: What's something you've learned today about what Jesus wants his friends and followers to do?

Why do we want to do what Jesus commands us to do?

SAY: Jesus loves us, and we love him, too. We do what he commands to show that we love him. We show ➡ **WE'RE FRIENDS WITH JESUS** if we do what he's taught us to do.