



SESSION 1 of 4

The fishermen

MEETING AIM

To discover that Jesus is special and worth following.

BIBLE PASSAGE

Luke 5:1-11

BACKGROUND

This month, we're looking at people Jesus met. In this session it's the fishermen, Jesus' first disciples. Younger children are unlikely to know much about fishing, so they won't get the full implication of this miracle. However, they will be able to see that Jesus is special. How can we help younger children encounter this special Jesus today?

5 CIRCLE TIME

As the children arrive, welcome each one by name and invite them to join your circle and share the snacks you have brought. Chat about what has happened since you last met. Ask the children if anyone has done anything surprising or special. Perhaps they had a treat or went to a birthday party. If possible, share an appropriate example from your own life.

10 FREE PLAY

You will need: fishing games; nets; fish shapes cut from paper; water-play equipment; cover-up and clean-up equipment

Set out the fishing games, nets, fish and water-play equipment, and enjoy playing with these together. Join in with the children as they play and chat about what they're doing. Encourage the children to use their imaginations in their play and see where they take you!

10 BIBLE STORY

You will need: a parachute (use a large sheet or net if you don't have a parachute); fish shapes cut from paper

Gather the children around the edge of the parachute and practise lifting it up and down. You could also show the children how to shake the edge so that it ripples like water. Lay the chute flat on the floor and sit the children around it. Tell the following story.

One day, Jesus was telling people all about God. He was standing next to a large lake. *Ask a child to stand up next to the chute and mime teaching.*

There were so many people that not everyone could see him, so he asked a fisherman called Simon Peter if he could use his boat. Simon Peter and his brother Andrew rowed their boat a short distance from the shore, and Jesus sat down to teach everyone more about God. *Ask two more children to be Simon Peter and Andrew, and to walk with Jesus a little way onto the chute.*

When Jesus had finished teaching, he said to Simon Peter: "Let's go out on the lake and catch some fish." Simon Peter was confused. They had just come back from fishing and had caught nothing. But he decided to do it anyway. *Jesus, Simon Peter and Andrew mime rowing into the middle of the chute. Everyone else picks up the edge of the chute and shakes it so that it looks like water.*

They threw their nets into the water and waited. *Ask the two disciples to mime doing this.*

Before long, the nets were full of fish! *Ask the children around the edge to throw the paper fish onto the chute.*

In fact, the nets were so full they couldn't pull them back onto the boat. *Ask the two disciples to mime struggling to pull the nets onto their boat.*

They had to call their friends, James and John, to help them. *Ask two more children to go onto the chute to be James and John. All four fishermen should mime dragging the nets on board.*

Simon Peter was surprised! He couldn't believe what had just happened. He knew Jesus was special. He was a little bit scared and fell to his knees. *One of the fishermen kneels down.*

But Jesus told him not to be afraid. He asked Simon Peter, Andrew, James and John to come with him and help him tell everyone about God! And that's what they did. *Ask your five 'actors' to hug and walk off the chute together.*

If you have time and the children are keen, tell the story again with other children as Jesus and the four fishermen.

5 CHATTING TOGETHER

Chat about the Bible story using these questions. Try to involve all the children in your discussion:

- What did you like best about the story?
- Who is your favourite character? Why?
- Can you think of any words to describe Jesus?
- What would you like to say to Jesus?

10 CREATIVE RESPONSE

You will need: art and craft materials; A3 paper; playdough or clay; nets and paper fish from 'Free play'; cover-up and clean-up equipment

Before the session, gather together plenty of resources to help the children respond to the story. Encourage them to think about what they might like to do to think more about the story. They could draw a picture, make a model from playdough or re-enact the story using the nets and paper fish. You might need to help them make their decisions, then assist them in getting all the materials they need. Make sure the children know they should share resources if someone else wants to use them.

As the children work, join in with them. Continue to chat about the story and what they think about Jesus. What might it be like to be his friend, as Simon Peter, Andrew, James and John were? Chat about why Jesus is special to you and why you follow him.

10 PRAYER

You will need: fish shapes cut from paper; felt-tip pens

Give each child a paper fish and a felt-tip pen. Ask them to think about Jesus. What have they discovered about him today? Encourage them to write or draw on their fish something that represents what they have discovered. You may need to help children verbalise their thoughts and assist those who aren't yet writing.

Once everyone has written or drawn on their fish, ask them to hold it out in front of them and think about what they would like to say to Jesus. Ask the children to shout out what they'd like to say (prime some leaders to start the ball rolling). Once everyone who wants to has shouted out, finish with a prayer thanking Jesus for being so special.

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