



## STORY 60

# Follow the Leader

## MARK 3

### BEFORE THE LESSON

- *Read Mark 3.*
- *Pray for God's help. Ask for the Spirit's help in understanding the passage and for the Lord to open the children's eyes to see who he is what he has done, and how they should respond to him.*
- *Study the lesson plan below. Use these sections as suggestions. Think of ways to teach it in your own voice.*

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### THE BIG PICTURE

*Help children see how this story connects with the other lessons. Build anticipation by introducing the setting and the significance of what is about to happen in this week's story. {5 minutes}*

Followers of Jesus are called *disciples*. When they began to follow him, Jesus's disciples also became part of Jesus's family (see Mark 3:34–35). Last lesson we met Levi (also called Matthew), the tax collector. Remember when Jesus called him and Levi left his old life and followed Jesus? He became a disciple. There are millions and millions of disciples today; and there have been billions and billions throughout history. But Jesus started with twelve disciples. He picked twelve so they could share a dozen donuts for breakfast. Just kidding! He picked twelve because there had been twelve tribes of Israel that made up the people of God, and Jesus would use his twelve disciples (who were all from Jewish tribes) to form a new people of God (called the church). Today we learn a bit about them—their names, why they are important, and what Jesus called them

1

Read

2

Teach

to do. “The household of God” (God’s family—the church) is “built on [the twelve disciples’] foundation” (Eph. 2:19–20), with Jesus himself as “the cornerstone” (the most important stone because all the rest are built on it).

## TELL THE STORY

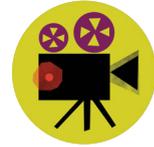
Share the story in one of these three ways. {5–10 minutes}



Read the  
Bible passage  
together



Read from  
*The Biggest Story*  
Bible Storybook



Play *The*  
*Biggest Story*  
video

## TEACH THE STORY

Retell the story with an emphasis on what it says about God and about us. {10 minutes}

**Big Truth**  
Jesus picked  
twelve ordinary  
men to do  
extraordinary  
things.

Do you know people, churches, or hospitals that have the names Peter, James, John, or Andrew? Maybe someone you know is named John. Maybe you were born in St. James’s Hospital in Ireland, have heard of St. Peter’s church in Italy, or watch professional golfers play at St. Andrews in Scotland. Those people and places are named after the first four disciples that Jesus called. Peter and Andrew were brothers, and so were James and John. All four were fishermen. Jesus called them to stop fishing for fish and start fishing for people.

One day, Jesus climbed a mountain and he asked his disciples to follow him. From that group, he chose twelve men whom he called “apostles,” a word that means “people sent out.” Once he trained them about the kingdom of God (they spent a lot of time with him!), he sent them out to share what they learned with others. God gave them the power to preach and cast out demons (see Mark 3:14–15). We might say their job was to announce the coming of the Snake Crusher and show his power over evil.

All the twelve apostles were Jewish, all spoke the same language, and all were from the same part of the world. (And it’s likely twelve out of twelve had beards!) But they were also very different. For example, James and John were fishermen who worked for their dad’s business, Matthew was a tax collector

who worked for the Roman government, and Simon was a “Zealot” (a freedom fighter who worked against the Roman government). Not a lot in common! What these men—along with Andrew, Bartholomew, Peter, Philip, Thomas, Thaddaeus, Judas, and another James—all had in common was Jesus. When he said, “Follow me,” they all left everything and followed him. Jesus became their leader, teacher, and friend. And on the cross he became (for the eleven who continued to follow him) the Snake Crusher, who saved them from all their sins, freed them from the power of Satan, and filled them with the Holy Spirit so they might share the good news they received with all the nations.

### GOSPEL CONNECTION

*Show how the story points to Jesus and his rescue mission as the Snake Crusher.*  
{5 minutes}

If you are a Christian, why are you a Christian? The simple answer is that, like Matthew, God called you. But, of course, there is more to it than that, isn't there? God used other people to share the good news with you and show you the power of the gospel by their changed lives. Maybe your parents told you that God loved the world so much that he sent Jesus, that Jesus died for the sins of the world, and that now God calls everyone (even you!) to turn from sin (repent), trust in Jesus (believe), and follow him (become a disciple). The disciples did what your parents might have done—they were sent out by Jesus to tell people the good news about Jesus, and then the Holy Spirit worked in people's hearts so they would repent, believe, and follow Jesus. The good news about Jesus may be an old story now, but it is new every day for thousands of people around the world. Jesus is still calling people everywhere to follow him. And those who follow him (no matter what language they speak) are part of the new people of God, children in God's one big family.

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### DISCUSS THE STORY

*Discuss the story in smaller groups. {10 minutes}*

- QUESTION:** What did Jesus tell Matthew, James, and John to do when he met them? What do you call people who follow Jesus? Who can become a disciple?

**TAKEAWAY:** If you follow Jesus, you are his disciple.

3

Engage

**Memory Verse**  
If anyone would  
come after me,  
let him deny  
himself and take  
up his cross and  
follow me.

MARK 8:34

2. **QUESTION:** How many men did Jesus call to be his first disciples? How many tribes did Israel have? What was Jesus trying to show by choosing twelve to be his disciples?

**TAKEAWAY:** Jesus chose twelve men as his first disciples to form a new people of God—the church.

3. **QUESTION:** What was another name for the twelve disciples? What does apostle mean? What did Jesus give the twelve apostles the power to do as he sent them out?

**TAKEAWAY:** The twelve disciples were sent out to preach the good news and cast out demons.

4. **QUESTION:** Where were God’s people from in the Old Testament? What’s different about God’s people in the New Testament?

**TAKEAWAY:** God’s family is now made up of people from all over the world, not just Israel.

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## ACTIVITIES

Download coloring pages and activity pages from [TheBiggestStory.com](http://TheBiggestStory.com), or choose from the following activity suggestions. {10–15 minutes}

K–2nd

### Option 1: Footprint Relay

*Supply List:* cardstock, scissors

*Before Class:* On cardstock, print and cut out large footprints that have Jesus printed on them (one set per team).

Divide children into teams and give each team one set of footprints. On “Go” the first person on each team places the footprints on the ground and puts one foot on each. The goal is to travel to and from the opposite wall by picking up and moving the footprints, only allowing one’s feet to touch the papers. Children then hand the footprints to the next person in line, who repeats the process. The first team to race all team members wins. Remind children that we should follow in Jesus’s footsteps.

## Option 2: Jesus Called Twelve Race

*Supply List: paper plates, shaving cream, masking tape, bowls, pom-poms*

*Before Class: Gather supplies. Cover paper plates with shaving cream (one per team). Set plates on the floor on one side of the room. Using tape, mark a line 8 feet from the plates. Place bowls of pom-poms at the line.*

Divide children into teams and line them up on the opposite side of the room from the plates. On “Go” the first child on each team crabwalks to the line, takes a pom-pom, and tosses it onto the shaving cream (continue tossing until successful). The child then bear crawls back to his or her team to tag the next person. The first team to land twelve pom-poms on the shaving cream wins. Remind children that Jesus called twelve disciples to follow him.

3rd–5th

## Option 1: Who’s the Leader?

*Supply List: none*

Have children sit in a circle. Choose one child to be a “disciple” and to step out of the room. When the disciple is out of the room, choose one child to be the leader. Have the disciple come back into the room. Have the leader start doing an action (clap, snap, pat knees, etc.). The other children should follow the leader without being obvious about who the leader is. The disciple tries to guess who the leader is. When she guesses correctly, the leader becomes the disciple and a new leader is chosen. Remind children that Jesus chose disciples to follow him.

## Option 2: Jesus Called Twelve Race

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## CRAFTS

Choose from the following craft suggestions depending on time, age ranges, and group size. {10–15 minutes}

K–2nd

### Option 1: Chain of Disciples

*Supply List: construction paper, heavy paper, pencils, scissors, tape*

*Before Class: Gather supplies. Cut construction paper into 6" x 12" strips (two per child). On heavy paper, cut out copies of a simple person outline, with arms extending outwards (6 inches high, 2 inches across). Make a sample craft.*

Give each child two strips of construction paper and an outline. Set remaining supplies on tables. Have children accordion-fold one paper strip, making folds every 2 inches. Using the template, trace the person on top of the folded paper (the hands should touch the folds). Have children cut along the drawn lines (not cutting the hands at the folds) and open the paper to see six joined men. Have them repeat the process with their second strip. Tape the two strips together to form the twelve disciples.

### Option 2: Stuffed Paper Fish

*Supply List: cardstock, string, scissors, stamp pads, baby wipes, hole punches, paper towels, stapler*

*Before Class: Gather supplies. On cardstock, print two matching fish templates (one set per child). Cut string into 8-inch pieces. Make sample craft.*

Give each child one set of fish and string. Set remaining supplies on tables. Have children cut out both fish. Using the stamp pad, have children make fingerprint “scales” on the fish until they are covered. Help children staple the two fish together. Before fully closing, have children stuff crumpled paper towels between the two fish. Punch a hole in the fish and tie string through for

hanging. Remind children Jesus told his disciples they would become “fishers of men.”

3rd–5th

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