

Naming the 12 Apostles_Family Bible Time



Many people followed Jesus. These followers were called disciples. There were many disciples, but Jesus chose twelve men to be His special followers. These men were granted special abilities, and they were called Apostles.

Scripture References: [Matthew 4:18-22; 9:9-12; 10:1-4; John 1:35-51](#)

Suggested Emphasis: The apostles followed Jesus. I will follow Jesus.

Group Share Time

Play follow the leader and then talk about how you were like the leader and not like the leader. What if the leader had done something bad or dangerous? Would you have followed? What do you think Jesus meant when he said, “follow me”.

Story from the Bible

An adult or young reader can read the words below as the slides are shown.

1. Cover: Naming the 12 Apostles; Matthew 4:18-22; 9:9-12; 10:1-4 and John 1:35-51

2. Have you ever played the game “follow the leader”? One person is the leader and everyone else follows. Whatever the leader does every follower copies and does exactly the same. The followers want to be like the leader.

In the New Testament times a follower was called a “disciple”. John the Baptist was a leader and he had disciples who followed him.

3. His disciples wanted to be just like John the Baptist and do and say things just like him. Andrew and Simon Peter were brothers and fishermen. They were also disciples of John the Baptist.

But there was one man John the Baptist admired more than anyone. That man was Jesus. John the Baptist knew that Jesus was sent by God to save the world.

4. When Jesus began his ministry he asked people to follow him and become his disciples. One day when Jesus was walking by the Sea of Galilee he saw Andrew and Simon Peter casting nets to catch fish. Jesus called out to them and said, “Follow me and I will make you fishers of people.”

What do you think Jesus meant by fishers of men? Fishermen usually cast out nets and bring fish in. Fishers of men go fishing for men. They teach people and then bring them to God. Peter and Andrew wanted to become fishers of people. They left their fishing immediately and followed Jesus.

5. Going on, they saw two other brothers, James and John, mending nets with their father, Zebedee. Jesus called them and said, “Follow me”.

6. James and John left their boat and their father and began to follow Jesus.

7. Jesus' group of followers was growing. Now Jesus had four disciples – Peter, Andrew, James and John. On His way to Galilee, Jesus found Philip and invited him to come along too. Philip was from Bethesda, the same town as Andrew and Peter.

8. Philip went to find his friend Nathanael. “Nathanael, we’ve found the one that Moses wrote about in the Scripture! He is Jesus from Nazareth.”

9. When Nathanael met Jesus he was very surprised. He had never met Jesus before but Jesus knew all about him. Because of this Nathanael knew that Jesus was someone very special sent from God. He started following Jesus too. You might know Nathanael by his other name. His other name was Bartholomew.

10. Jesus called others to follow him. Matthew was a tax collector in the town of Capernaum. Some people thought that Matthew could never be like Jesus. Tax collectors were often cheaters. But Jesus knew that Matthew had a good heart. When Jesus said, “Matthew, come follow me” Matthew got up from the table and began following Jesus.

11. Jesus invited others to follow him. Soon James (called “James the Less” because he was younger than the other James) and Thomas followed Jesus. Another Simon, Thaddeus and Judas Iscariot.

12. More and more people became disciples (followers) of Jesus. Even though many followed Jesus twelve men were with him almost all of the time. This group of twelve men became known as the “twelve apostles”. Jesus gave these men special jobs to do and special powers to make sick people well and to cast demons away.

13. Peter, Andrew, James and John. Philip, Thomas, Matthew and Bartholomew (Nathanael). James (the less), Simon, Thaddaeus and Judas.

Verse(s) to Think About

“ Then Jesus said to his followers, “If anyone wants to follow me, he must say ‘no’ to the things he wants. He must be willing even to die on a cross, and he must follow me.” Matthew 16:24

“That is what you were called to do. Christ suffered for you. He gave you an example to follow. So you should do as he did.” 1 Peter 2:21

“Later, Jesus talked to the people again. He said, ‘I am the light of the world. The person who follows me will never live in darkness. He will have the light that gives life.’” John 8:12

“My sheep listen to my voice. I know them, and they follow me.” John 10:27

Choose Activities and Learn Together

Select activities that suit your family or group. Consider ages and abilities and how to involve everyone present in at least one of the activities.

- **AT HOME:** Gather items in your house that look like nets (actual fishing net, tennis racket, net fabric, bird or pest netting). Create a game to catch items in the nets. For example, you might catch scrunched up paper that someone else tosses. Another example might be to draw a net on a paper. One person tosses a coin and another tries to catch the coin in the net.
- **EXPLORE:** List influential leaders in history and in current times. These can be world or local leaders and good or bad. Talk about how they led/lead and the attitudes, beliefs and actions of those that follow/ed. Search the internet, books or magazines before or during the lesson to find pictures to depict these influential people.

- **IN THE WORD:** Following Jesus often means turning away from following other people. Explore [Mark 10:28-31](#) and talk about what Jesus expected of the apostles when he said, “follow me”. What does Jesus expect of us today when we follow him?
- **IN THE WORD:** Divide a paper or poster into two columns. At the top of one write “Teacher” and at the top of the other write “Student”. Read [Luke 6:40](#) together and fill in the first column with attributes of Jesus. Invite participants to use the second column to list others in the group or others that you all know who have the same qualities as Jesus. Following this exercise read the fuller context of [Luke 6:37-42](#) and discuss ways we can be like Jesus but, at the same time, not judge other people.
- **GAME/ACTIVITY:** Play “Apostle Concentration.” Make up 12 matching pairs of cards (2 with Andrew written on them, 2 Peters, 2 Johns, etc.). Mix up the 24 cards and lay them face down on the table. Children take turns turning two cards over. If the two cards they turn over match, then they get a point for the matching pair – and also win an extra turn. Keep playing until all cards have been matched. The child who has won the most pairs wins. Nice pictures of the apostles can be downloaded free from [Biblefunforkids.com](#)
- **CREATIVE:** Before the slideshow begins have each participant divide a piece of paper into 12 parts. As they listen to the slideshow write the name of each apostle, one in each square. Add items to each apostle that help identify him. Simple stick figures will do and nets, boats, coins, etc can be added. Complete pictures at the end.
- **LIFE APPLICATION:** List various life situations in which members of the group might find themselves (school, playground, sports, work, driving, shopping, paying bills, etc.) For each explain how a follower of Jesus would be recognised.
- **LITTLE ONES:** Write each of the apostles’ names on 12 separate index cards (add a simple stick figure picture beside each name). Hide the cards and then invite the children find them.
- **FOOD FOR THOUGHT:** Serve fish, fish sticks, tuna or goldfish crackers.

Song Suggestions:

Singing does not have to be a performance. Don’t take yourself too seriously. In the privacy of your own home or within a small group allow yourself to just be genuine and enjoy the experience together.

Singing songs yourself is more reliable than viewing them online. If you are viewing published videos online on forums such as YouTube be sure and preview them first to make sure there are not unhelpful advertisements. To avoid long pauses due to internet speed issues play the song through once before you begin and then hold it paused and ready to go at the beginning of the song.

- [Apostle Song](#)
- [Fishers of Men Song](#)
- [He Leadeth Me \(YouTube video and sheet music by A Capella Hymns\)](#)
- [More songs to choose from](#)

Additional Mission Bible Class Resources

- [Instructions for Family Bible Time and Intergenerational Groups here.](#)
- [More teacher information and additional ideas for today’s lesson here.](#)
- [How to Plan a Bible Class for Children](#)
- [How to Teach Children at Various Ages](#)
- [Ideas for Teachers](#)
- [Songs for Bible Class](#)

- [Praying With Children](#)
- [Movement and Dance](#)



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