



GO TEAM! | WEEK 2 | MARCH 10, 2024

## Preschool Lesson

# Follow Me

**Bible Story:** Follow Me. Jesus wants everyone to follow Him • Matthew 9:9-12; Luke 5:1-11

**Memory Verse:** “I have called you friends.” John 15:15, NIV

**Key Question:** Who wants to be your friend forever?

**Bottom Line:** Jesus wants to be my friend forever.

**Basic Truth:** I am loved by God no matter what so I can belong in God’s family forever.

### LEADER BIBLE STUDY

Waiting to be picked by a team in grade school is agonizing. If you’re some of the last people chosen by a team, it means while everyone else is cheering, “Go team!” you’re probably thinking something like, “They don’t want me, and I don’t want to be here.” The truth is, we don’t all have the skills to hit home runs or run really fast. And that’s okay. What’s not okay is being unwanted. Thankfully, for all of us, Jesus wants EVERYONE on His team! Jesus wants everyone everywhere to follow Him and be His friend forever. No matter what we can do or can’t do, what we have done, what we look like, or where we live, Jesus is alive, and He wants to be our friend...FOREVER! And that kind of Good News makes us all want to say, “GO TEAM!”

Story Focus: Jesus wants everyone to follow Him. Jesus begins forming what would become His team of 12 disciples. Jesus didn’t go to the religious leaders or the powerful political leaders to pick His team. No, instead Jesus went to a fishing boat where He asked Peter, Andrew, James, and John to follow Him. Then Jesus went to a tax collector’s booth and asked a very unpopular Matthew to follow Him. Jesus chose 12 people, from different jobs and families, to follow Him and become His friends, the disciples. But that’s not all of this story, because Jesus isn’t done yet! Jesus loves everyone, and Jesus wants everyone to be His friend forever!

#### Pre-Service Check List

- HUDDLE AS TEAM → You’re in this together! Pray together and talk about the activities for the day.
- PLAY MUSIC
- PUT OUT TOYS
- PUT ASIDE DISTRACTIONS → A welcoming environment is important! We want it to be obvious from the moment kids walk in that they belong HERE!
- ENGAGE WITH KIDS

#### Morning Flow



## KID CONNECT

### WELCOME TIME

**(VIDEO: ARRIVAL MUSIC)**

Play intro music in the background as you greet preschoolers and follow the KidCity check-in procedures. Set out a few favorite theme-related toys, such as puzzles and blocks.

### OPENING ACTIVITY

**(No Supplies)**

Kid Connect time is spent building relationships with the kids. Gather your small group together for some intentional connecting time before Large Group. You can do small activities while you chat together (like coloring or building with blocks) or just sit and listen to each other. Ask your kids relationship-building questions like:

- How old are you?
- Do you have a favorite stuffed animal?
- Do you have a brother, sister, or pet? What are their names?
- What do you like to play at home?
- What's your favorite food/color/animal/ice cream flavor?

Transition to Large Group...

## LARGE GROUP

### COUNTDOWN

**(VIDEO: COUNTDOWN)**

Show the countdown video as the children clean up and transition to Large Group.

**(SLIDE: PJ DAY)**

LGL: "Hello my friends! How are you today? Come sit with me. I am so glad you are here! My name is [your name]. I'm excited to spend time with you today! Guess What?! It's Pajama Day! Does anyone feel sleepy today? We moved our clocks last night and woke up a whole hour early. I'm so glad we could wear our PJ's today. I see some pretty fun and comfy PJ's.

### SETTING UP FOR SUCCESS

**(CG: EXPECTATION SLIDE, BASIC TRUTHS SLIDE, MEMORY VERSE VIDEO; BIBLE)**

LGL: "Okay, let's get started! We are getting ready to sing and dance and hear a true story from the Bible. Before we do let's go over our rules and truths.

"Here in KidCity we have three rules. How many rules do we have? (Kids respond.) That's right! Three rules. Let's go over our rules now. (List rules while counting on fingers)

1. Be kind. We can be kind by using our indoor speaking voices, by staying on our blankets (or whatever space you have), and by obeying our leaders.

2. Be safe. We can be safe by walking around the classroom and keeping our hands to ourselves.
3. Have fun! We are going to have SO much fun, and that's because you are here!

"Can everybody follow those rules today? (Kids respond.) Great! KidCity is a place where we learn about God and Jesus! And there are three big truths that we want you to know. Let's say them all together! Are you ready?"

1. I am made by God. What is it? (Kids repeat.)
2. I am loved by God no matter what. What is it? (Kids repeat.)
3. I am made for a purpose! What is it? (Kids repeat.)

"It's time for our memory verse. Let's watch our memory verse motions and do it along with them!"

Show memory verse motion video and then practice without it.

'I (point up)  
have called you (two fingers on top of two fingers)  
friends,' (hook index fingers twice)  
John 15:15. (Open hands like a book.)

"Ok, Now let's sing and worship God!"

## WORSHIP

(VIDEO: NEVER BETTER, VERY BEST FRIEND)

Sing the worship songs together.

## INTRO SKETCH

(Yay Jesus Flag, Prop or Picture, Story Box)

LGL brings the story box with the props to the center of the room. You should have a Yay Jesus Flag and Prop/Picture for current week (Ducks).

"I have my story box ready. I'm SO excited to see what we are learning about God today. Let's see what I have in here..."

Pull out flag and prop/picture

Hold up the flag. What do I have here? (Pause for responses). YES, it's a flag! A team flag! It has letters and words on it. I'm going to read them, and I want you to repeat them. The first part has letters, J-E-S-U-S. Now you say the letters. J-E-S-U-S. Those letters spell Jesus. The next part has words. It says Yay Jesus! Now you say it. Yay Jesus! Let's say it altogether now. J-E-S-U-S, Yay Jesus! Jesus wants everyone to be on his team and be his friend! Isn't that Awesome? Yay Team Jesus! There was one more item in our story box. What is this? (Pause for responses). YES, ducks! Do you know what the ducks are doing? They are following each other. Today we are going to hear about people who followed Jesus and were part of His team.

Let's watch our Bible story to see who followed Jesus.

## WATCH THE BIBLE STORY

**(VIDEO: BIBLE STORY, BOTTOM LINE)**

Wow! Was that a great story? Yes! Who followed Jesus? The disciples. How many disciples were there? Twelve (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12) disciples. The disciples were Jesus' first team! Jesus wants YOU to be on His team too!

When I ask, 'Who wants to be your friend forever?' I want you to say, [Bottom Line] 'Jesus wants to be my friend forever' Let's try that! Who wants to be your friend forever? (Jesus wants to be my friend forever.)

## SAY THE BASIC TRUTH

**(CG: BASIC TRUTH SLIDE)**

Let's look at our Basic Truth for today. It says, 'I am loved by God no matter what so I can belong in God's family forever.' When we choose Jesus as our friend, we are on Jesus' team and part of his family forever.

## PRAY

"Let's pray together. (Have kids "put both hands up in the air, clap them together once [keep hands clasped], and then lower them down to their lap.")

"Dear God, thank you for the disciples who chose to follow Jesus! Thank you for sending Jesus and that we can follow Him too! He is the BEST friend ever. In Jesus' name, we pray, amen.

## PRAY AND TRANSITION TO SMALL GROUP

## SMALL GROUP

**Bible Story:** Follow Me. Jesus wants everyone to follow Him • Matthew 9:9-12; Luke 5:1-11

**Memory Verse:** “I have called you friends.” John 15:15, NIV

**Key Question:** Who wants to be your friend forever?

**Bottom Line:** Jesus wants to be my friend forever.

**Basic Truth:** I am loved by God no matter what so I can belong in God’s family forever.

### CATCH AND FOLLOW (2-3’s)

(Beach Type Ball – 1 per small group)

What You Do:

Before the Activity: Encourage children to line up in a straight line in your activity area.

During the Activity: Invite the children to play a game of toss and catch with you. Take turns calling each child’s name and then tossing the ball to them. Each time a child catches the ball say, “Follow me, [child’s name].” Direct the child to bring you the ball and stand behind you. Continue doing this until every child is standing behind you. Repeat the activity.

After the Activity: Gather the children around you as you hold the ball. Ask every child to put one hand on the ball while you say the Bottom Line together.

What You Say:

Before the Activity: “Who wants to play a game with me? Great! Everyone, line up against the wall. I have a ball we can play catch with.”

During the Activity: “When I say your name, get ready to catch the ball. After you catch it, wait for me to say, ‘Follow me.’ And then you will bring the ball to me and stand behind me. Here we go!

“[Child’s name]! (Toss the ball.) Yay! You caught it! [Child’s name], follow me! (Guide the child to bring the ball to you and stand behind you. Repeat with each child until all the children have joined you.) Everyone did it! Go team! Now line back up and let’s play again!” (Repeat as desired.)

After the Activity: “That was fun! Now I want everyone to come stand around me and put one hand on the ball. In our story today, Jesus told people to follow Him because He wanted to be their friend forever. Jesus wants EVERYONE on His team! And guess what! Jesus wants YOU to follow Him and be His friend forever too! Who wants to be your friend forever? [Bottom Line] Jesus wants to be my friend forever! One more time! Who wants to be your friend forever? [Bottom Line] Jesus wants to be my friend forever!”



## MOVE THE BALL (4-5's)

**((2) Plastic Bins/Bags/Beach Pails and (12) Pit Balls/Bean Bags per small group)**

What You Do:

Before the Activity: Place twelve balls/bean bags in one bin/bag/pail. Have children sit in a straight, single-file line behind the bin with the balls. Place the empty bin at the end of the line.

During the Activity: Encourage children to pass all twelve balls from the front of the line to the back, one at a time while counting. Encourage the first child in line to pick up a ball and pass it over their shoulder to the friend behind them. Help children count. Repeat counting and passing all twelve balls. Celebrate the teamwork.

After the Activity: Review the Bottom Line.

What You Say:

Before the Activity: "Friends, let's play a fun pass-the-ball game! Come sit in a straight line behind this bin with balls."

During the Activity: "The friend at the front will pick up one ball, say 'one,' and pass it over your shoulder to the friend behind you, like this. (Demonstrate.) Then that friend will pass it over their shoulder to the next friend and so on. When the ball reaches the last person in line, put the ball into the empty bin right here. (Point to the empty bin.) Ready, friends? Let's go! Pick up one ball. Everyone, say, 'One!' One! Pass the ball! (Pause.) Pick another ball and pass it. This is number two. Shout, 'two!' Two! Great job! Keep passing! (Continue with each of the twelve balls. If time allows, encourage children to rotate and the last person becomes the first person. Repeat as desired.) That was a fun game! Everyone, shout, 'Go team!' with me. Go team!"

After the Activity: "Great job, friends! You worked as a team and passed all twelve balls. I'm so glad to know that Jesus loves us and wants us to follow Him, just like His first twelve friends. Jesus is such a good friend. Who wants to be your friend forever? [Bottom Line] Jesus wants to be my friend forever!"

## JESUS AND FRIENDS (All)

**("Jesus and Friends" Activity Page - 1 per child and 1 for small group leader, Crayons)**

What You Do:

Before the Activity: Prepare "Jesus and Friends" one per child. Write each child's name on their paper where designated (if they cannot write their own name). Ensure small group leader has one copy as well.

During the Activity: Encourage children to color their paper as you prompt them.

After the Activity: Review the Bible Story.

What You Say:

Before the Activity: "Friends, come sit with me! Let's color a picture of today's Bible Story."

During the Activity: “Look at your paper and tell me what you see in the middle of your paper. (Pause.) That’s right! It’s a heart with Jesus inside! (Pause.) Color Jesus and the heart. (Pause.) Great! Now look at all the pictures on the side of your paper. Color those too. (Pause.) These pictures are of Jesus’ friends, the disciples. Let’s count them together. One, two, three . . . twelve! You have one more thing to add to your picture, and that’s you! Draw you right here (Point to the gingerbread person) above your name. (Pause.) Amazing!”

After the Activity: “In our Bible Story, we learned about these twelve people—they were the first people who followed Jesus. This is Peter and Andrew. (Point.) They were fishermen. One day, while they were fishing, Jesus told them, ‘Follow Me!’ And they did! James and his brother John were fishermen too. (Point.) They were working with their dad when Jesus said, ‘Follow Me!’ And they did! In the next town, Jesus found a man named Philip! (Point.) Philip followed Jesus and brought his friend Nathanael (point) to follow Jesus too! Next, we have Matthew. (Point.) He was a tax collector and made a lot of bad choices. But Jesus still loved Matthew and wanted to be his friend. Jesus said, ‘Come, follow Me.’

And Matthew did! There was also Thomas and James . . . (point) . . . Thaddeus and Simon and Judas! (Point.) These were Jesus’ twelve disciples! That was His first team. Go team! But Jesus isn’t done yet! Jesus wants YOU to be on His team too . . . and your friends . . . and your family . . . because Jesus loves everyone, and Jesus wants everyone to be His friend forever! Yes! EVERYONE!! Yes, Jesus wants to be everyone’s friend forever. Who wants to be your friend forever? [Bottom Line] Jesus wants to be my friend forever!”

## MEMORY VERSE WITH MOTIONS

(Memory Verse Motions Poster – 1 per group)

Say the memory verse using motions from the Memory Verse Motions poster. Repeat several times and encourage children for their efforts.

‘I (point up)  
have called you (two fingers on top of two fingers)  
friends,’ (hook index fingers twice)  
John 15:15. (Open hands like a book.)

## PRAYER

“Let’s pray together. (Have kids “put both hands up in the air, clap them together once [keep hands clasped], and then lower them down to their lap.”)

“God, thank you for the disciples who chose to follow Jesus. Help us to follow Jesus too because He’s the best friend ever. In Jesus’ name, we pray, amen.”

## CONNECT WITH PARENTS/INFLUENCERS

(First Look Placemats - 1 per child)

Hand out placemats to parents as they arrive. Encourage parents/influencers to review the Preschool lesson with their child this week.