

The Disciples

Lesson At-A-Glance

Scripture Reference

**Matthew 4:12-23; 9:9-13;
10:1-4**

Lectionary Sunday/
Church Season

Epiphany 3

Lesson Focus

Jesus loves me!



Gather (10 minutes)

	Spark Resources	Supplies
Play Time Kids explore activities related to the story The Disciples.	Coloring Pages 	Container of water, toy fish, nets (aquarium, produce, decorative, fishing, etc.), toy cash register, calculators, purses, wallets, play money, old shoes (different sizes and tread patterns), shallow containers of paint, mural paper, masking tape, paper towels, crayons or markers, white and green construction paper, glue sticks, kid-safe scissors, gold glitter glue
Circle Time Kids are welcomed, hear about the church season, and say a class cheer.	Leaflet	Assorted fishing gear (poles, nets, tackle boxes, bobbers, lures with hooks removed, etc.)
Prayer Time Kids repeat, "Jesus loves me!" as a refrain during the prayer.	None	None

Open the Bible (15 minutes)

	Spark Resources	Supplies
The Disciples Storytelling Kids copy the leader's words and actions as they retell the story.	Spark Story Bibles	None
Who Follows Jesus? Kids complete the picture with stickers and a drawing of themselves.	Leaflets, Lesson Stickers	Markers or crayons

Activate Faith (15 minutes)

	Spark Resources	Supplies
Sing It! Sign It! Kids learn sign language and sing the song "Jesus Loves Me."	Leaflets, Spark Song CD (optional)	CD player (optional)
Who Does Jesus Love? Kids cut and decorate a chain of people Jesus loves.	Leaflets	Kid-safe scissors, fabric pieces, wiggle eyes, yarn, glue sticks, crayons or markers
Jesus Calls! Kids sing and play a game about following Jesus.	Leaflet, Lesson Stickers	None

Send (5 minutes)

	Spark Resources	Supplies
Good-bye Time Kids review the lesson and say a good-bye cheer.	Leaflet	None
Prayer Time Kids sing and sign "Jesus Loves Me" for the closing prayer.	Leaflets, Family Pages, Spark Song CD (optional) 	CD player (optional)



Looking for additional Spark content to further engage kids? Visit wearesparkhouse.org/kids/SHOSS to learn more about these options for purchase.

- The Director's CD-Rom contains Activity Pages, Coloring Pages, Family Pages, Large Group Openings, and two additional in-class activities for each lesson.
- A Spark Online annual subscription gives you access to all content contained in the Director's CD-Rom and the Spark Leader Guides, plus administrative tools and other extras.

Gather (10 minutes)

Play Time

Before kids arrive, set the container of water along with the fish and nets on a surface where they can be explored. Place the cash register, calculators, play money, wallets, and purses in an open area of the room. Tape the mural paper to an appropriate surface and place the shoes, paints, and paper towels nearby. As kids arrive, invite them to explore the activities. **Which nets do you think work best for catching fish? What are some things people do with money? Both fish and money are in our story today. Are all footprints the same? What would the footprints look like if people were following each other? You can use the shoes to create paths of followers on the mural paper. Someone follows Jesus in today's story! How can you decorate these stars with green and gold? We are going to hear about stars again today, too.** Provide copies of this lesson's Coloring Page for kids to color. Be sure to help them put their names on their papers.

When all of the kids have had a chance to play, invite them to help put away the supplies and follow you. Recite the following rhyme as you play a game of Follow the Leader to help kids transition to Circle Time. Once everyone is following you, lead them to sit in a circle on the floor.

**Put away supplies.
Then come and see
Why everyone is
Following me!**

Circle Time

Greet kids warmly by name as you gather in a circle. Pretend to hold a fishing rod, cast out toward the kids, and "reel them in" as they sit down. **Hello, everyone. I'm so glad to see you all! Raise your hand if you have ever gone fishing.** Affirm responses to this and the following question. **What things do you need when you are fishing?** Show kids the fishing gear, one piece at a time, talking about its uses. **We're going to hear about some brothers who make their living by catching fish in a net, in today's Bible story.**

What are some things that people do with money? Accept kids' answers. **We're going to meet some people who worked with fish and with money in today's story. Raise your hand if you helped make footprints on the mural paper today. Some people start to follow another person in our story, too.**

Spark Resources

Coloring Pages



Supplies

Container of water
Toy fish
Nets (aquarium, produce, decorative, fishing, etc.)
Toy cash register
Calculators
Purses
Wallets
Play money
Old shoes (different sizes and tread patterns)
Shallow containers of paint
Mural paper
Masking tape
Paper towels
Crayons or markers
White construction paper, cut in star shapes
Green construction paper
Glue sticks
Kid-safe scissors
Gold glitter glue

Spark Resources

Leaflet

Supplies

Assorted fishing gear (poles, nets, tackle boxes, bobbers, lures with hooks removed, etc.)

Show kids the front of the leaflet. **What color and symbol do you see here? Green and a star! Some of you decorated stars during Play Time! We are now celebrating the church season called Epiphany. Throughout the season of Epiphany, we will learn about Jesus who came into the world to be the Light of the world. If it is dark, what do you need to see? (light) Jesus is called the Light of the world because he helped people see how to live. He showed us how to live together and love each other.**

Let's find out what happens in today's story! But before we begin, let's say our class cheer together! Move your bodies the ways the cheer tells you!

Snap, clap, turn around!

Jump up high and wiggle down!

We're glad to be here with our friends.

We'll learn that God's love never ends!

Prayer Time

Let's pray before our story. I'll say a line and then you say, "Jesus loves me!"

Dear God,

I'm happy to be here today.

Help me hear.

Help me learn.

Help me remember.

Amen.

Spark Resources

None

Supplies

None

Open the Bible (15 minutes)

The Disciples Storytelling

It's time to hear a story from God's Word, the Bible. Today, we are going to hear about brothers who make their living going fishing. They fish and fish and fish until Jesus invites them to do something else. Let's hear what happens then.

Hand the Spark Story Bibles out to kids and help them find The Disciples on pages 258-263. Encourage kids to follow along as you read the story, indicating when it is time to turn the pages.

Read the story a second time, involving kids in the following way. **I need your help to tell the story this time.** Invite kids to stand up. **Sometimes I will point to myself during the story. You watch what I do and listen to what I say. Then I'll point to you, and you copy my words and actions. Let's try.** Practice reading a sentence while doing an action. Have kids copy you. Begin reading the story a second time. Whenever you get to dialogue within quotations, point to yourself, read the

Spark Resources

Spark Story Bibles

Supplies

None

statement dramatically, and add an action. Then point to kids and have them copy you.

Following the story, ask kids these questions. **What was Simon, Andrew, James, and John's job before they met Jesus?** (*fishing*) Point to the picture on page 261. **What did Jesus ask the fishermen to do?** (*follow him*) **What did Jesus ask Matthew the tax collector to do?** (*follow him*) **Would you follow Jesus?** Affirm kids' responses. **Jesus wants everyone to follow him. Jesus wants everyone to hear how much he loves them. Like the disciples, I can follow Jesus. Jesus loves me! You can follow Jesus! Jesus loves you!**

Who Follows Jesus?

Gather the kids at a space where they can work. Hand a leaflet out to each kid and set the markers or crayons where all kids can reach them. Point to the front of the leaflet. **What do you see in this picture?** (*people following Jesus*) **Who were some of the people in our story that followed Jesus?** Allow kids to respond. **Some people left their jobs to follow Jesus. What did Simon, Andrew, James, and John leave to follow Jesus?** (*fishing*) **Let's show that on our picture.** Pass out the fish stickers. Encourage kids to place them on the ground in the picture. **What did Matthew leave to follow Jesus?** (*tax collecting*) **Let's show that in our picture, too.** Pass out the money stickers for kids to stick on the ground.

Does everyone who follows Jesus look the same? (*no*) **Draw more people in the picture. Try to make them look different.** Allow kids time to complete the picture. **Leave room for another person to follow Jesus in this picture. Who does Jesus love?** (*me*) **Draw yourself in the picture. Jesus wants me to follow him, too. Jesus loves you, and all of us!**

Spark Resources

Leaflets
Lesson Stickers

Supplies

Markers or crayons

Activate Faith (15 minutes)

Sing It! Sign It!

Direct kids' attention to the activity Sing It! Sign it! on the back of the leaflet. **What is it called when we use our hands instead of our voices to say a word?** (*sign language*) **Does Jesus want people who use sign language to follow him?** (*yes*) **Jesus wants everyone to know about Jesus' love. We're going to learn some sign language to help us sing a song about Jesus' love.**

Invite kids to stand. **Raise your hand if you know the song "Jesus Loves Me." Let's sing the song together.** Use the Spark Song CD as an accompaniment, if desired. Sing the song. **Now we're going to learn some signs to use instead of words.** Teach kids the signs in the song by demonstrating each sign shown in the leaflet and having the kids copy you. Practice each sign several times. **We're going to sing "Jesus Loves Me" again, this time using the signs we've learned.** Sing the song using the signs. **Jesus loves everyone and wants all people to follow him—fishermen, tax collectors, people who use sign language, and people who don't. Jesus loves you, and Jesus loves me, too!**

Spark Resources
Leaflets
Spark Song CD (optional)

Supplies
CD player (optional)

Who Does Jesus Love?

Ask kids to return to their seats, and help them find Who Does Jesus Love? on the back of their leaflets. **Look at the person who followed Jesus during Bible times. What do you think this person's name might be?** Allow kids to respond to this and the following questions. **Does Jesus love this person?** (*yes*) **Who else can follow Jesus?** (*parents, friends, me, etc.*) **Let's make a chain of people to follow Jesus!** Demonstrate the following steps.

1. Fold the leaflet on the "mountain fold" line so it looks like a mountain.
2. Fold the leaflet on the "valley fold" line so it looks like a valley.
3. Press all of the layers together so the leaflet is folded in thirds with the Bible person on top.
4. Help kids cut on the cut lines.
5. Unfold the leaflet to see a chain of three people!

Set the art supplies where all kids can reach them. **Use these supplies to draw people who follow Jesus. Be sure to make one of the people look like you!** Allow kids time to create. **Jesus loves everyone and wants all people to follow him. I can follow Jesus. Jesus loves me! You can follow Jesus! Jesus loves you!**

Spark Resources
Leaflets

Supplies
Kid-safe scissors
Fabric pieces
Wiggle eyes
Yarn
Glue sticks
Crayons or markers

Jesus Calls!

Gather kids in a group in an open area of the room. Show them the front of the leaflet. **Do you remember what church season green and the star remind us of? (Epiphany) Throughout the season of Epiphany, we will learn about Jesus, who came into the world to be the Light of the world. He showed us how to live together and love each other. When we follow him, we try to live as he taught us! We're going to sing a song and play a game about following Jesus. I'll sing a line in the song and you sing it after me.** Teach kids the following song, sung to the tune "Where Is Thumbkin?"

**Jesus, our light, Jesus, our light,
Says, "Follow me!" Says, "Follow me!"
I will follow Jesus. I will follow Jesus!
Jesus loves me! Jesus loves me!**

Jesus calls each of us to follow him. Let's play a following game, singing our song. Form a line behind me. Stay in line, watching what the person in front of you does. I will lead the line and do different things. Watch and copy! Lead the group around the space, follow-the-leader style, singing the song as you go. At various intervals, hop, skip, clap, and move in a variety of ways, encouraging kids to repeat your actions.

After the game, give each kid a Jesus Loves Me! sticker to wear. **Jesus calls me to follow him. Jesus loves me! Jesus calls you to follow him, too. Jesus loves you!**

Spark Resources

Leaflet
Lesson Stickers

Supplies

None

Send (5 minutes)

Good-bye Time

Gather kids in a circle on the floor. **We've had fun today, learning about fishermen, tax collectors, and others who left what they were doing to follow Jesus. Who can follow Jesus? (everyone, me) We learned that Jesus loves everyone and calls everyone to follow him. I can follow Jesus. Jesus loves me! You can follow Jesus! Jesus loves you! When you take your leaflet home, ask your parents or caregivers about the Faith on the Go! idea on the back. It's a fun way to remember that Jesus loves you all week long.**

Before we go, let's stand and do our class cheer again together!

**Snap, clap, turn around!
Jump up high and wiggle down!
We had lots of fun here with our friends.
We learned that God's love never ends!**

Spark Resources

Leaflet

Supplies

None

Prayer Time

Invite kids to stand. **For our closing prayer, let's sing and sign "Jesus Loves Me" one more time.** Let kids refer to their leaflets, if they wish. Sing and sign the song together.

Thank kids for coming and encourage them to return.

Be sure to send the leaflets and Family Pages home with kids.

Spark Resources

Leaflets

Family Pages



Spark Song CD (optional)

Supplies

CD player (optional)