



BIG IDEA

We can follow
Jesus.

BIBLE

The Baptism of Jesus: John 1:29-42;
Psalm 40:8-11

LARGE GROUP TIME

Welcome to another week of *Measure Up*, where we discover that learning about God is the greatest attraction there is! Last time, we talked about how we can love God with our actions. One of the best ways to start learning an action is by following what someone else does. Today, we'll learn about the one person we can always follow because everything he did pleased God!

WHAT? What are we talking about today?

MUSIC | Worship

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** You can lead kids in worship with any songs of your choice, but here are some suggestions that go along with this month's theme. Make sure you have purchased any licenses required to play or perform these songs. For more information, [read this!](#)
 - "One Me" (Grow Kids VBS)
 - "Hey Me (Now and Forever)" (Elevation Church Kids)
 - "Won't Stop Now" (Worship Together Kids)
 - "Wanna Be Like Jesus" (Yancy)
 - "Wise Up" (Kidspring Children's Ministry)

ACTIVITY | Follow the Leader

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** This game gets everyone involved, up, and moving! Select one person, the "seeker," to leave the room. While that person is gone, select a person to be the "leader." When the seeker returns, their job will be to identify the leader. The group will begin by doing the same movement like waving their arms, marching in place, or patting their heads. The leader's job will be to change the movement of the whole group in a way that is not obvious to the seeker. When the seeker isn't looking, the leader could change the action to clapping their hands or marching in place. Everyone in the room must change to the new action as quickly as they see the change. The seeker will try and pick out the leader with whom the change in the action is originating. The

leader can continue changing up the actions until found. You can play multiple rounds with new leaders and seekers. You could even have more than one seeker per round working together or racing to figure out who the leader is.

✖ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** For kids who may experience sensory overload from too much happening at once around them, consider playing a simple game of "Simon Says" to set up the concept of following a leader for today's Bible story.

- **Are you a good follower? Are you able to easily blend in and do what everyone else is doing? Are you a good leader? Are you able to get people to do a new thing?**
- We are going to play a game where we as a group have to be good at following!

ACTIVITY | Popcorn Toes

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Split the group into teams of eight to ten kids, with players lined up behind a starting line. Each team needs a set of [popcorn-shoe holders](#) and a person designated as the popcorn (or packing peanut) filler. In relay style, a kid from each team, wearing the popcorn-shoe holders, will run down to their popcorn filler. The holders will be filled, and the kid will run back, dumping the popcorn collected into that team's bucket. Then, the popcorn-shoe holders will be passed to the next in line. The team to collect the most or fill their bucket completely in a certain amount of time wins.

✖ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** Instead of having kids attach the cups to their shoes, allow them to carry them with their hands or over their heads for a little bit of a challenge.

- Popcorn is a favorite amusement park snack, but we won't be eating it today! Instead, we'll use our feet to race in a popcorn relay!

QUESTION | If you could choose one person to be when you grow up, who would you choose?

- **If you could choose one person to be when you grow up, who would you choose? Why?**
- **What do you admire about that person?**
- Maybe the person you chose is rich, famous, compassionate, extremely smart, or hilarious. Maybe you admire what they invented or how they treated others.
- Whatever it may be that makes that person special or unique to you, there is someone even more worthy of following. Let's talk about him now!

SO WHAT? Why does it matter to God and to us?

SCRIPTURE | John 1:29–42 (The Baptism of Jesus)

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Play a water park video like [this one](#) without the sound as your backdrop as you begin to tell the Bible story from John 1:29–42. Dress up as a ride operator (polo shirt with khaki pants or shorts and a name badge). You will need volunteers to play Jesus, John, Andrew, and Simon. Have them act out what you say in the story. Make sure you point to each character when you mention them in the story as their cue to act it out. Hand out name tags or accessories to differentiate between the characters. As you read the story, spray the audience with water anytime you mention "baptism" just for fun!
- Hey friends! Welcome back to our live show experience at the Measure Up theme park. Today's show is called "The Baptism of Jesus." [Here's your first chance to spray the audience with water!]
- Excellent! You are a great audience — we're going to have so much fun, and you might even get a little wet. Wave your hands if you'd like to be a part of the show! [Select volunteers.]
- Let's begin!

- John is standing by the river when he sees Jesus walking toward him.
 - "Hey, look!" John said to the people around him. "It's the guy who takes away the sins of the world! He has greater than me or anyone else."
 - **Can you guess who John is talking about?** That's right – the man he is talking about is Jesus!
- Then John started to tell people about this experience he had:
 - "I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and stay on Jesus. God told me that I baptize people with water, but Jesus will baptize with the Holy Spirit. [Each time you say baptism, spray the audience with water.]
 - "I have seen and am here to tell you that this man – Jesus – is God's chosen one." **Everyone say, "Awesome!"**
- The next day, John was at the river again with two of his disciples. He saw Jesus passing by . . . again.
 - "Look! The lamb of God!" John said to his disciples. **Everyone point at Jesus and say, "Look!"**
- John's disciples, including Andrew, immediately started following Jesus.
 - The first thing Andrew did was find his brother Simon and tell him that he found the Savior they had all been waiting for their whole lives.
 - When Andrew brought Simon to Jesus, Jesus knew right away who he was and who he was going to be. He changed his name to Peter – Simon, I mean, Peter, why don't you do a quick spin to show off your new name? **Everyone chant with me, "Peter! Peter! Peter!"**
- And that's how Andrew, Simon Peter, and many others followed Jesus. **We can follow Jesus**, too!
 - And just like how Andrew brought Simon to Jesus, our pastors, Bible teachers, parents, adults in our lives, or friends may help bring us to Jesus!
 - Once you start following Jesus, you can help your friends by bringing them to Jesus, too.
- **Please help me give a round of applause to our volunteers!** [And spray the audience and volunteers again for good measure.]

BIG IDEA | We can follow Jesus.

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Write the Big Idea on one winning ticket. Hide the winning ticket inside a carnival punch-out game. Use one [like this](#) or make your own with cups and tissue paper, [like this](#). Kids take turns punching holes until the winning ticket is found! Once it is found, read the winning ticket aloud. After the Big Idea is revealed, give kids pins for their lanyards as a reminder. If you have access to a [button maker](#), you can create buttons that say each week's Big Idea (using the graphics provided in their Programming folder) or purchase an assortment of fun pins and encourage pin trading (like at [Disney](#)).
- ✖ **PRETEEN HACK:** Instead of giving out pins, consider giving out items that are more closely related to the Big Idea. This week, use [these slinkies](#) and challenge them to "walk" them down different surfaces, and remind them to walk with Jesus!
- And the winning ticket says . . . **We can follow Jesus**.
- Whenever you look at this pin on your lanyard, remember **we can follow Jesus!** Let's follow Jesus more closely than we would follow park signs to our favorite roller coaster!

VIDEO | Measure Up, Episode 3

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Play this week's episode of [Grow TV](#).

VIDEO | Duck, Duck, Follow the Leader!

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Show [this video](#) and discuss the questions.
- These ducklings follow their owner and no one else. They know his voice and will even scale obstacles to stay close. He has been with them since they hatched. He's even their adopted father!

- **What does it look like for us to follow Jesus? How do we do this today when we cannot see him physically like the disciples could?**
- **What obstacles might we need to overcome to follow Jesus? What can distract us from following Jesus?**
- **How do we hear his voice? How do we stay close to Jesus?**

OBJECT LESSON | Human Ferris Wheel

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Get your volunteers involved to demonstrate this [human Ferris wheel](#). Explain that they each have to keep their bodies completely straight. To start, have a volunteer make a 't' shape by standing with their arms out, holding hands with a volunteer laying down to their left. As the volunteer standing leans to the right, the volunteer to the left is lifted up. As the first volunteer hits the floor on their right, they let go and wait their turn to join the wheel on the left again.
- We can only move with Jesus if we are following his lead. Sometimes it takes practice, but once we get the hang of it, we get to see something pretty amazing.

SCRIPTURE | Psalm 40:8–11

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Read aloud Psalm 40:8–11. Give each kid one small container of bubbles and one marker. Place write-on labels on the small containers of bubbles. Have the kids write the Big Idea on the labels.
- The psalm says we should not keep God to ourselves, but share with others, just like Andrew did with Peter! One way is to tell others about God's righteousness and faithfulness, as it says in verse 10.
 - **What is righteousness?** An easy way to remember it is by looking at the word, "right." Righteousness is doing what is right.
 - **What is faithfulness?** Faithfulness describes someone you can put your faith in, someone you can depend on because they are always there.
- **What is one way God's righteousness and faithfulness have shown up in your life?**
- **Because we know how righteous and faithful God is, we can talk about that with others. Like verse 9 suggests, we shouldn't keep our lips sealed.**
- And you can't keep your lips sealed if you want to blow bubbles! Bubbles are a great way to stay entertained at theme parks while waiting in line. Write the Big Idea on these bubble bottles and take it with you the next time you have to stand in line somewhere. You can blow these bubbles and share about God while you wait!

NOW WHAT? What does God want us to do about it?

REFLECTION | Cast Member

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Have someone dress up as a "Disney cast member" or other theme park worker. Have fun asking them questions about things like where the bathrooms are and when does the park close.
 - ✖ **PRETEEN HACK:** Preteens are able to follow a narrative and create storylines. Ask preteens to describe what would happen if all cast members disappeared from a theme park one day. What would happen to the rides? To the food stands? To the bathrooms? To the ticket counters?
- **Can you imagine if a theme park had no cast members, ride operators, or any other kind of workers?** It would be chaos! Nobody would know where to go, and things could get out of control. It's good that these fun places have people who can point us in the right direction.
- Jesus is more than a cast member in our lives. Jesus is the main attraction. But you can be someone who helps point others to Jesus.
- **What are some things you might want to say about Jesus to others? Why should they follow Jesus like you do?**

RESPONSE | Fishing for Friends

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Using the fish printable provided, give each kid four fish to decorate and to write the names of four people they want to share about Jesus with. Then, attach paper clips to the fish and place them in a shallow bin or tray or empty kiddie pool. Create fishing rods out of dowels, string, and washer magnets, and have kids "fish for friends." This can be done by dividing kids into teams of five or six, taking turns, and racing to get four fish per teammate first. After the game, have kids take home their fish as a reminder.
- **Who can you point to Jesus this week?**
- **Why did you choose these particular friends or family members?**
- Take your fish home as a reminder to pray about opportunities to share about Jesus to these people. This is how **we can follow Jesus!**

MEMORY VERSE | Matthew 6:33 (NIV)

- **"But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."**
- Let's keep spinning the carnival wheel until all the words are removed!
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Write one or two words of the memory verse on a piece of paper. Do this for the entire verse. Pass the papers out to kids. Have each kid with a piece of paper sit in a circle in the correct order of the verse. Have the kids hold up their paper. Have everyone recite the verse. Then, have a volunteer or a kid act as a "spinner arrow." Have them stand in the middle of the circle, and with their eyes closed or blindfolded, spin with their hand pointing out. Wherever they stop, the person closest to where the "spinner" is pointing, hides their paper for the rest of the activity. Continue (recite and spin) until all papers are hidden or time allows. **(Don't forget to also check out the memory verse signs – a combination of SEE and ASL – available in your Programming folder or at growcurriculum.org/Matthew6-33.)**

PRAYER

- Dear God, thank you for sending your son to this world to save us from our sins and to show us how to live for you. We want to follow Jesus because we know that following Jesus is the way to you. We hope that our lives will lead others to follow you, too. Amen.

SMALL GROUP TIME

DISCUSSION

- Who is the one John said will baptize with the Holy Spirit?
- What was the first thing Andrew did after he began following Jesus?
- What words did John use to describe Jesus?
- Read Psalm 40:10. What is one way you can speak of God's faithfulness and saving help?
- Who do you follow?
- In what ways do you follow Jesus?
- How can you show someone else what it means to follow Jesus?

ACTIVITY | Bible Story Water Ride

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Pass out a plastic zip bag and a permanent marker to each kid. Have them draw directly on the bag a picture of their interpretation of what happened in today's Bible Story when Jesus was baptized. When they finish, add some water and blue food coloring (or blue hair gel) to the bags. It should look something like [this](#) when finished.

❖ **PRETEEN HACK:** *In addition to this activity, have small group leaders talk with their kids about baptism or starting point, according to your church's tradition. Prepare any additional information you need to send home with kids if they are interested in being baptized.*

- John let everyone know that Jesus was the Savior that everyone had been waiting for. Some people, like the disciples, understood this and followed Jesus right away.
- Use this activity to help you remember this story and the fact that **we can follow Jesus** because Jesus is definitely worth following.