



BIG IDEA

God makes us ready at
the right time.

BIBLE

Jesus Begins His Ministry:
Matthew 4:12-23

WELCOME TIME

MUSIC | Praise in the Park

- **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!](#)
 - "Why He Came" (Lifeway Kids Worship)
 - "Seek First His Kingdom" (Seeds Family Worship)
 - "Follow On" (Orange Kids Music)
 - "I Want to Be Like Jesus" (Lifetree Kids)
 - "I Wanna Do Right" (Jana Alayra)

ACTIVITY | Guess the Hand

- **When was a time you had to wait?** Maybe you had to wait for your birthday or for your mom to make lunch.
- **Have you ever been to an amusement park and had to wait in line for a ride?** Raise your hand if you have.
- It takes a lot of patience to wait for your turn to go on a ride or play a game at the amusement park! Let's play a game that's easy to do when you're waiting in line – and makes waiting in line more fun!
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** With your hands behind your back, place a small souvenir item, like a coin (or choose an item that you might have gotten as a souvenir from a theme park), in one hand and hide it by making a fist. Without revealing where it is, hold fists out to your sides so you form a 't' with your body. Have kids move to the side they think the souvenir is in. If they guess incorrectly, they complete an action (like clap ten times, touch their toes for five seconds, or three frog jumps).

✖ **TODDLER HACK:** Have younger kids stand in a circle facing outwards while they pass around a small amusement park game prize, like a stuffed animal, until you say, "Stop." Have an adult or a kid on the inside of the circle guess who has the stuffed animal.

ACTIVITY | Hop on the Ride

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Lay a blanket on the ground. Have kids walk or dance around the blanket while amusement park music plays. As soon as the music stops, yell out, "Hop on!" which tells the kids to get onto the blanket as quickly as possible.
 - ❖ **TODDLER HACK:** Younger kids might need a little physical help moving onto the blanket. You can run around the edges as the ride attendant and gently usher on any little toes or body parts that are off the blanket.
- In our game, we had to wait until the right time to hop on the ride!
- In today's story, Jesus waited until the right time to start telling people to follow God.

STORY TIME

SCRIPTURE | Matthew 4:12–23 (Jesus Begins His Ministry)

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** As you read the story, have the kids participate by doing some fun motions together as indicated below. For added fun, you can have a spray bottle and spray mists into the air – kids will definitely enjoy that!
- One day, while walking by the Sea of Galilee, Jesus saw two brothers named Andrew and Simon Peter. They had spent time with Jesus before, but this time was different.
- Andrew and Peter were fishing on their boats by throwing huge nets into the water.
 - **Let's pretend we are on a boat and sway side to side.**
- Jesus called out to them saying, "Come, follow me!" and invited them to share about God with other people so that others can follow Jesus, too.
 - **Let's wave like we are inviting someone to follow us.**
- **What do you think Andrew and Peter decided to do?** They left their fishing nets right away and went with Jesus!
 - **Everyone stand up! Let's run from this side of the room to the other side!**
- After this, Jesus saw two more brothers named James and John. They were also fishing on the lake.
 - **Let's sit and sway side to side like we're on a boat again.**
- Jesus called out to them, too, saying, "Come, follow me!"
 - **Let's wave like we are inviting someone to follow us.**
- **What do you think James and John decided to do?** Just like Andrew and Peter, they also left their fishing nets right away and went with Jesus!
 - **Everyone stand up! Let's run back to the other side of the room!**
- Andrew, Peter, James, and John were all ready to follow Jesus!
 - Jesus made them a promise when they decided to follow him. He told them that instead of fishing for fish, like they were used to, now they would fish for people!
 - That meant that they would go out and tell lots of people about Jesus – when the time was right.
- Jesus traveled all over Galilee. Jesus healed people who were sick and continued teaching people all about God. And his new friends were right there beside him the whole time.

BIG IDEA | God makes us ready at the right time.

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Assemble a carnival punch-out game board following [these instructions](#). To make it more reusable, you can use rubber bands to secure the tissue paper rather than using hot glue. Use raffle tickets and write one word of the Big Idea on each ticket. Without tearing them, fold them up and place them inside one of the cups before placing the tissue paper to cover the opening of the cup. Kids can take turns punching holes in the cups until the winning ticket is found!
- You found the winning ticket! Today's Big Idea is . . . **God makes us ready at the right time.**

VIDEO | Measure Up, Episode 4

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

ACTIVITY | Ready, Set, Go

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Use tape to mark a start line and a finish line. Choosing a few kids at a time to play, have them sit on the start line. Instruct them to close their eyes until you tap them on the shoulder to go, at which time they can bottom shuffle all the way to the finish line as fast as they can. Having their eyes closed is the sign that they are ready! You can say, "Ready . . . set . . ." as drawn-out as you like, and the catch is that you will only tap the kids whose eyes are still closed by the time you're ready to say, "Go."

❖ **TODDLER HACK:** Allow younger kids to have their eyes open. Show them how to bottom shuffle. Have them wait until you say, "Go," to bottom shuffle to the finish line.

- Being ready means we have everything we need to do what we have to do.
 - **What do you do to get ready to eat?** Wash your hands, help set the table, or tell your siblings dinner is ready.
 - **What do you do to get ready for bed?** Brush your teeth, find your favorite stuffed toy, read a book, or get your pajamas on.
- Jesus came to earth to bring people to God, but Jesus waited until the right time to start doing that.
- God wants us to do big things, too. We might want to grow up and do everything right now, but **God makes us ready at the right time.** When God says, "Go!" we'll know that's the perfect time!

PRAYER

- God, you made Jesus ready to tell others about you at the right time, and we know that you will make us ready at the right time, too. Amen.

SHARING TIME

SNACK | Fishing for Treats

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Place fish-shaped crackers, pretzels, raisins, and o-shaped cereal into separate bowls along with slotted spoons. Invite kids to scoop the snacks into their bowl to make their own treat mix. You can also mix the snacks and distribute into cups or bowls beforehand.
- **How tall do you think you will be when you grow up?**

ACTIVITY | Circle Time

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Place fish pieces in the middle of the circle. Pass a fishing pole to the person who will answer a question. After they answer, have them use the fishing pole to catch a fish.
- **When was Jesus ready to tell others to follow God?**
- **What were Andrew, Peter, James, and John doing before Jesus spoke to them?**
- **How did these brothers respond to Jesus when he told them to follow him?**
- **What does this story tell you about being ready to follow God?**

ACTIVITY | Ready to Fish

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Distribute a stick and a pipe cleaner to each kid. Have them wrap one end around the stick and bend the opposite end of the pipe cleaner into a hook or j-shape to form a fishing pole. Use a hole punch to create a hole in the Big Idea fish. Then, thread the card onto the hook of their fishing pole.
- Andrew, Peter, James, and John were trying to catch fish before Jesus invited them to follow him! Jesus also invites each of us to come and follow him, and **God makes us ready at the right time!** Jesus wants us to share about God with other people so that others can follow Jesus, too.

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.”**
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Write out just the first letter of each word in the memory verse in order on a white board, and work together to say the rest of the word that's missing. (Feel free to only do key words.) Point to each letter, sound it out with them, then say the word that it stands for in the verse.
- Our memory verse for the month is from Matthew 6:33. Today, we are going to play a game to help us remember the verse!

PLAY TIME

ACTIVITY | Coloring Page

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Print and distribute the coloring page along with crayons or markers. As the kids color, you can review today's Bible story, Big Idea, and memory verse.

ACTIVITY | Disciples Assemble

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Prepare water beads following manufacturer's instructions. Consider soaking the beads before kids arrive to give them more time to enlarge. Set out water beads in a bin along with five LEGO people and two toy or foil boats. Encourage kids to reenact the part of the story where Jesus tells Andrew, Peter, James, and John to follow him.

ACTIVITY | Catch Some Fish

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Set out a bin of uncooked beans along with fish or sea animal figurines and cups. Have them see how many fish they can catch in one scoop with the cup.