



Dear Parents,

In the first century, *rabbi* was a title given to a respected expert in the law of Moses. A *rabbi* studied the Scriptures and taught through speaking and writing. Jews wanted to honor God in how they lived, and they looked to the *rabbis* to instruct them in their behavior.

The word *rabbi* translates “my master.” Jewish students would seek out a *rabbi* and ask to follow him. A *rabbi* would choose only a few highly-promising students to be his disciples. If a student was not accepted by the *rabbi*, he likely returned home to learn a trade. Those chosen to be a *rabbi’s* disciples followed him everywhere. They learned from the *rabbi* how to think and how to act. They trusted the *rabbi*, and the goal was to become just like him.

When Jesus chose His disciples, His strategy was unusual. Rather than waiting for students to come to Him, Jesus sought out His disciples among the people who followed Him. He found them working—fishing and repairing nets. Some of Jesus’ disciples were introduced to Him by their friends. He approached these ordinary men and said, “Follow Me.” Their response? “Immediately they left ... and followed him” (Matt. 4:20,22).

The Twelve—Simon (Peter) and his brother Andrew; James and John; Philip; Bartholomew; Matthew; Thomas; James, son of Alphaeus; Thaddaeus; Simon; and Judas—spent time with Jesus during His ministry. Jesus taught them how to live in light of God’s coming kingdom. He commissioned them to teach others about Him. The good news about Jesus is too great not to share with the entire world.

The call to follow Jesus is not an easy one. Jesus said, “If anyone wants to follow after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me” (Matt. 16:24). Jesus calls us to do the same—to surrender our lives for His purposes and perhaps even to die. “For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life because of me will find it” (Matt. 16:25).

Jesus came to earth to show what God is like and to save people from their sins. This is great news! Jesus told His disciples to tell others about Him, and we are Jesus’ disciples when we trust in Him. Everyone in the world needs to hear the good news about Jesus.

Family Starting Points – Bible Passages: Matthew 4,9; Mark 1–3; Luke 5–6

Preschool	Elementary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Jesus chose disciples to follow Him. ● Why did Jesus become human? Jesus became human to rescue sinners. ● Key Passage: “He must increase, but I must decrease.” John 3:30 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Jesus called disciples to follow Him. ● Why did Jesus become human? Jesus became human to obey His Father’s plan and rescue sinners. ● Key Passage: “He must increase, but I must decrease.” John 3:30