

Small Group – February 27–28, 2021

Spring Lesson 1

Bible Passage: Luke 5:1–11
(Peter)



God's Plan Is Best

Remember Verse

Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts.
See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.
Psalm 139:23–24

EXPLORE//
10 minutes



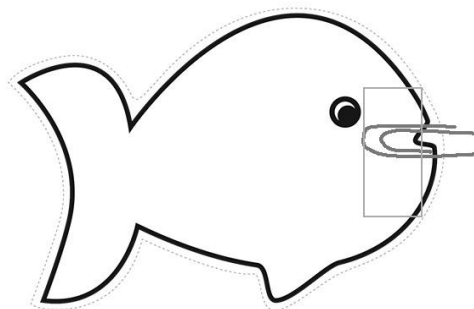
Children engage in fun, creative activities designed to pique their curiosity about the day's portion of The Big God Story.

Jesus used a fishing miracle to demonstrate His power and invite Peter to follow Him into a new calling and a new life. Today the children will create fish as they prepare to hear how God chose a simple fisherman to be a part of His story and change the world.

Activity 1: Flat Fish

SUPPLIES

- Paper "fish" printout on white card stock (1 or more per child)
- Paper clips (1 per fish paper)
- Scissors
- Clear tape
- crayons



RELATE

Print out the fish image (on the last page) or draw a fish similar to the example on heavier paper. Invite the child to decorate and cut out the fish. Using clear tape, tape a paper clip on the mouth of the fish so that the end of the paper clip extends out. We'll revisit this activity during small group time when they use a magnetic wand or a magnet to "catch the fish" by the paper clip coming out of its mouth.

Remember Verse

This week's Remember Verse focuses on a character trait of God that's highlighted in today's portion of The Big God Story:

Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. Psalm 139:23—24

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*see Resources

RESPOND//15 minutes



Children reflect on what the Holy Spirit is teaching them and respond through creative activities and games.

Reflect: God's Plan Is Best

Encourage the kids to open their Bibles and read the suggested passages.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER KIDS

- **Why did crowds of people follow Jesus?** John 6:2
- **What did Jesus ask Peter to do?** Luke 5:4
- **What do you think Peter was expecting would happen when they let down the nets?** Luke 5:5
- **What was so amazing about their catch of fish?** Luke 5:6–7
- **How did Jesus invite Peter into God's plan?** Luke 5:10b–11
- **How has God invited you to be part of His plan?**

QUESTIONS FOR OLDER KIDS

- **Why did crowds of people follow Jesus?** John 6:2
- **What was so amazing about their catch of fish?** Luke 5:6–7
- **Why did Peter tell Jesus to leave him after he saw the miracle Jesus did?** Luke 5:8
- **How would you respond if you saw Jesus perform a miracle in front of you?**
- **What did Jesus mean when He said that Peter would “fish for people”?** Luke 5:10b
- **What do you think it would be like for Simon Peter and his friends to leave their lives and follow Jesus? Why?** Luke 5:11
- **How has God invited you to be a part of His plan?**

Activity: Gone Fishing

Each child has created a fish (they can make more than one. Parents, you can make “fish” also). Now ask them to prayerfully think about someone that might need prayer and write the name of that person on the fish. Now, go fishing for the folks on the fish!

Allow each child to take a turn fishing for one fish in the “pond” (or pile of fish papers). Whatever name is pulled out, take a minute and pray for that person. Ask clarifying questions such as: why does that person need prayer, etc.

After everyone has had a turn, you should have prayed for each one named on a fish.

BLESS// 5 minutes



Children receive a blessing from their leaders and sometimes one another. A blessing may be prayer of commission, a portion of Scripture, or words to encourage and guide.

RELATE

God's plan is best. As I read the blessing over you today, hold out one palm, facing up. Every time you hear the word "plan" in the verse I read, use your other hand to trace the letter "P" on your open palm and imagine God writing your part of The Big God Story.

Open a Bible and read Jeremiah 29:11:

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

Speak the following blessing over the group.

May you know that God's plan is best. May you trust Him each day.

LEADER PREP

Imagine that you're fishing at a nearby lake or beach. Suddenly, a person walks up to you and asks you to leave your family and your business and follow him. This person might draw more than a strange look from you—maybe even a call to the police. But when this scenario played out with Jesus and Peter, a very specific cultural context applied.

In the Jewish educational system of the day, there were three different levels of learning. Both boys and girls, ages six to 12, participated in Bet Sefer, where they learned to read, write, and memorize the Torah (the five books of Moses). The next level was Bet Midrash, for boys ages 13 to 16. Only the top students continued at this level. Here they memorized the entire Old Testament. They continued to be taught by the local rabbi while also learning the family trade.

Then, only the best of the best would be specially selected by well-known traveling rabbis to enter Bet Talmud, for those ages 15 to 30. Very few would make it this far. Those chosen would often leave home to travel with and emulate the rabbi. This was the highest of honors.

As such, countless requests were made of these rabbis to take on new talmidim, or disciples. The potential talmidim were evaluated on their potential to become like the rabbi and on their perceived commitment level. Most students were rejected. Only a very select few heard the longed-after words "Follow me."

So when these young fishermen were asked by this very famous Rabbi, Jesus, to leave everything they had ever known to follow Him, this was a dream come true. This was something every Jewish mother dreamt of for her child. This was something that conferred upon them the highest respect. And this was something through which Peter learned that God's plan is best.

