##

## Intergenerational Faith Formation Program

## *Call to Follow Jesus*

This program explores the dynamics of becoming a disciple of Jesus Christ: experiencing a personal call, following Jesus, and changing one’s heart. Becoming a disciple is explored through the stories of New Testament disciples who accepted Jesus’ call to follow him. Inspired by the New Testament disciples and the example of Jesus, participants discover what it means to follow Jesus today and how they can practically live out discipleship in their lives and homes.

### Design

Opening Prayer & Instructions (10 minutes)

Part 1. All Ages Learning Experience: Jesus Calls People to Follow Him—New Testament Stories

(25 minutes)

“It’s Your Call! People Who Followed Jesus” Quiz Show

Part 2. Learning Experience: Following Jesus Today (25 min)

Part 3. Sharing Learning Reflections (10 minutes)

Closing Prayer

### Group Formation

**WARREN** will welcome everyone. We’ll have a slide on the screen encouraging people to sit in families and to include as many generations as possible at their table.

Organize people into intergenerational small groups of 8-10 people for the All Ages Learning Experience. Ask all members of the same family to sit together in these intergenerational groups. Each group should have as many of the following categories as possible: family (parents, children, teens), young adults, adults without children, and older adults. If members of the same family are intergenerational—children, teens, parents, and grandparents—keep them together in one group.

### Opening Prayer Service

Set up a prayer table with symbols of Baptism: Bible, cross, bowl of water and small white towel, bowl of oil, paschal (Easter) candle or large white candle. Consider displaying icons, paintings, and/or statues of Jesus calling the disciples or Jesus with the disciples.

Light the paschal candle or a large candle to begin the prayer service.

**Gather**

**Opening Prayer [NATALIE]**

Come, Lord Jesus,

startle us

 with your presence, life-sustaining as air,

to open our hearts

 to praise you,

to open our minds

 to attend you,

to open our spirits

 to worship you,

to open us

 to live our lives

 as authentically and boldly

 as you lived yours.

Come, Lord Jesus,

be with us

 in our longing;

come, stay with us

 in our needing;

come, go with us

 in our doing;

come, struggle with us

 in our searching;

come, rejoice with us

 in our loving.

Amen.

(Ted Loder. *Guerrillas of Grace.* San Diego, CA: Luramedia, 1984. p. 89)

**Listen [ YOUTH or CHILD: ]**

Hear this reading from the Gospel of John, chapter 1:

**35**The next day John was standing again with two of his disciples. **36** When he saw Jesus walking along he said, “Look! The Lamb of God!”**37**The two disciples heard what he said, and they followed Jesus.

**38**When Jesus turned and saw them following, he asked, “What are you looking for?”

They said, “Rabbi (which is translated *Teacher*), where are you staying?”

**39**He replied, “Come and see.” So they went and saw where he was staying, and they remained with him that day. It was about four o’clock in the afternoon.

**40**One of the two disciples who heard what John said and followed Jesus was Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter. **41**He first found his own brother Simon and said to him, “We have found the Messiah” (which is translated *Christ*). **42**He led him to Jesus.

Jesus looked at him and said, “You are Simon, son of John. You will be called Cephas” (which is translated *Peter*).

**Respond [JASON ROGERS] – response on screen**

Christ Jesus, you love us so much that you seek us out and personally call us to follow you.

**Response: Give us the grace to follow you.**

Christ Jesus, you call us to open our lives to God’s love and will.

**Response: Give us the grace to follow you.**

Christ Jesus, you call us to shape our lives on the pattern of your own life.

**Response: Give us the grace to follow you.**

Christ Jesus, you call us to love and forgive, to serve those in need, and to proclaim your Good News.

**Response: Give us the grace to follow you.**

**Closing Prayer [MELISSA]**

Gracious God, we ask you to open our hearts and minds to the call of Jesus. We want to follow him on the path of discipleship, but it is a hard journey. Give us the courage to accept Jesus’ invitation and to live our lives as he lived his. Inspire us to find ways to follow Jesus every day. Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

### Part 1. All Ages Learning Experience: Jesus Calls People to Follow Him—New Testament Stories

(20 minutes)

The All Ages Learning Experience focuses on the stories of people in the New Testament whom Jesus called to follow him—getting the participants to reflect on the lives of real people who were called by Jesus. People will encounter Jesus through the lives of those in the New Testament who chose to follow him and then find out how their lives were changed because of their acceptance of his invitation to follow him.

### “People Who Followed Jesus” Quiz Show (Large Group Option)

Handout: People Who Followed Jesus: Who Am I?

Moderator/Host: Brett

Quiz show participants: TBD (see disciples 1-10 below)

You are organizing a quiz show with New Testament disciples who followed Jesus. You will need a moderator for the quiz show and ten disciples from the New Testament. Give the disciples one New Testament person and the following Scripture passages to read. Participants should prepare using their own bibles.

1. YOUTH: Mary Magdalene: Matthew 27:55-61 and John 20:1-18
2. YOUTH: Matthew (Levi): Mark 2:13-17
3. ADULT: Thomas: John 20:24-29
4. YOUTH: Peter: Matthew 4:18-22, Matthew 14:22-33, Mark 14:32-41, Mark 14:66-72, John 13:3-20, John 21:15-19, and Acts 2:14, 22-24, 32-33, 36, 37-42
5. YOUTH: Paul: Acts 9:1-30, Acts 26:2-23, and Acts 16.16-40
6. CHILD: Zacchaeus: Luke 19:1-9
7. ADULT: The Samaritan Woman: John 4:5-30, 39-42
8. YOUTH: Stephen: Acts 6:5-15 and Acts 7:54-60

9 . CHILD: Mary the Mother of Jesus: Matthew 1:18-24

Ask each disciple to become familiar with the Scripture passages about their New Testament person. On the Quiz Show they are going to be interviewed by the moderator, who will ask them the following questions:

* How did Jesus call you? How did you meet? Why did you meet?
* How were you “changed” when you chose to follow Jesus?
* How did you follow Jesus after you met him? How did you live your decision to follow Jesus? (If the story does not include lots of details about this, suggest ways you think that person would have followed Jesus.)
* What feelings did you have toward Jesus?

If the New Testament stories do not include all of the answers to the above questions, disciples should prepare a response in keeping with the New Testament disciple’s story, e.g., the ways a person may have lived out their decision to follow Jesus. Each disciple must keep his or her identity a secret because the participants are going to identify each of the people.

You may want to have gift prizes for the individuals or families who identify each disciple correctly.

**Activity**

The moderator guides the Quiz Show using the following process:

Introduce the Quiz Show, using the words below or your own words.

Welcome to “It’s Your Call!” A Quiz Show for people who follow Jesus. We are going to hear the moving stories of ten people who met Jesus and chose to follow him. We are going to hear about how they met Jesus and how he changed their lives. But, we are going to keep their identities a secret. Our studio audience is going to have to figure out the real identities of our ten New Testament disciples. So let’s begin.

Begin the Quiz Show with all of the New Testament disciples “on stage.” When each disciple is interviewed they should stand. Call them New Testament disciple #1, #2, and so forth. It is important to keep the person’s identity a secret. Keep the interviews moving. You should only spend about 90 seconds interviewing each person.

Interview each disciple using the following questions [one handheld wireless]:

* How did Jesus call you? How did you meet? Why did you meet?
* How were you “changed” when you chose to follow Jesus?
* How did you follow Jesus after you met him? How did you live your decision to follow Jesus? (If the story does not include lots of details about this, suggest ways you think that person would have followed Jesus.)
* What feelings did you have toward Jesus?

Pause after each interview to give the participants an opportunity to identify the New Testament disciple and write his or her name on Handout #3. Table groups should work together to determine who the New Testament disciple is.

Reveal each New Testament disciple’s identity after you have interviewed the last person. Ask the disciple to stand and reveal his or her name. After the last person has revealed his or her name, check with the “audience” to see how well they did. Were there one or two disciples who “stumped” the audience? Give prizes for the individuals or families who identify each disciple correctly.

**Treasure box**

Conclude the activity be inviting the table groups to discuss the following questions as a group. Each person should share an answer to the first question before the participants discuss the second and third questions.

Write these questions on newsprint or create **PowerPoint slides** with the questions.

* Which New Testament disciple seemed the most interesting to you? Why?
* How were people changed when they met (encountered) Jesus and chose to follow him?
* What did it mean for them to follow Jesus?

### In Depth Learning Experience: Following Jesus Today

(20-30 minutes)

### Preparation

* Have several Bibles or New Testaments on every table or in every group.
* Make copies of Handouts (p. 13 &f).
* For family activity plan: You will need large sheets of poster paper or newsprint, crayons, and markers for “We Follow Jesus” poster. The poster paper should have an outline of a person on it (think of something similar to a ginger bread man outline).
* Write the essential instructions for each age group on newsprint or create a PowerPoint presentation with the instructions.
* Facilitators can guide the process, share Scripture passages, and give presentations to the entire group.

#### 1. We Follow Jesus: Families with Children (or IG groups of all ages)

**Introduction**

Jesus calls us personally to follow him. We have experienced the stories of New Testament disciples who were called by Jesus and followed him. In this activity you will work together as a group to explore what it means to follow Jesus today by describing **what a disciple believes**, **what a disciple feels**, and **how a disciple acts**. For example:

* Believes: A disciple believes Jesus is the Son of God.
* Feels: A disciple experiences Jesus’ love and forgiveness.
* Acts: A disciple serves people in need.

**Creative Activity**

Together with the people at your table or in your family you are going to create a “We Follow Jesus” poster. In parts of the poster, you and your table mates are going to write things a disciple believes, feels, and does (acts). “Believe” responses will go in or near the head, ‘Feel” responses near the heart, and “Do/Act” responses near the hands and feet.

**Step 1.** As a group, develop your own ideas for what a disciple believes, feels or does (acts). Record your answers on the worksheet.

Think of what you have learned about following Jesus from the stories of the New Testament disciples. Try to identify what they believed, what they felt, or how they acted. You might want to read several stories from the opening activity of the session. Record your answers on the worksheet.

1. Mary Magdalene: Matthew 27:55-61 and John 20:1-18
2. Matthew (Levi): Mark 2:13-17
3. Thomas: John 20:24-29
4. Peter: a few passages to consider: Matthew 4:18-22, Matthew 14:22-33, Mark 14:66-72, John 21:15-19
5. Paul: Acts 9:1-30, Acts 26:2-23, and Acts 16.16-40
6. Zacchaeus: Luke 19:1-9
7. The Samaritan Woman: John 4:5-30, 39-42
8. Stephen: Acts 6:5-15 and Acts 7:54-60
9. Mary the Mother of Jesus: Matthew 1:18-24

**Step 2. Imagine yourself in the Bible story.**

Review your worksheet list of what disciples believe, what they feel, or how they act. Is there anything missing? Discuss the following questions to see if there is anything you would add to your list. The Scripture passages are only examples. You may want to read one or two stories together as group.

* If you saw Jesus in action and heard him teach, what would you believe about Jesus? (Example: Matthew 15:13-17)
* If you were healed or forgiven by Jesus, what would you believe about him? (Example: John 9:1-7, 35-38 or John 8:1-11)
* If you were healed or forgiven by Jesus, what would you feel?
* If you saw Jesus serving people in need, what would he say to you about serving others? (Example: Matthew 25: 34-40 and John 13:12-16)
* If you heard Jesus telling people about relying on God, what would he say? (Example: Luke 11:3)

**Step 3. Make Your Poster!** Select three or four things disciples believe about Jesus, three or four things disciples feel about Jesus, and three or four things that disciples do (act). Write or draw one characteristic on your disciple poster

Believe near the head

Feel near the heart

Act/Do near the hands or feet)

On the top or in the center of the poster, write, “We Follow Jesus,” in large print.

**Step 4**. **Share your “We Follow Jesus” poster** with others at your table or nearby tables when the leader gives the invitation.

Take your poster home and hang it on a wall to remind everyone of how you are following Jesus.

**Concluding Reflections**

When you have finished your creative projects and shared it with the others at your table, discuss the following questions as a table group:

* What did you learn about following Jesus from this activity?
* When you think about what you wrote on your poster about following Jesus, where do you or your family feel affirmed (good) and where are you challenged to grow?
* What can you and your family start doing now to follow Jesus more faithfully?

Think of everything we have done in this session to understand what it means to follow Jesus today. To help us take our learning from this session and live in our lives and homes reflect on the following questions and share your thoughts with your group.

* What is the most important “lesson” you have learned about following Jesus?
* How can you as an individual and as family grow follow Jesus more faithfully in the coming weeks? Think of practical things that you can start doing now. Write them in the space below and review them each day this week.

**CLOSING ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Remember that small groups start next week.

Sign up online or at the tables.

Also an online class. Details will be on our website.

### Closing Prayer

*Jesus, you call to our hearts: “Leave anything that holds you back from deeper love. Come follow me, again and again.” Grant us the courage to leave behind whatever keeps us from you and to trust you with our lives. May our heart’s connection with you be so strong and true that we will daily risk the road of following in your footsteps. Keep us open to the adventure of life where we meet you day by day. Remind us often of our inner goodness. Help us to believe that you look upon us with love. Thank you for the call to be you disciple. Amen.*

(Joyce Rupp. *Out of the Ordinary*. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 2000. p. 139)

## It’s Your Call! Who Am I?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Disciple # 1 |  |
| Disciple # 2 |  |
| Disciple # 3 |  |
| Disciple # 4 |  |
| Disciple # 5 |  |
| Disciple # 6 |  |
| Disciple # 7 |  |
| Disciple # 8 |  |
| Disciple # 9 |  |

Here are some disciples who might be on the panel. Note there are more listed here than are on the panel.

Lydia, Zacchaeus, Matthew (Levi), Thomas, James, Mary Magdalene, Peter, The Samaritan Woman, Paul, Andrew, Mary the Mother of Jesus, Stephen

**Reflection Questions**

* Which person seemed the most interesting to you? Why?
* How were people changed when they met Jesus?
* What did it mean for them to follow Jesus?

## We Follow Jesus – Worksheet

Use this worksheet to capture characteristics of being a disciple today by making note of what a follower of Jesus Believes, Feels, and Does. The instruction sheet will give you some more detailed guidance.

In the space below, write down words or phrases that describe what a disciple believes, what a disciple feels, and how a disciple acts. For example:

* Believes: A disciple believes Jesus is the Son of God.
* Feels: A disciple experiences Jesus’ love and forgiveness.
* Acts: A disciple serves people in need.

**BELIEVES**

**FEELS**

**ACTS**

## We Follow Jesus –Table Group Activity Instructions

**Introduction**

Jesus calls us personally to follow him. Tonight, we have experienced the stories of New Testament disciples who were called by Jesus and followed him. In this activity you will work together as a group to explore what it means to follow Jesus today by describing **what a disciple believes**, **what a disciple feels**, and **how a disciple acts**. For example:

* Believes: A disciple believes Jesus is the Son of God.
* Feels: A disciple experiences Jesus’ love and forgiveness.
* Acts: A disciple serves people in need.

**Creative Activity**

Together with the people at your table or in your family you are going to create a “We Follow Jesus” poster. In parts of the poster, you and your table mates are going to write things a disciple believes, feels, and does (acts).

“Believe” responses will go in or near the head.

“Feel” responses near the heart.

“Do/Act” responses near the hands and feet.

**Step 1. Make a list of what a Disciple Believes, Feels, and Does.**

As a group, brainstorm ideas for what a disciple believes, feels or does (acts).

Think of what you have learned about following Jesus from the stories of the New Testament disciples. Try to identify what they believed, what they felt, or how they acted. You might want to read some of the stories of the disciples from our game show. Record your answers on the worksheet.

1. Mary Magdalene: Matthew 27:55-61 and John 20:1-18
2. Matthew (Levi): Mark 2:13-17
3. Thomas: John 20:24-29
4. Peter: Matthew 4:18-22, Matthew 14:22-33, Mark 14:66-72, John 21:15-19
5. Paul: Acts 9:1-30, Acts 26:2-23, and Acts 16.16-40
6. Zacchaeus: Luke 19:1-9
7. The Samaritan Woman: John 4:5-30, 39-42
8. Stephen: Acts 6:5-15 and Acts 7:54-60
9. Mary the Mother of Jesus: Matthew 1:18-24

**Step 2. Imagine yourself in the Bible story.**

Review your worksheet list of what disciples believe, what they feel, and how they act. Is there anything missing? Discuss the following questions to see if there is anything you would add to your list. The Scripture passages are only examples. You may want to read one or two stories together as group.

* If you saw Jesus in action and heard him teach, what would you believe about Jesus? (Example: Matthew 15:13-17)
* If you were healed or forgiven by Jesus, what would you believe about him? (Example: John 9:1-7, 35-38 or John 8:1-11)
* If you were healed or forgiven by Jesus, what would you feel?
* If you saw Jesus serving people in need, what would he say to you about serving others? (Example: Matthew 25: 34-40 and John 13:12-16)
* If you heard Jesus telling people about relying on God, what would he say? (Example: Luke 11:3)

**Step 3. Make Your Poster!**

Select two to four things disciples believe about Jesus, two to four things disciples feel about Jesus, and two to four things that disciples do (act). Write or draw one characteristic on your disciple poster. You could write these on the colored strips of paper and glue them to the poster.

Put Believe characteristics near the head

Put Feel characteristics near the heart

Put Act/Do characteristics near the hands or feet.

On the top or in the center of the poster, write, “We Follow Jesus,” in large print.

**Step 4**. **Share your “We Follow Jesus” poster**

When the leader gives the invitation, you may share your poster with others at your table or nearby tables when everyone is done.

Take your poster home and hang it on a wall to remind everyone of how you are following Jesus. Talk with others in your home about how you are following Jesus.

**Concluding Reflections**

When you have finished your creative projects and shared it with the others at your table, discuss the following questions as a table group:

* What did you learn about following Jesus from this activity?
* When you think about what you wrote on your poster about following Jesus, where do you or your family feel affirmed and where are you challenged to grow?
* What can you and your family start doing now to follow Jesus more faithfully?

Think of everything we have done in this session to understand what it means to follow Jesus today. To help us take our learning from this session and live in our lives and homes reflect on the following questions and share your thoughts with your group.

* What is the most important “lesson” you have learned about following Jesus?
* How can you as an individual and as family grow follow Jesus more faithfully in the coming weeks? Think of practical things that you can start doing now. Write them in the space below and review them each day.