

TEXT John 1:35-51

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES Isaiah 6:8; Mark 3:14,15; Acts 9:15,16; 22:21; Ephesians 4:11,12

OBJECTIVE The students will be able to describe Christ’s call to His disciples. They will further be able to discuss the importance of being alert to the calling of God in their own lives, and answering that call.

KEY VERSE FOR ANSWER And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. — Matthew 4:19

KEY VERSE FOR SEARCH Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. — Matthew 16:24

ANSWER TITLE: **Chosen**

SEARCH TITLE: **God’s Call**

REFERENCE INFORMATION

Besides Peter and Andrew, and James and John, Scripture cites other times when two brothers were called, but in those cases they had opposite reactions to the call of God (one answering and one not).

Cain and Abel — Genesis 4:1-7

Esau and Jacob — Genesis 25:31-33

Parable of two sons — Matthew 21:28-31

Prodigal son and his brother — Luke 15:11-32

When Jesus was looking for disciples, He did not go among the scribes and Pharisees, men who had studied the Old Testament Scriptures and were at the head of the Jewish church. Those men were filled with their own ideas and would not listen to Christ’s teachings. Neither did He go among the rich, because they thought they had all they needed and were not looking for the heavenly

Kingdom. Jesus went, instead, among the humble folk and sought out men who needed help and who loved the truth. Among them He found men He could trust to carry on His great work after He returned to Heaven.

A *disciple* (Greek, *mathetes*, a learner) is a pupil of some teacher. The word implies the “acceptance in mind and life of the views and practices of the teacher.” In the New Testament it means, in the widest sense, those who accept the teachings of anyone, whether it be Moses, John the Baptist, the Pharisees, or Jesus. Usually, however, it refers to the followers or close associates of Jesus Christ, and sometimes to the twelve Apostles. More often though, it refers to the believers, the Christians. The term *Christian* was not applied to disciples until the founding of the church at Antioch. See Acts 11:26.

YOUR OPENER

God's Call

TEXT: John 1:35-51

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES: Isaiah 6:8; Mark 3:14,15; Acts 9:15,16; 22:21; Ephesians 4:11,12

KEY VERSE: Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. — Matthew 16:24

RESPONSES

1. The students will see that the preaching of John the Baptist caused the attention of the disciples to be drawn to Jesus. The presence of Jesus was pointed out by the statement of John the Baptist. "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29,36). Ask your students to explain why this statement offers one of the greatest reasons to answer the call of Christ.

2. It will be noted that the first step for the disciples, as well as any new Christian, is to actively follow Jesus. Ask your students if they feel the disciples were fully aware of what following Jesus would mean, or the extent of the call He was placing upon their lives when they chose to follow Him. When the call of God comes to people today, is it always clear and definite? Discussion should bring out that sometimes the call of God must be taken one step at a time; for instance, by making ourselves available for God's service and doing whatever He gives us to do. Christ sees each action and will lead us a step at a time as we prove our willingness to follow Him.

3. He believed Jesus to be the Messiah, and immediately went out to seek for his brother Peter, whom he introduced to Jesus. It might be worthwhile to note that although Andrew was not often referred to, he was always laboring behind the scenes to bring people to Christ: the lad with the loaves and fishes (John 6:8), and the Greeks who came to see Jesus (John 12:20-22). Your students should see that they do not always have to be in prominent positions or engaged in service that can be seen of men in order to be valuable workers for the Lord.

4. As your students cite some reasons, they should understand that, though there are many excuses, none of them are valid. Some such excuses may be: I am so weak in myself; there are too many hypocrites; I am not a very bad sinner; I cannot understand. Remind your students that in Jesus' parable, those who made excuses were barred from the feast.

In calling men and women to follow Him, Jesus always spoke in words that could be comprehended by the hearers. The message of the Gospel is not veiled to the understanding. Throughout the centuries God has called countless men and women who answered and left all to follow Him. How vital it is to be alert to the calling of God in our own lives, and then to answer that call!

1. What circumstances brought about the disciples' first contact with Jesus?
2. What was the first simple step taken by the disciples?
3. What was Andrew's reaction when introduced to Jesus?
4. State some of the reasons people might give for not following Christ, or for not answering His call.

19

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

5. How did God's call to salvation come to you?

6. After a person has answered God's call to salvation, he will undoubtedly be called to do some particular service for God. How does God's call for service come to individuals?

7. What might be some of the common reactions or feelings of a person when God calls him to do a particular task?

8. God does not ask everyone to do the same task, but there is one thing that every Christian is called to do. Using Psalm 107:2, identify a calling that every Christian shares, and explain how it can be answered.

5. Begin the discussion by having your students tell of the different ways in which God's call came to them. This is a good opportunity to enumerate the different means by which the Gospel message is conveyed to individuals—preaching, testifying, singing, distributing literature, etc.

6. As your students respond to this question, it should become apparent that God calls His followers to work for Him in a variety of ways. It may be through the suggestion of the ministry, through a strong persuasion which comes as one seeks the will of God, through revelation of Scripture, etc.

7. Your students' responses to this question might be that, though he may feel honored or inadequate, each person needs to realize the supreme importance of this call to service. Your students should understand that God gives strength for each task He calls them to do, therefore it is vital that they follow through and do it.

8. Every Christian is called to tell others of the redemption they have received through Christ. Our duties and responsibilities in the Lord's service may vary, but our goals and objectives are the same—to glorify God and point men and women to Jesus Christ. Ask your students to mention some of the places where a verbal witness for Christ can be given, thus helping them to recognize that their testimony should not be reserved solely for a church service. Conclude your lesson by re-emphasizing the importance of being alert to the call of God in whatever manner it comes, and being ready and willing to answer that call.

YOUR WRAP-UP

SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

What did Peter and Andrew do after Jesus told them to follow Him?

How might we hear or recognize God's call to us? How can we be sure that it is God's call and not just our own desire?

Name some things God might call a young person to do?

Peter and Andrew left their nets, their occupation, when Jesus came by. What are some things we might be required to give up in order to answer God's call?

How much did the disciples understand about their calling?

The disciples were able to follow Jesus physically: they ate where He ate and slept where He slept. How are we, as Christians, able to follow Jesus today?

What are some things that you feel God has called all Christians to do?

The ANSWER story tells why some people fail to answer God's call, or find the truth. What is that reason?

THINGS TO DO

As an opener for your class, have a short game of "Follow the Leader" where the students try to do exactly what the teacher does. You could recite the key verse, open your Bible to the Scripture text, bow your head in opening prayer, etc. Lead into the lesson, explaining that Jesus calls us to follow Him.

In a piece of net, put a number of paper fish on which you have written some situations. These should be circumstances where a person might feel a call from God to do something specific for Him. Have each student take out a fish, read the message aloud, and tell what he thinks should be the response or action taken. Examples of some situations might be:

- A new neighbor moves in next door. You wonder if he goes to Sunday school, but he looks older than you and you are not sure if he is friendly.
- Your locker partner asks you to skip class with him.
- Your science teacher assigns a report on evolution.

Show your students pictures which illustrate choices we make every day. With each picture ask such questions as: Would you rather take a trip to the beach or the mountains? Do you want a red dress or a blue sweater for your birthday? Would you prefer to drive a Honda or a Ford? Talk about how we all have a much more important choice to make, to follow God or not. Show a

picture of Jesus and contrast it to a group of friends or something else they might choose instead of Jesus.

Visual aid: Dog whistle or dinner bell, used to summon someone.

Call one of your class members on Saturday evening and give him a message. Ask him to call another member of your class with the same message. That person in turn should call another person with the message. On Sunday morning in class, see how many of your members received the message. Emphasize how important it was for each person to pass the message along. Compare this to Andrew and Philip, who passed the message of the Messiah along to Peter and Nathanael.

Give each class member a sealed envelope on which the words OFFICIAL CALL TO DUTY is printed on the outside. Have each student open his envelope to see what duty he has been assigned to perform in class that day (answer lesson questions, recite key verse, read Scripture text, close in prayer, etc.). Compare this "call to duty" to Jesus' call to Christians. Do we always know exactly what duty we are to perform for the Lord? How do we find out what we are supposed to do?

Answers for ANSWER

Tell Me About It

When Jesus lived on earth He had twelve special helpers who were called His disciples. Below is a list of their names. Read Matthew 10:2-5 and fill in the missing letters.

B A R T H O L O M E W J A M E S M A T T H E W T H A D D A E U S S I M O N J O H N P E T E R T H O M A S J U D A S P H I L I P J A M E S A N D R E W	
--	---

Dear _____,

Signed _____

Wouldn't it be fun to talk to one of the disciples? Pretend you lived during Biblical times. Write a letter to a disciple of your choice. What will you ask him? What do you want to know about Jesus?