

Jesus Chooses Twelve Apostles

Matthew 10:1-15



New Testament 1
Part 1: Early Life of Christ

SUNDAY MORNING

New Testament 1 [Class Attendance Sheet](#) provided in activity sheets (NOTE: The document is interactive, allowing the teacher to type in the Class, Teacher, and the children's names.)

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES:

Matthew 10:1-15; Mark 3:13-19; Luke 6:12-16; Acts 1:13,26

MEMORY WORK:

Names of the 12 apostles (see Matthew 10:2-4)

SONGS AND FINGERPLAYS (SEE END OF LESSON FOR WORDS):

A [song book](#) and [audio recordings](#) of many of the curriculum songs are available on the curriculum Web site.

- [“The Apostles”](#)
- [“Jesus Chose His Twelve Apostles”](#)
- [“The Twelve Apostles”](#)
- [“I Can Be a Follower”](#)
- [“Four Fishermen”](#)

LESSON VISUALS AND TEACHING AIDS (NOTE ANY DISCLAIMERS):

- See [AP's Pinterest page](#) for ideas on bulletin boards, visuals, crafts, etc. [DISCLAIMER: Pins may sometimes need to be adjusted to be Scriptural.]
- [Jesus' Birth & Sermon](#) Bible fact cards (provided under “N.T. 1 Bible Facts” on curriculum Web site)
- Apologetics Press' [Bible Timeline](#)
- “Summary of the Bible” from [“Kids Prep”](#) CD by Jeff Miller
- “Matthew Chapter Summary” from [“Kids Prep”](#) CD by Jeff Miller
- Betty Lukens' felt pieces
- Ministry of Jesus flannel graph
- Boyhood and Early Ministry of Jesus picture set from A Beka (DISCLAIMER: use the cards, *not the lesson book*; note on card CB 3.5, angels were male humans without wings when they appeared to humans in the Bible)
- Toilet roll figures
- Large cut-out numbers to illustrate “12 Things to Remember about the Apostles” (see end of lesson)



PERSONAL APPLICATION:

YOUNGER CHILDREN: Jesus chose 12 men to be special helpers and teachers. I can be a special helper for Jesus too.

OLDER CHILDREN: The 12 apostles were “ordinary” people who Jesus knew could do extraordinary things for Him. In many ways I am “ordinary,” but I can also do special things for Jesus.

LESSON STARTS HERE

INTRODUCTION: (YOUNGER CHILDREN)

Jesus spent His “growing up” years getting ready for what God wanted Him to do. After He was baptized and tempted by the devil, He was ready to begin His work. He chose 12 men who would be His helpers.

INTRODUCTION: (OLDER CHILDREN)

Jesus came to Earth for a purpose, and He spent the first 30 or so years of His life preparing for what He was to do. After He was baptized and tempted by the devil He was ready to begin His ministry and to fulfill the reason He came to Earth. He chose 12 men to not only help Him, but to learn from Him and witness all He did, so they could teach others after He was gone.

POINTS TO EMPHASIZE:

1. Great crowds of people followed Jesus wherever He went. Many wanted to be healed of diseases. Many wanted to see what miracles He would perform. Many wanted to hear what He had to say; some believed and some did not. Those who wanted to listen and learn were called disciples. Jesus knew that He would not be on Earth for much longer, so He needed men who would continue His work after He was gone.
2. One day, after spending many hours teaching and helping the multitudes who followed Him, He told His followers, “The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore, pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest” (Matthew 9:37). Then He went up on a nearby mountain and spent the entire night praying, most likely concerning those who would be the best **apostles**. Jesus knew that from many followers (**disciples**) He would need to choose a few good men who would be great preachers—and leaders of the Church later.

Disciple: Someone who wants to be a follower of a certain teacher. A disciple is one who wants to learn all he or she can from that special teacher.

Apostle: A man who was chosen by Jesus to be a special preacher, sharing the good news (the Gospel) about the Savior with others; literally “one sent forth.” All the apostles were at one time disciples of Jesus, but not all His disciples were apostles. There were originally 12 apostles, but later Paul (Romans 1:1; 1 Corinthians 15:8-9; Galatians 1:1) and Matthias (Acts 1:26) were also given that title of distinction. There are **no** apostles today since they already served the purpose Jesus intended for them.



3. Jesus called 12 of His followers up to the mountain where He had been praying and told them that they were the ones He had chosen to be special messengers. They would be able to heal the sick and do other miracles to prove that what they were preaching was from God.



NOTE: Jesus' selection of the 12 apostles might have occurred at least a year after He began His public ministry. He had previously called Peter, Andrew, James, and John to be disciples (Matthew 4:18-22; Mark 1:16-20; Luke 5:1-11), as well as Matthew (Matthew 9:9-13; Mark 2:13-14; Luke 5:27-32), Philip, and Nathanael (John 1:43-51).

4. These 12 men spent more time than anyone else with Jesus. Each day they listened and learned from Him. They were able to do great things in His name. They were eyewitnesses to His ministry, His death, and His resurrection. But they were not perfect men. They still had times when their faith was weak, when they were afraid, and times when they struggled to make good choices. Yet Jesus knew they all had great potential; He knew what they could do and what they could become. They were ordinary men with different personalities and occupations and backgrounds and abilities who later did extraordinary things for the Lord.
5. Since God made each of us, He knows better than anyone else what our talents are. He knows that as we grow older, we will be able to do different things, and He expects us to use our talents and opportunities. There may be times when we think that we just can't do something, but we must try. As a little boy or girl, we learned to tie our shoes, dress ourselves, etc. It was hard, but we learned. As we get older, there are other things that we can and must learn to do.
6. We must also remember that there are no "ordinary" people to God. We are all different, but He made each of us special—just like the apostles. Four of the apostles (Peter, Andrew, James, and John) were fishermen. One (Matthew) was a tax collector. One (Simon the Zealot) was probably part of what we would consider a terrorist group trying to overthrow the Roman government in Palestine. But they loved Jesus so much that they were willing to do things they never thought they could before.

MORE ABOUT THE 12 APOSTLES:

- Simon Peter (also called Cephas) and his brother Andrew were fishermen from Bethsaida. The first to confess Jesus (Matthew 16:18), Peter was also the first to deny Jesus. He was the first to preach the Gospel to both the Jews (Acts 2) and to the Gentiles (Acts 10). Andrew is mentioned only four times in the New Testament; three of those times, he is said to have brought someone to Christ (John 1:41, 6:4-9, 12:20-22). Andrew and Peter might have been a disciple of John the Baptist awaiting the coming Messiah.
- James and John, the sons of Zebedee were also fishermen. They were nicknamed "Boanerges" (Sons of Thunder). James was the first of the apostles to be a martyr for his faith (Acts 12:1-2).
- Philip was also from Bethsaida. He is not Philip the evangelist mentioned in Acts.
- Bartholomew (Nathanael): His name means "son of Tolmai."
- Matthew (called Levi in Mark and Luke's accounts) was a tax collector for the Roman government occupying Palestine. He wrote the Gospel account that bears his name. Luke's account mentions that Matthew left everything to be a follower of Jesus—a fact that Matthew himself conspicuously omits.
- Thomas was also called Didymus, which means "twin." He is most remembered for his insistence on evidence.
- James the son of Alphaeus was also called James the Less.
- Thaddeus was also called Judas, the son of James and "Judas, not Iscariot." He may have used the name Thaddeus to avoid the stigma of the name Judas.
- Simon the Zealot was also called Simon the Cananite. "Cananite" probably indicates that he was from Cana. "Cananite" is not a translation of the original Greek, but a transliteration of the Aramaic word meaning "zealous." Some scholars think "Zealot" may describe his character, while

others believe it describes his involvement with a Jewish terrorist group trying to oust the Romans from Palestine.

- Judas was surnamed Iscariot. Iscariot may indicate that he was from Kerioth (or Carioth). He is always listed last in the lists of the apostles and referred to as “the one who betrayed Jesus.” He committed suicide and was replaced by Matthias about whom nothing is known



RECOMMENDED READING FOR TEACHERS: See the articles “[Are There Modern-Day Apostles?](#)” by Dave Miller and “[The Calling of the Apostles](#)” by Eric Lyons on the Apologetics Press Web site for relevant apologetics information for this lesson.

beyond his name and the fact that he was a disciple of Jesus’ from the beginning (Acts 1).

12 THINGS TO REMEMBER ABOUT THE APOSTLES (Original Concept by Sara Richey)

(Illustrate with flannel graph figures on large cut-out numbers.)

1. **One** carried the money bag and betrayed Jesus [JUDAS]. **One** was chosen to take Judas’ place [MATTHIAS]. **One** was a tax collector [MATTHEW].
2. **Two** were mending their nets when Jesus called them to be disciples. [JAMES AND JOHN]. **Two** went to Jesus’ tomb when the women told the apostles He had risen from the dead (John 20:3-4). [PETER AND JOHN]
3. **Three** slept in the garden while Jesus prayed. [PETER, JAMES, AND JOHN] Peter denied Jesus **three** times.
4. **Four** had names starting with “J.” [JAMES, JOHN, JAMES THE SON OF ALPHAEUS, JUDAS ISCARIOT] Four were brothers. [PETER AND ANDREW; JAMES AND JOHN]
5. **Five** had five letters in their names. [PETER, JAMES, JUDAS, SIMON, JAMES]
6. **Six** had more than one name. [MATTHEW = Levi; PETER = Simon or Cephas; THADDEUS = Judas; BARTHOLOMEW = Nathanael; THOMAS = Didymus; JAMES, THE SON OF ALPHAEUS = James the Less] Also, **six** told Peter, “We will go fishing with you” after Jesus’ death (John 21:3). [THOMAS, NATHANAEL, JAMES, JOHN, and “two other disciples”]
7. **Seven** went fishing in two boats after Jesus’ death (John 21:2). [THOMAS, NATHANAEL, JAMES, JOHN, PETER, and “two other disciples”]
8. **Eight** waited outside the garden for Jesus while He was praying. [Judas had gone to betray Jesus; Peter, James, and John were inside the garden with Him.]
9. **Nine** waited outside the house of Jairus while Peter, James, and John went inside with Jesus.
10. **Ten** met Jesus in the upper room after His resurrection. [Judas was dead; Thomas was not in the room the first time Jesus appeared to the apostles.]
11. **Eleven** saw Jesus ascend into heaven.
12. **Twelve** ate the last supper with Jesus. **Twelve** stood before the crowd at Pentecost and preached the good news about Jesus.

PRE-CLASS ACTIVITIES/LEARNING CENTERS (TO BE USED AS CHILDREN ARE ARRIVING—BEFORE CLASS, AND UP TO THE FIRST FIVE MINUTES OF CLASS; OR AS HOMEWORK):

- Click here for complete [Activity Book](#) and [Answer Key](#).

Ages 2-5:

- “[Jesus Chooses Twelve Coloring Sheet](#)” (provided in activity sheets)
- Use the “[Puppets of the Twelve Apostles](#)” to make stick puppets glued on craft sticks (provided in activity sheets).
- “[Jesus Chooses Twelve Maze](#)” (provided in activity sheets)
- Use Alphabet Word Cards to spell out names of several apostles. Let children sound out the names phonetically.
- Leap Frog Bean Bag Toss: On small pieces of paper, write questions about different apostles and/or about previous lessons. Put them under “lily pads” that you have cut out and colored. After each child tosses a bean bag (preferably in the shape of a frog) onto a lily pad, he/she tries to answer the question (or instead of tossing the bags, use make a small catapult or “see-saw” so the kids can launch the bags onto the pads).
- Work on memorizing the names of the apostles.
- Play “Go Fish.” Have fish cut-outs (or die-cuts) and attach questions about the apostles. Attach a paper clip to the fish. Make a fishing rod out of a dowel rod and string. Attach a magnet on the end of the string so it will “catch” a fish. Let the children take turns fishing like the apostles.
- Have “Goldfish” as a snack.

1st-2nd Graders:

- “[Apostles Matching Game](#)” (provided in activity sheets)
- Work on memorizing the names of the apostles. Write the “12 Apostles” song on the board (or on a transparency), leaving out some of the names. Let kids fill in the blanks.
- Leap Frog Bean Bag Toss: On small pieces of paper, write questions about different apostles and/or about previous lessons. Put them under “lily pads” that you have cut out and colored. After each child tosses a bean bag (preferably in the shape of a frog) onto a lily pad, he/she tries to answer the question (or instead of tossing the bags, use make a small catapult or “see-saw” so the kids can launch the bags onto the pads).
- Play “Go Fish.” Have fish cut-outs (or die-cuts) and attach questions about the apostles. Attach a paper clip to the fish. Make a fishing rod out of a dowel rod and string. Attach a magnet on the end of the string so it will “catch” a fish. Let the children take turns fishing like the apostles.
- Have the children read *Jesus Shows God’s Love*, Mary Hassinger, Zonderkidz, The Beginner’s Bible (DISCLAIMERS: skip p. 3 with the “angels”; change “cousin” to “relative” on p. 6)

3rd-4th Graders:

- Advanced Bible Reader: Have the kids read Matthew 10, Mark 3, Luke 5-6 (and chapters 1-4, if they have yet to do so this quarter), and Acts 1. [This could be assigned Sunday, to be completed by Wednesday.] Print out copies of the Luke 1-5 quiz from AP’s [Advanced Bible Reader](#) (ABR) site. Have each of the children take the quiz. If you have not already, outside of class, make ABR accounts for each of the children and put their answers into the ABR quiz for each child. Show them their scores in the next Bible class, and explain what ABR is.
- Have the children read Matthew 10, Mark 3, Luke 5-6, and Acts 1.
- “[Apostles Matching Game](#)” (provided in activity sheets)

- Have students work in pairs/groups. Give each pair/group the names of the apostles and scriptures that give a characteristic about each. Have the students look up the scriptures to find the characteristic.
- Work on memorizing the names of the apostles. Write the “12 Apostles” song on the board (or on a transparency), leaving out some of the names. Let kids fill in the blanks.
- Have the children read the following:
 - *The Story of Jesus and His Disciples*, Alice in Bibleland Storybook, Davidson (DISCLAIMER: some believe that one should only pray to the Father)
 - *Twelve Who Followed Jesus* Arch Book, by Sarah Fletcher

SONGS:

“THE APOSTLES”

Author: Jeff Miller

(Tune: See “[Kids Prep](#)” CD)

Peter and Andrew his brother;
James and John of Zebedee;
Philip and Bartholomew,
and then Thomas and Matthew.

James the son of Alpheus,
And also, there was Thaddeus,
Simon, and Judas Iscariot,
Paul and Matthias.

“JESUS CHOSE HIS TWELVE APOSTLES” ([Click to Hear](#))

Author: Unknown*

(Tune: “Battle Hymn of the Republic”)

Jesus called the 12 to teach the Gospel everywhere,
Jesus called the 12 to teach the Gospel everywhere,
Jesus called the 12 to teach the Gospel everywhere,
And all but one obeyed.

CHORUS:

Jesus loved the 12 apostles.
Jesus loved the 12 apostles.
Jesus loved the 12 apostles.
They helped to spread God’s Word.

You and I can teach the Gospel to neighbors and friends.
You and I can teach the Gospel to neighbors and friends.
You and I can teach the Gospel to neighbors and friends,
And share with them God’s love.

2nd CHORUS:

God wants us to use our talents.
God wants us to use our talents.

God wants us to use our talents.
We can help to spread God's Word.

“THE TWELVE APOSTLES” ([Click to Hear](#))

Author: Unknown*
(Tune: “Jesus Loves Me”)

VERSE 1:

Jesus called them one by one,
Peter, Andrew, James, and John,
Next came Philip, Thomas, too,
Matthew and Bartholomew.

CHORUS:

Yes, Jesus called them.
Yes, Jesus called them.
Yes, Jesus called them.
And they all followed Him.

VERSE 2:

James the one they called the Less,
Simon, also Thaddeus.
Twelfth apostle Judas made.
Jesus was by him betrayed.

(CHORUS)

VERSE 3:

Matthias then took Judas' place,
To preach to men of every race.
Paul three preaching trips did make.
He went to Rome for Jesus' sake.

(CHORUS)

“I CAN BE A FOLLOWER” ([Click to Hear](#))

Author: Unknown*
(Tune: “Mary had a Little Lamb”)

I can be a follower, follower, follower.
I can be a follower of my Lord, Jesus Christ.

(Child's Name) can be a follower, follower, follower.
(Child's Name) can be a follower of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

(REPEAT, using all the children's names.)

“FOUR FISHERMEN” ([Click to Hear](#))

Author: Unknown*

(Tune: “Jesus Loves Me”)

Jesus walked beside the sea.
He said, “Come and follow Me.”
He had lots of work to do.
He needed helpers good and true.

CHORUS:

They followed Jesus. They followed Jesus.
They followed Jesus. His helpers they would be.

*Author Unknown: Please contact us through the feedback button for this lesson if you are aware of any copyright information for this song.

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Jesus Chooses Twelve Apostles

Matthew 10:1-15



New Testament 1
Part 1: Early Life of Christ

WEDNESDAY EVENING

New Testament 1 [Class Attendance Sheet](#) provided in activity sheets (NOTE: The document is interactive, allowing the teacher to type in the Class, Teacher, and the children's names.)

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES:

Matthew 10:1-15; Mark 3:13-19; Luke 6:12-16; Acts 1:13,26

MEMORY WORK:

Names of the 12 apostles (see Matthew 10:2-4)

SONGS AND FINGERPLAYS (SEE END OF SUNDAY'S LESSON FOR WORDS):

A [song book](#) and [audio recordings](#) of many of the curriculum songs are available on the curriculum Web site.

- [“The Apostles”](#)
- [“Jesus Chose His Twelve Apostles”](#)
- [“The Twelve Apostles”](#)
- [“I Can Be a Follower”](#)
- [“Four Fishermen”](#)

LESSON VISUALS AND TEACHING AIDS (NOTE DISCLAIMERS):

- See Sunday morning's lesson
- Fishing net, old carpenter's tools, a bag of coins, etc. (see point #5 from the lesson)
- Have cards with different scenarios written on them (someone sick, someone needs clothes/food, at school someone drops his books, etc.) and have students tell something they can do to help. (Emphasize that each one of us can do special things for Jesus.)

PERSONAL APPLICATION:

YOUNGER CHILDREN: Jesus chose 12 men to be special helpers and teachers. I can be a special helper for Jesus, too.

OLDER CHILDREN: The 12 apostles were “ordinary” people whom Jesus knew could do extraordinary things for Him. In many ways I am “ordinary,” but I can also do special things for Jesus.



INTRODUCTION:

Review Sunday's lesson (see [N.T. 1 Review Questions](#) for example questions). Emphasize the important job that the apostles had and why they were chosen (i.e., to continue Jesus' work after His death).

[N.T. 1 Bible Facts Flashcards](#) (provided under "N.T. 1 Bible Facts" on curriculum Web site)

POINTS TO EMPHASIZE:

YOUNGER CHILDREN:

Tell more information about the apostles from Sunday's lesson or review the information given on Sunday.

OLDER CHILDREN:

1. After Judas' death, the apostles met to choose, with God's help, a man to replace him. A godly man named Matthias was chosen (Acts 1:21-26). He was one of the 12 who stood with Peter on the Day of Pentecost and preached to the multitudes, but nothing else is known about him.
2. Discuss the qualifications of an apostle given in Acts 1:21-22:
 - He must have been with the other apostles throughout Jesus' ministry, "beginning with the baptism of John."
 - He must have been "a witness of Jesus' resurrection."
3. Later, Paul was chosen to be an apostle (Galatians 1:1) in the sense that he was chosen to be a "special messenger." He had been a witness of His resurrection, having seen Jesus on the road to Damascus.
4. The apostles had different occupations and different backgrounds. They did not all have the same talents. But they lived together, traveled together, and learned to work together, because they all loved Jesus and wanted to do what He asked of them. God planned for the Church to be a group of people from different backgrounds, with different talents and jobs, working together to tell everyone about Jesus. If we do what we should and live as we should, others will see that we have "been with Jesus," as they did the apostles (Acts 4:13).
5. Discuss Bible times occupations. If possible, have objects related to different jobs, such as a fishing net, old carpenter's tools, a bag of coins, etc.

NOTE: The 12 "were not learned men, and could not be supposed to spread their religion by art or talents. They were not men of wealth, and could not bribe men to follow them. They were not men of rank and office, and could not compel men to believe. They were just such men as are always found to be the best witnesses in courts of justice—plain men, of good sense, of fair character, of great honesty, and with favorable opportunities of ascertaining facts to which they bore witness. Such men everybody believes, and especially when they are willing to lay down their lives to prove their sincerity.... No witnesses were ever so well qualified to give testimony as they, and none ever gave so much evidence of their sincerity as they did" (Albert Barnes (1972), *Barnes' Notes on the Old and New Testaments*, p.107, 1972).



PRE-CLASS ACTIVITIES/LEARNING CENTERS (TO BE USED AS CHILDREN ARE ARRIVING—**BEFORE** CLASS, AND UP TO THE FIRST FIVE MINUTES OF CLASS; OR AS HOMEWORK):

See Sunday morning's lesson

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