

Fishers of Men

1st - 3rd Grade
Lesson 6

The Disciples of Christ

Peter, Andrew, James, John, Philip, Thomas, Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, Thaddeus, Simon, Judas, and Bartholomew. Do you know who these 12 men were? They were Jesus' disciples. They are also called *apostles*. Jesus asked them to follow Him. He wanted them to know He is God. He wanted them to trust Him and obey Him. They would need to tell people about Him after He went back to Heaven. Our lesson today tells us about these 12 disciples.

Who Were the Apostles?

What kind of men do you think Jesus chose to be His disciples? Were they rich? Were they famous? Were they very smart? No. They were ordinary men. They were men who would follow Jesus.

These 12 men were workers. They had jobs. Four of them were fishermen: Peter, Andrew, James, and John. Peter and Andrew were "mending their nets" when Jesus called them. (Matthew 4:18, 19) Matthew was a tax collector. He was at work when Jesus called him.

All 12 of the apostles followed Jesus when He called them. They just stopped what they were doing and followed Him. Peter and Andrew "straightway left their nets, and followed him" (Matthew 4:20). James and John "left their father Zebedee in the ship...and went after him" (Mark 1:20). Matthew "arose and followed him" (Matthew 9:9). Peter said in Matthew 19:27, "Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee."

What Did They Do?

Jesus told His Father that the apostles believed what He told them:

For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them.

—John 17:8

It pleases God when we trust Him. When we trust God, we have faith in Him. Hebrews 11:6 tells us that we cannot please God if we don't have faith in Him. It pleased God that the apostles had faith in Him.

The apostles believed that Jesus is God's Son. Many people followed Jesus everywhere He went. They wanted to see Him do miracles. They saw Jesus heal people who were sick. They saw Him make blind people see. They even saw Jesus raise Lazarus from the dead. But when Jesus told them they were sinners, they went away. They didn't want to hear about that. Jesus asked the disciples, "Will ye also go away?" (John 6:67) But Peter answered for all the disciples. He said,

Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.

—John 6:68, 69

All of the disciples, except one, believed in Jesus and followed Him. Do you know which one betrayed Jesus? It was Judas Iscariot. He did not really believe in Jesus. But the other 11 apostles really believed Jesus. They knew He was their Savior. After Jesus went back to Heaven, the disciples chose a new disciple to take Judas' place. His name was Matthias. Now there were 12 apostles again. They went everywhere telling people about Jesus. Many people believed the disciples and accepted Jesus as their Savior.

Conclusion

Would you want to walk from city to city with Jesus? Would you want to hear Him preach? Would you want to be one of Jesus' disciples?

You can be! Just believe God's Word and obey Him. Tell everyone you meet about Jesus. Tell them He loves them and died to pay for their sins. Tell them they can be saved if they believe in Him. Then you will be Jesus' disciple too.

Teacher's Notes
