

LESSON PLAN

BE A WITNESS FOR JESUS

Matthew 4:19

Lesson Memory Verse: Matthew 4:19 “And He said to them, Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.”

Lesson Aim: Teach the children how to be witnesses for Jesus Christ.

Lesson Plan: Use the KEY – HE – SEE – WE – BE plan (explained in the Introductory Notes).

KEY (for Attention): Many years ago in Europe, a godly Christian named Count Zinzendorf met an old Jewish rabbi named Rabbi Abraham. The Count took the old man’s hand and smiled kindly and respectfully. “Gray hairs are a crown of glory,” he said looking at the rabbi. “You must have much experience and wisdom! I love your God, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. In His Name, let us be friends.”

The old Jew was surprised. Most people were very unkind to Jews. They wouldn’t talk to them at all, or if they did, it would be to tell them to get out of their way. Yet here was a Christian who was showing love and kindness. The old man was so touched that his eyes filled with tears and his lips trembled.

Rabbi Abraham and Count Zinzendorf became good friends. Often the Count would go to the rabbi’s house and eat black bread with him for supper. Finally, because Count Zinzendorf’s life shone for the Lord, the old rabbi said to him, “Friend, I have long been searching for light.” Then Count Zinzendorf was able to show him that Jesus is the Son of God, the Messiah promised to the Jews. And Rabbi Abraham believed and accepted Jesus – the same Jesus who changed Zinzendorf’s heart and made him kind to a Jew when others would have nothing to do with him.

Wouldn’t you like to be like Count Zinzendorf and let others see Jesus in your life? The Bible tells us what we must do to be different so others can see Him in our lives and trust Him as their Savior. Please open your Bibles to Matthew 4:19.

HE (for Authority): One day as Jesus was walking along the shore, He saw Peter and Andrew. They were busy fishing, but Jesus had other plans for them – much more exciting plans. “Follow me!” He called to them, “And I will make you fishers of men!” Jesus wanted Peter and Andrew to leave their fishing nets and He would teach them how to fish for men by showing them how to be saved from their sins. Fishing for fish was an important job, but “fishing for men” – telling them the good news about Jesus was a far more important job. Today, if you are saved, Jesus wants you to “follow” Him and learn from Him how you can win others to Him. Would you like to see your friends ask Jesus to save them? We are going to see what we must do if we want the Lord to carry out His promise and make each of us a “fisher of men” (a witness, a soul winner).

SEE (for Apperception) and WE (for Application): PLEASE do not read these comments until you have read the Scripture for this lesson. First let the Holy Spirit teach you directly from His Word. In Matthew 4:19 Jesus gave a command and a promise. In our lesson today we will see just what Jesus expects of us, and what He said He would do for those who obey Him.

OUTLINE OF THE DOCTRINE

I. Jesus’ Command: “Follow Me.”

A. A follower must know Jesus is his Savior – 1 Jn 5:11-13.

A follower must know that he is on the road that leads to Heaven before he can be a fisher of men.

B. A follower learns from Jesus on how to witness – Mt 10; Jn 3, 4, 9.

Jesus taught His disciples many aspects of witnessing and what to expect when they did it. Matthew wrote them in his gospel. John gave several examples of Jesus’ witnessing in his gospel: Nicodemus, the Samaritan woman and the man born blind.

C. A follower must give his body to make him a witness – Rom 8 29; 12:1-2.

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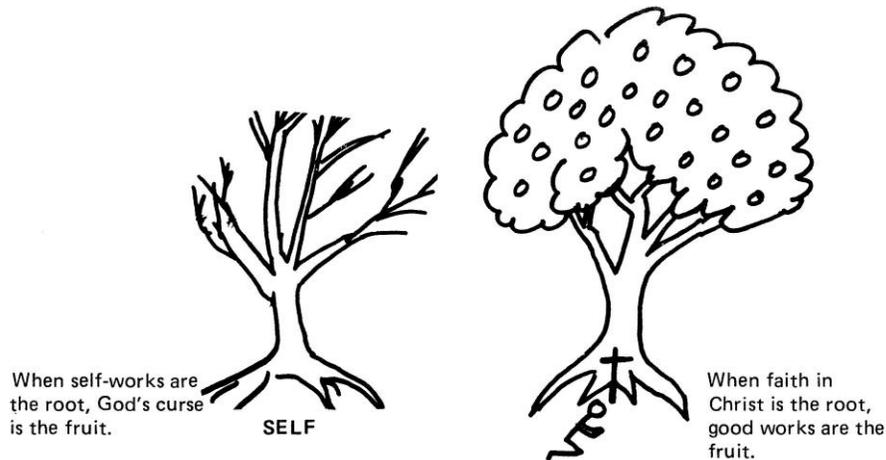
He must present his body as a living sacrifice so he can effectively witness to lost sinners. He must not be like the world, but he must seek to be like Jesus. Then he will be a good witness and he will know where God wants him to witness for Him in the world.

II. Jesus' Promise: "I will make you fishers of men."

A. A believer cannot witness in his own power – Jn 15:5

A believer must trust in Christ for power to bring souls to salvation or he will fail.

Whiteboard idea for older grades:



B. A believer has the Holy Spirit to give him power to witness – Acts 1:8

Christ gives the Holy Spirit to believers and He dwells in them (1 Cor 6:19). The Holy Spirit works in believers to want to witness and to do it (Phil 2:13). A witness is someone who tells what he sees, hears or knows (like a witness at an auto accident). The Holy Spirit uses the Word to bring about the new birth in sinners (Jn 3:5; 1 Pet 1:23).

C. A believer must witness so the Holy Spirit can convict sinners – Jn 16:7-11

As a **believer** witnesses for Jesus, the Holy Spirit will work in the hearts of the people to convict them of their sins and their need to have Jesus as their Savior. A believer needs some questions to start a conversation with a sinner: Do you believe in Heaven and Hell? Where do you think you will go when you die? Why do you think you will go there? Could I show you from your Bible how you can be sure of going to Heaven?

A believer needs a basic plan of salvation in mind: **(1)** All people are born sinners—Rom 3:23. **(2)** Jesus loves us and died for sinners—Rom 5:8. **(3)** We have a choice to make—sin and death or Jesus and life—Rom 6:23. **(4)** Call on Jesus to save you from sin and death and He will give you life—Romans 10:13.

A believer needs one or two visual tracts to give to sinners. Give the children some gospel tracts with visual aids that they can use in witnessing, such as The Royal Road to Heaven or The Gospel Hand.

D. A believer can get help from Jesus in witnessing – Jn 14:14; 15:16

Jesus promises a believer who tries to witness to lost sinners that He will answer his prayers so he can bring some souls to salvation that will remain true believers. If he has any problems, he can pray and Jesus will give him whatever he needs.

Peter: He was a fisherman. Jesus called Peter to follow Him. Peter obeyed. Jesus worked with him and made him into a fisher of men who preached a sermon where 3000 people came to receive Jesus as their Savior. He did that by the power of the Holy Spirit. Peter himself could not have done it by himself.

WE: We have the Holy Spirit to give us power, too. Let us pray that He will give us power to win souls to Jesus Christ as well.

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APPLICATIONS OF THE DOCTRINE

Jim swung his hoe over his shoulder, left the garden and headed for the house. His forehead was damp and his face flushed with heat, but his eyes were shining. As he walked across the neatly trimmed lawn, he was still singing, "I will make you fishers of men, fishers of men, fishers of men. I will make you fishers of men, if you follow Me." He had learned that song at Sunday school the week before, and he really liked the tune.

Mother was watching from the window. She loved Jim very much and was proud of him. He was a hard worker – and a cheerful one. The Lord Jesus certainly had made a difference in Jim's life since he had been saved last autumn. He had been reading his Bible each day and praying. He was a good helper at home most of the time, too. Of course, Jim was far from perfect. He did wrong things and had to be punished, but Mother knew he loved the Lord and wanted to serve Him. (What would your mother say? Can she see that you love the Lord? Or are you selfish and unkind at home?)

Mother noticed Jim's mouth moving and wondered what he was singing. He was always singing some happy song. Mother swung the porch door open and greeted Jim. "My, you look hot, dear! How about a glass of ice-cold grape juice?"

"That sounds great, Mom," Jim smiled. "I'll be right in."

As Jim sat at the table sipping his juice, Mother asked him, "What was that chorus you were singing as you came up to the house?" At first, Jim was surprised. "Was I singing? Oh, I guess I was. I was singing 'I will make you fishers of men.' We learned that last week at Sunday school. It has a dandy tune."

"Yes," agreed Mother. "The tune is very nice. But I like the message of the chorus best. Have you ever thought about what it means?"

"No," Jim answered. "I guess I really haven't." He sat quietly poking an ice cube in his glass with a straw. "Well..." he said finally, "I think it means that Jesus will use us to win other people to Him if we obey Him."

"That's exactly right," Mother replied. "Isn't that a wonderful promise? Songs mean a lot more when we think of their meanings, don't they?"

Later that night as Jim sat on his bed with his Bible, he was still thinking about the song and his talk with Mother. When he knelt to pray, he asked the Lord to help him to be obedient, and then to make that promise real in his life. It surely would be thrilling to be a "fisher of men." Three weeks of school were left before summer vacation. Perhaps the Lord could use him there.

The next morning, Jim listened while his teacher, Mr. Tucker, explained something called "evolution." Some people actually believed that the world was millions and millions of years old and that life had begun as an accident! They believed that from one little living cell, all of the plants and animals in the world, and even man, had come! As Jim listened, he was troubled inside. Mr. Tucker seemed to think that evolution was true. But Jim knew it couldn't be. Jim raised his hand.

"Yes, Jim. Did you have a question?" Mr. Tucker asked.

"Well, Mr. Tucker, I just wanted to say that the Bible teaches something different from evolution. God created the world and all of the plants and animals in one week. In that same week He made the first man and woman. It says so in Genesis."

Mr. Tucker grinned. "Well, Jim, that is a possibility, I guess. But which would you rather believe: an old book like the Bible or all of our new modern science books?"

All of the children were very quiet. They were waiting for Jim to answer. Danny, the boy who sat next to Jim listened closely. He had often wondered what to believe – the Bible or evolution. The Holy Spirit gave Jim the words to say to his teacher and to say them with His power.

"Sir," Jim began respectfully, "I know that the modern science books were written by very smart men, but men don't know everything. The Bible is God's Word, and God knows everything there is to know. I would rather stick with God's Word, the Bible, and trust what it says. Men's ideas are often wrong, but God is never wrong."

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Mr. Tucker was surprised. He had never thought of things quite that way. He did not know much about the Bible. He admired Jim very much for standing up for what he believed, but Mr. Tucker didn't say that. Instead he simply said, "Well, Jim, you may believe what you like."

Mr. Tucker went on with the lesson, but Danny kept thinking about what Jim had said. It made more sense to believe God than to believe men. But Danny didn't know what God said. He didn't know anything about the Bible.

After class Danny stopped Jim. "Hey, Jim. How do you know so much about Bible? You must be very religious."

"I'm not 'religious,' Danny, but I am a Christian. I've accepted Jesus Christ as my Savior and I'm trusting Him to take me to Heaven. Since the Bible is God's Word and is the only book that tells me how to serve the Lord Jesus, I read it and go to church and Sunday school to study it. Do you go to church, Danny?"

"No, not usually," Danny shrugged.

"Would you like to come with me this Sunday?" asked Jim.

"Okay. I think my Mom will let me. I'll ask her."

All week Jim and his family prayed for Danny. That Sunday Danny went to church with Jim. He went the next Sunday, too. During the week Danny asked Jim lots of questions about the Bible, and finally one day after Jim had shown him some verses about receiving Jesus as Savior, Danny bowed his head and asked the Lord to forgive his sins and save him.

Jim was very, very happy. That night as the family met together for prayer and the reading of the Bible, he chose the chorus, "Fishers of Men." After they had sung it, Jim told Mom and Dad how the Lord had answered his prayer by saving Danny. Mother hugged Jim. "Songs mean a lot more when we put them into practice, don't they, Jim?"

"They surely do!" smiled Jim. "And this is one song I want the Lord to make true for my whole life! It's great to be used by the Lord Jesus to win others to Him!"

WE: We can be like Jim. We can be fishers of boys and girls for the Lord Jesus. Can we think of some ways we can follow Jesus so that we can be soul winners?

1. What are some ways in which Jim followed Jesus? (Here are a few suggested answers from the story: Jim became a Christian. Jim obeyed the Lord by reading his Bible and praying. He helped at home. He was cheerful. He went to Sunday school and church to learn.)

WE: We must pray, read the Bible, go to church to learn God's Word and try to obey what He tells us.

2. What are some ways Jim witnessed for the Lord? (Jim stood up for the Bible at school. He invited his friend to church. He prayed for Danny. He talked to Danny about the Bible. He showed Danny verses about salvation. He led Danny to receive Jesus as Savior.)

WE: We must love Jesus and the Bible and want to tell others what we know about Him and the Bible.

3. How was Jim able to be so bold in his class? How did he know what to say to Danny? (Jesus has given the Holy Spirit to all who have received Him as their Savior. He makes us bold and gives us the words to say.)

WE: We must depend on the Spirit; He will make us bold and teach us what to say.

4. How did Jim know that he should witness to his teacher and then to Danny? (Jesus led him by giving him an opportunity to speak up in class, and He led Danny to come to Him.)

WE: We will be given opportunities to witness for Jesus, if we are bold in the Lord. He will also help us know what to say. He will train us as we witness and depend on Him.

BE (for Action): Can you think of someone you could witness to this week? Who will be willing to obey the Lord this week and try to be a good witness for Him? (Have them raise their hands. Pray for those who raised their hands.)