

Sunday 22nd March 2026
Jesus calls who to follow Him?
Matthew 4: 18-22

Welcome

- What's your best memory of Christmas 2025?
- What's your favourite incident from Jesus' early life and ministry and why? (Passages we have looked at include: Presentation at the Temple, Jesus aged 12 visiting the Temple, John the Baptist & Jesus, Jesus tempted by the Devil in the wilderness, Jesus preaching in his home town Nazareth, Turning water into wine)

Word

(Alternative Bible readings in different gospels are suggested throughout this sheet – there is no need to read these, they are just for information)

Simon, Andrew, James & John

Read Matthew 4: 18-22 (also in Mark 1: 16-20)

1. Do any words in these verses suggest how quickly these 4 men responded? What do you think about this? Would you be the same?
2. What does it mean today to 'leave your nets' and follow Jesus? What would (or did) it mean for you?
3. What did Jesus mean by 'fishing for people'? Is it a good analogy? Why or why not?
4. Besides their nets, what else did they leave behind in these verses?
5. Why do you think Jesus chose fishermen—regular working people—as his first followers rather than educated religious leaders?

Matthew

Read Matthew 9: 9-13 (also in Mark 2: 13-14)

6. If you had been Jesus, would you have chosen an unpopular person to be your disciple? Why do you think Jesus did? What does it tell us about who Jesus calls?
7. What groups today generate hatred like tax collectors? How would you react if someone like that joined our church?
8. Matthew left his job but not his friends to follow Jesus (Matt. 9:10), Jesus joins in with Matthew & his friends. New Christians often have more connections with non-Christians than those who've been to church for longer. What can we learn from Jesus' approach to this?
9. Are there ways that we can 'bring our friends to Jesus'? Talk about practical ways you can do this – you might be able to help each other.
10. Is it easy to judge other people's sins rather than accepting who they are & sharing Jesus with them? How can we do better?

Andrew & another disciple

Read John 1: 35-42

11. Think about this story from John the Baptist's point of view. How would he have felt? What does the way he 'let them go' tell us about his character and mission?
12. How powerful is a personal invitation to Jesus – like Andrew shared with his brother Simon?
13. Is your faith based on a personal encounter with Jesus (direct experience) or are you relying on someone else's knowledge and relationship with Jesus?
14. What does it look like in our 21st-century culture to truly follow Jesus, rather than just knowing *about* him?

Phillip & Nathanael

Read John 1: 43-49

15. When Nathanael questions if anything good can come from Nazareth, Philip replies "Come and see." How does this approach work better than arguing, and what does it tell us about bringing friends to Jesus?

List of 12

The list in Matthew 10:1-4 is as follows: (also in Mark 3:16-19 & Acts 1:13)

1. Simon (Peter)
 2. Andrew (brother of Simon)
 3. James (son of Zebedee)
 4. John (brother of James, 'sons of thunder')
 5. Philip
 6. Nathanael (Bartholomew)
 7. Thomas (doubting)
 8. Matthew (tax collector also called Levi)
 9. James (son of Alphaeus)
 10. Thaddaeus (also known as Judas son of James)
 11. Simon (the Zealot)
 12. Judas Iscariot
16. Are there any disciples here that you have never heard of?

Women disciples

Read Luke 8:1-3

17. How did the inclusion of women like Mary Magdalene, Joanna, and Susanna challenge the cultural norms of the time regarding rabbis and women?
18. What does it show about Jesus' character that he allowed women to support his ministry, including the financial aspects?
19. Can you think of times in the gospels where women played an important role in Jesus' life?

20. Are there groups of people today that need to be included more in church life?

Optional Extra

Read 1 Corinthians 1: 26-31

21. What do these verses tell us about the types of people God calls and why?
22. Do we know any examples of 'weak' or 'foolish' things being used by God?
23. How does the world's definition of success (power, wisdom, status) contrast with the characteristics God chooses?
24. How do these verses redefine 'success' for a Christian?
25. Why is it so difficult for human beings not to boast in their own achievements, even within the church?
26. Is there any part of your life where you need to move from self-reliance to relying on God?
27. How does knowing your calling is entirely initiated by God (v. 30) impact your confidence?

Worship & Witness

- What can you do this week to be more open to God's call, to listen to his voice?
- Is God calling you to do something that means leaving something behind?
- Do you need to speak to someone about God's call on your life?
- Who is a "Simon" in your life—someone you feel prompted to invite to "come and see" Jesus? Pray that you will grasp hold of this opportunity and that they will be receptive.