

SUMMER FRIENDSHIP GATHERINGS

2023 SUMMER FRIENDSHIP GATHERING

LARGE GROUP LESSON, DAY 1

- Summer Friendship Gathering events lasts three evenings and each evening is divided into three parts: fellowship meal, worship time with a large group lesson, and small group discussion. On the last evening there is a closing worship service, which replaces the Large Group Bible Lesson and Small Group Discussion time.
- As you start preparing your lesson a good place to start is to pray asking the Holy Spirit to give you insight and direction.
- You will find an illustrated sample video for this Day 1 Bible Lesson [Called to Follow](#), along with the other Summer Friendship Gathering training videos. You are encouraged to watch this video as you plan your lesson.
- The theme for this year's Summer Friendship Gathering is "**Called Out of Your Boat.**" We are not actually talking about getting out of our blow-up kayak or luxury yacht, but we are going to study how we can eagerly jump out of our old way of doing things and what we want to do. Instead, Jesus is calling each of us to go and do the things He wants us to do. We join Jesus in His mission.

(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)



2023 SUMMER FRIENDSHIP GATHERING

LARGE GROUP LESSON, DAY 1 CONTINUED

- This week we will be studying Peter's journey to follow Jesus' calling on his life. We will be talking a lot about how we are also called to follow Jesus and love one another.
- Our theme verse for these three lessons comes from John 12:26 (NIRV) ***"Anyone who serves me must follow me. And where I am, my servant will also be. My Father will honor the one who serves me."***
- During all three of our lessons, we will have a buzz word. The buzz word is "I'm Called." Everyone is to shout out "I'm Called!" every time the large group leader says the word "Call, Calls, Called, or Calling! Have the friends practice. **(Leader says)** "Jesus **calls** each of us." **(Everybody shouts out)** ***"I'm Called!"*** Encourage everyone to listen carefully and shout loudly.
- Have you ever been called out? Singled out to do a job? Or called on to help someone in need? We titled today's lesson "Called to Follow," because we are going to see how Jesus called Peter to follow him out of his boat and to join Him in accomplishing His mission. Remember to listen for our buzz word, "I'm Called." **(Make sure everyone is shouting out the buzz word).**
- Our theme Bible verse for the Day 1 lesson is Luke 5:11. ***"So they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed Him."***
- In this Bible lesson we will learn how Peter hears God's Word taught from Jesus' own mouth from his boat. Jesus asked Peter to do something that didn't make sense. But when he obeyed Jesus, Peter witnessed a miracle that landed him a boat load of fish. He left everything to follow Jesus, to become a fisher of men.

(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

2023 SUMMER FRIENDSHIP GATHERING

LARGE GROUP LESSON, DAY 1 CONTINUED

- Our story starts out with Andrew and Peter. They were fisherman in the area where Jesus was teaching. They had been fishing all night but caught nothing. Jesus found them cleaning their nets.
- Jesus saw their boats near the shore and decided to get in one of the boats which belonged to Peter. He asked Peter to take the boat out a little from the shore so the people could hear him better. Jesus then taught the crowds the Word of God.
- After Jesus finished teaching the people, he wanted to teach Peter something. The Bible says, he turned to Peter and said, “Go out into deep water. Let down the nets so you can catch some fish.”
- Jesus is now calling them to put their nets back in the water after they wasted a full night not catching any fish. They were tired! They had already cleaned their nets and now they will have to clean them again!
- You can hear Peter’s frustration when he answered, “Master, we’ve worked hard all night and haven’t caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets.”
- ***This may be a good time to ask the friends if they have ever had a bad day, when nothing seemed to go right, like Peter.***
- ***Did Jesus ask them to do something that didn’t make sense to them?***
- Jesus wants to be involved in our everyday lives. In our frustrating times as well as when things are going well.

(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

2023 SUMMER FRIENDSHIP GATHERING

LARGE GROUP LESSON, DAY 1 CONTINUED

- The story continues, to their surprise, as soon as they let down their nets, they caught a huge number of fish! So many that their nets were at the point of breaking.
- This had to be the best catch of their fishing career! This was a miracle of God!
- When Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus' knees. "Go away from me, Lord!" he said. "I am a sinful man!"
- ***A good question to ask is if they have ever had a sinful heart or felt guilty. And maybe think they couldn't talk to God or be close to Him?***
- **The Bible says in Romans 3:23 Everyone has sinned. No one measures up to God's glory. But if you have trusted Jesus, you have the Holy Spirit in your heart. Jesus lives in us through the Holy Spirit.**
- The Holy Spirit, which is the Spirit of God, shows us our sin and helps us repent and turn away from our sin. And just like Jesus was in the boat with Peter, through His Holy Spirit, He lives within us. Jesus promises He will never leave us.
- ***It is important you make the point that Jesus wants to be in relationship with us because He loves us.***
- Jesus loved Peter and He said to him **"Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching men instead of fish!" Luke 5:10.**

(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

2023 SUMMER FRIENDSHIP GATHERING

LARGE GROUP LESSON, DAY 1 CONTINUED

- Peter knew he was a sinner, but Jesus still called him out of his boat. He called him from being a fisherman to become a fisher of men. He wanted Peter to follow Him, to join Him in His mission to the world.
- Just like Peter, Jesus calls all of us out of our everyday lives to follow Him and be part of His mission. We are all privileged to be called by Jesus! We get to be part of Jesus' work in world.
- ***Here would be a good time to ask what it means for us to be part of Jesus' mission in the world. Ask them how they may be part of His mission right now.***
- Some of us can teach or tell a friend about Jesus. We can stop and pray with a friend or anyone in need. We can pray for our neighbors or housemates that they would love Jesus. We can encourage others when they're sad or struggling with something. We can generously give our time and money to people in need.
- But we can't do this on our own. We need help. Jesus equips and helps us with this work through the Holy Spirit.
- The Bible says after they pulled their boats up on shore, they left everything to follow Jesus.

(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

2023 SUMMER FRIENDSHIP GATHERING

LARGE GROUP LESSON, DAY 1 CONTINUED

- *You can end the lesson by asking our friends what are some things that they **have** left behind or **need** to leave behind to follow Jesus.*
- There are four main points to be made in this lesson. It will be important that each of these points are covered in your lesson because they will be part of the discussion questions.

1. The first point is that Jesus wants us to trust Him when He asks us to do something we don't understand.

You can ask our friends if they have ever had a bad day when nothing seemed to go right.

Sometimes we may think that Jesus only calls us to do things we understand or things that make sense to us.

Often Jesus wants to teach us like He did Peter, that we can trust Him in those situations. When we trust Him and not ourselves, He will show us that He is trustworthy and a good God.

2. The second point is the presence of the Holy Spirit reveals our sinfulness and need for a Savior.

Seeing this miracle catch of fish and being in the presence of Jesus, Peter became aware of his sinful heart. Faced with his sin, he didn't think he could be close to Jesus. But Jesus was already close to him. He was sitting right there in his boat.

3. The third point to remember is, how can we also be fishers of men (or people) and join Jesus' work in the world?

Jesus calls all of us to join Him. Some of us can teach or tell a friend about Jesus. We can stop and pray with a friend or anyone in need.

(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

2023 SUMMER FRIENDSHIP GATHERING

LARGE GROUP LESSON, DAY 1 CONTINUED

We can encourage others when they're sad or going through a hard time. We can give to people in need.

4. The last point to ask is, what are things we are willing to leave behind to follow Jesus?

We can skip watching TV so we can go to Friendship Group. Give up a nap so we can help someone with a chore? Maybe, leave behind our fear. Ask God to give you courage to pray with someone?

It is important that our friends understand that not only does Jesus call us to join Him in his mission, but because he loves us, He calls us into relationship with Him through the Holy Spirit.

- As you plan out the flow of your lesson, you can choose to use, or not use the optional skit or object lesson. These resources can be used before your first telling of the story or afterwards. This is up to you.
- It is important to find more than one way to tell the story about Jesus calling Peter. Visuals and illustrations will help with learning. Most people learn best if the lesson combines different techniques, or modes of learning. Remember, you have access to the PowerPoint slides of the story provided on the flash drive with the curriculum and on our website.
- You should also review the Discussion Group Leader's Guide for the detailed questions and sub-questions that will be asked on Day 1.

(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

2023 SUMMER FRIENDSHIP GATHERING

LARGE GROUP LESSON, DAY 1 CONTINUED

- Before you finalize your lesson, be sure to incorporate these Day 1 Discussion Questions into the Large Group Bible Lesson. It is best to reinforce the main points with our adult friends. This helps them with a smoother transition into the small group discussion time which follows the large group lesson.
- Be sure to incorporate these Day 1 Discussion Questions into the Large Group Bible Lesson. It is better to reinforce the main points with our adult friends to help with a smoother transition into the small group discussions which follow the large lesson.
- Thank you for your willingness to lead the Day 1 lesson. You are encouraged to review the Large Group Leaders Guide found on the Connection Ministries website next to the training video.