

Elementary

Small Group

Day 1



Today's Bible Story

Jesus calls His disciples. Luke 5:1-11

Bottom Line

Jesus invites us to follow Him.

Memory Verse

John 14:6 (NirV): "Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'"

Small Group Leader Guide Day 1
Kingdom Quest VBS



TOKENS

This year, our kids will participate in a Token Challenge! To recognize and encourage meaningful participation and positive behavior, we will be rewarding kids with tokens throughout VBS!

- **Who is giving out tokens?** All of our volunteers will receive tokens to reward kids as they catch them engaging well in VBS.
- **What are we doing with the tokens?** Kids will work together to reach an Overall Token Goal and receive a celebration on the last night of VBS! Tokens are used to reward kids for remarkable expressions of love, kindness, great listening, participation, and memorizing our Bottom Line and Bible verse!
- **When are we passing out tokens?** Immediately! We want to help kids connect their positive attitudes, behaviors, and participation with the reward of the token, so as soon as you see a behavior to celebrate, pass out the reward!
- **Where are we getting tokens from?** We will have tokens available for all volunteers at check-in each night. As we use up our stash, there will be designated spots to go to for more throughout the night.
- **How do we distribute tokens?** Our volunteers will keep their eyes and ears tuned in to our kids so they can immediately reward them with a token to celebrate what we want repeated! They will praise the specific behavior that earned the reward when we give them their token. For example:
 - Active engagement during each rotation
 - Invite kids to "Show Me What You Know!" and let them earn a token by sharing the memory verse, finishing the lyrics to a worship song, sharing today's "Main Point", etc.
 - Displays of the fruit of the spirit - love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, self-control, gentleness
 - Demonstrating good manners, listening attentively, and following instructions the first time they're asked
 - Being respectful to volunteers, peers, and the VBS environment.
- **When do kids turn in their tokens?** There will be buckets available at each rotation for kids to drop their tokens in. All tokens will be brought to the closing session and combined so we can see how we're progressing towards our goal each night!
- **Remember, the goal of using tokens is to reinforce positive behaviors, encourage active participation, and create a fun and rewarding experience for all kids attending VBS.** Thank you for your commitment to making VBS a memorable and impactful event!



SHARING THE GOSPEL WITH KIDS

The Goal: Consistent, Frequent, and Low-Pressure

Kids can trust Christ as Savior, and many of them do! Often, the ones who trust Him have heard consistent and frequent explanations of the gospel at home and church. However, young children are very eager to please adults, so we must be careful of what we say and how we present the Gospel. The child should take the initiative. We will avoid directly asking a child if he or she wants to trust Christ as Savior, unless the child has been asking questions and showing clear signs of readiness to make this decision. We will also avoid invitations where kids raise their hand or come to the front of the room to show their desire to trust Christ. Not only do children want to please adults, but they are also prone to copy the behavior of other children. Instead, we will give children the opportunity to talk to a leader or ask questions.

You Are A Gospel Seed Planter

Overall, you should see your evangelistic role as a gospel seed planter. You are laying a foundation of biblical truth and repeating the gospel message clearly, consistently and frequently, so kids will be prepared to understand and receive the gospel when they are ready. Children often need to hear the gospel message many times before they can understand and respond to it.



God Created

You were created on purpose by a powerful and loving God to belong to His family. In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. He made the sun, moon, stars, land, oceans, and every living thing, and He created people in His own image. God made us to know Him, love Him, and live in relationship with Him. He is not only our Creator but also the King over everything, and everything He made was very good.



We Sinned

We chose our way, instead of God's way. God gave Adam and Eve everything they needed, but they chose to disobey Him and believed a lie instead of trusting His word. Sin is anything we think, say, or do that goes against God, and ever since that first choice, every person has sinned and fallen short of God's glory. Because God is holy, sin separates us from Him and deserves death, and we cannot fix this problem on our own. But the good news is that God made a way to rescue us, even though we did not deserve it.



Jesus Saves

God made a way. When sin entered the world, God promised to send a Savior, and at just the right time He sent His Son, Jesus. Jesus is fully God and fully human, lived a perfect life, taught about God's Kingdom, and even though He had done nothing wrong, He died on the cross to take the punishment for our sins. Three days later He rose from the dead, defeating sin and death, and because of Him our sins can be forgiven and we can have eternal life as God's gift.



We Choose

God does not force anyone to follow Him. He invites us, and because of what Jesus has done, each of us must choose how we will respond. To follow Jesus means we believe He is Lord and Savior, admit that we have sinned, and turn from our sin to trust Him alone for forgiveness. When we do, God forgives us, welcomes us into His family, gives us the Holy Spirit to help us grow, and begins a new life of trusting, obeying, and telling others about Him.

Jesus Invites Us to Follow Him

Today's Bible Story

Jesus calls His disciples. Luke 5:1-11

Bottom Line

Jesus invites us to follow Him.

Key Question

Who is Jesus?

Theme

CALLED



Preparing for the Day

Set up the room:

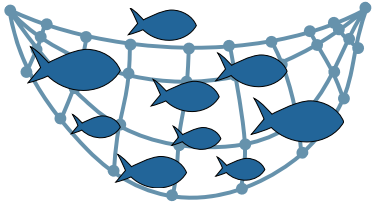
- Arrange crews at tables or floor circles so each crew faces the leader and each other.
- Divide Kingdom Quest booklets by crew so they are easy to pass out. Two versions: K-1 (picture prompts, stickers) and 2-5 (short journal prompts).
- Dim lights a bit and keep a battery LED or lamp handy to reveal hidden messages.
- Prepare the fish and nets for Bible Story Review.
- Display the Kingdom Quest Chant and Bottom Line Posters where kids can see.
- Have craft station set ready and nearby.

Tips for leaders:

- Reinforce the Bottom Line: **Jesus invites us to follow Him.** Use the phrase often.
- Keep it active and visual. Use gameboard or quest language and actions when possible. Get creative!
- Use short call and repeat phrases to maintain energy:
 - **Leader:** "Follow the path!"
Kids repeat: "Follow the path!"
 - **Leader:** "Quest on!"
Kids repeat: "Quest on!"
 - I can tell you're ready to learn. Thank you for showing me with your eyes forward and your mouths closed.
 - Questers - I need your body still and your voice off.
- Use movement: Have kids stand for answers, use hand motions, repeat key words and phrases.
- Give short, specific choices rather than open questions.
- Praise bravery/positive behavior: *"I like how you tried that even though it felt a little scary."*
- Use Crew Leaders and Assistant Leaders.
 - Give clear instructions to the other leaders in the room, too! They won't know how to help unless you tell them.

Kingdom Quest booklets:

- Each kid will have a daily Kingdom Quest Booklet.
- The booklet has the Lesson Recap, Memory Verse, space for prayer/reflection, and a back page with information for parents.
- There is a version for younger and older kids.
- Encourage kids to show their parents their booklets each day and challenge them to retell the story.
- They will tear off the bottom portion and receive a sticker if they completed the devotion with their parents.



What You Need

- dimmable lantern or flashlight
- Optional soft background wind or ocean sound
- Day 1 Bottom Line Poster (1/station)



Welcome (1-2 minutes)

Welcome, Kingdom Quest Crew! I'm [name], your Crew Guide today. Take a few moments to introduce kids to small group and set expectations.

This week we are on a quest to discover God's Kingdom. We will follow Jesus and learn how He invites us, leads us, saves us, calls us, and sends us. Today's Bottom Line is: **Jesus invites us to follow Him!** Repeat it with me: **Jesus invites us to follow Him!**

Opening Activity (1-3 minutes)

Before the Light

How You Prepare

- Enlist an assistant to volunteer to control the lights of the room.
- Set a dimmable lantern close to where you will be leading.
- Attach the Bottom Line Poster to the wall where kids can see. Each day, you will add one until all 4 are on the wall.

What You Do

- Dim the room lights
- Start with the lantern/flashlight very dim, as you speak, it will grow brighter, emphasizing how Jesus lights our way.

What You Say

Before we start today's story, I want everyone to look right here. Turn the lantern on, but keep it low and dim.

Have you ever tried really hard at something... and it just didn't work? Maybe you studied, but the test was still hard. Maybe you practiced a sport or instrument, but you still messed up during the performance. Maybe you tried to do the right thing, but you still got angry and hurt someone.

That feeling is called frustration. Now imagine someone asks you to wait... and try again. pause.

Waiting can feel hard. Waiting takes patience. You can get tired of trying, and sometimes, when you can't see what's going to happen next, it's hard to trust that anything good is going to happen. Slowly increase the light slightly.

What You Need

- Small fishing net, blue cloth or table cloth 2/crew/rotation
- mini fish (plush or squishies) 1/kid
- props for leader (fisherman hat/fishing pole)
- Kingdom Quest Chant Poster (1/station)



In today's story, Peter felt all three things. Frustrated. Tired. Unsure. Before anything amazing happened... Peter had to decide whether to trust Jesus.

Increase the light slightly.

A light helps us see where we're going. Jesus does the same thing. He helps us see the way—even when we don't understand yet.

Increase the light to full brightness.

Let's remember what happened when Peter trusted Jesus and followed the light.

Today we are learning that **Jesus invites us to follow Him**. Point to today's Bottom Line Poster. That's our Bottom Line today. When Jesus tells us to follow, He knows the path and is leading us. Great work, everyone!

Bible Story Review (3–5 minutes)

How You Prepare

- Place props where they are easy to reach.
- Prepare 1 "net" per crew that is empty, and 1 "net" per crew that is full of fish.
- Recommended -> wear fisherman hat and have a fishing pole/lantern

What You Do

- Retell today's story in a fun, dynamic way. Use the Bible story pictures as you lead.
- For larger groups, delegate leaders to help pass out nets.
- Give each crew an empty "net."

What You Say

Before we talk about today's story, let's do our Kingdom Quest Chant together. We'll do this each day before Bible Story time and as we are leaving! Repeat after me.

Use hand motions and enthusiasm to add more engagement to this chant.

Jesus invites us to follow Him—I follow His light! (*Kids repeat*)

Called on a quest to do what's right! (*Kids repeat*)

Step by step, I trust and obey! (*Kids repeat*)

His Kingdom grows in me each day! (*Kids repeat*)

In our story today, Peter and his friends had been fishing all night. They were tired and ready to quit.

Then Jesus walks by and tells Peter to push out a little from the shore and let down the nets again. Let's pretend like we are Peter and his friends. Everyone open your nets. Do you have any fish?

Allow kids to answer. Look expectantly around the room.

For younger kids (K-1):

What, no fish! The disciples didn't have any either. Peter said, 'We worked all night, nothing.'

How do you think Peter and his friends felt? Show me with your faces.

Show your best disappointed face and look around at the kids faces.

But he listened to Jesus. He let the nets out one more time. Now, act like you are pulling your net up.

Have kids act out casting nets and pulling them back in. Have leaders around the room ready to hand out the nets full of fish. Or, have them dump the fish dramatically on each crew.

It was amazing! Fish, fish, and more fish! The nets were so full the boats started to sink! Then Jesus said, 'Follow me.' Peter left the boat and followed Jesus.

How do you think they felt now? Show me with your faces.

Model your own expressions of shock, surprise, excitement.

For older kids (2-5):

Uh-oh, looks like you didn't catch any fish. Peter said, 'We worked all night and caught nothing.'

Imagine how Peter and his friends were feeling.

Invite a few kids to answer: **What kind of things do you think they were feeling?**

Even though nothing worked, Peter listened to Jesus. He let the nets out one more time. Let's step into Peter's shoes for a moment. Pretend you're casting the net and pulling it back in one more time.

Have kids act out casting nets and pulling them back in. Have leaders around the room ready to hand out the nets full of fish. Or, have them dump the fish dramatically on each crew.



What You Need

- Quest Log (younger and older) 1/kid
- coloring utensils
- pencils
- stickers
- Small Group Spotify Playlist

Leader Tip:

Slow down and really emphasize these words. Look kids in the eyes, and let the Holy Spirit lead you.



Elementary Small Group Day 1

It was amazing and unbelievable! Fish everywhere! The boats were so full they were almost sinking!

Then Jesus said, 'Follow me.' Peter left the boat and his old life behind to follow Jesus.

Now, think about how Peter must have felt—shocked, amazed, maybe a little nervous? Show me with your face.

Peter left everything he knew to follow a carpenter teacher named Jesus. That was bold trust. Jesus told Peter: *"I will show you a new path."*

Peter followed, his life changed, and so did the world. Jesus is not just a guide. He is the only right and true way.

Invite a few kids to answer:

What would you leave if Jesus asked you to follow?

Prayer & Reflection (3-5 minutes)

How You Prepare

- Put Quest Logs and supplies at each seat.
- Play background music.

What You Do

- Walk kids through Day 1 Quest Log. Younger kids draw Peter leaving the boat. Older kids write a sentence about choosing God's way.
- Give kids a few minutes to write or draw a prayer.
- Close in prayer together.

What You Say

This is your Kingdom Quest Log. Each day, you will get a booklet to document your journey! Today, we learned about how Peter followed Jesus. One of the most special things about Jesus is that He invites us, all of us to follow Him!



No matter who you are, where you came from, or what you have done, God created you for a purpose. He loves you, and He has BIG and GREAT plans for you! Even though we may not understand, all we have to do is follow and obey Him and we get to be a part of His amazing works, like the abundance of fish in today's story when all seemed hopeless!

Let's think about what it means that Jesus invites us.

What You Need

- Bottom Line Label 1/kid
- 8.5x11 blue cardstock (cut in half) 1/kid
- 8in craft sticks (2 / kid)
- Craft netting (cut in 7x5in sections) 1 / kid
- string (cut into ~6 inch pieces) 1/kid
- Small wooden fish (2 inches or less) at least 4 / kid
- Markers or crayons
- Metallic stickers (water, fish, underwater)
- Glue sticks or tape

Leader Tip:

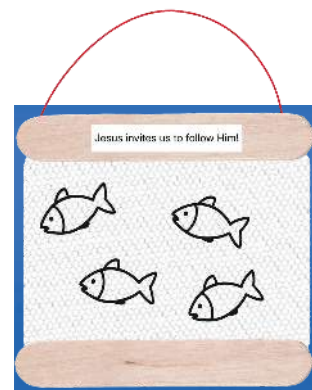
Crew Leaders are your best assistants! Give them specific instructions so they know how to help the kids.

Craft (7-10 minutes)

Fishers of Men

How You Prepare

- Cut blue cardstock in half
- Cut craft netting into 7inx5in sections
- Cut string into 10in pieces
- For younger kids, pre-glue the netting and craft sticks onto the cardstock
- Create an example to show kids



What You Do

- Kids will create a “net full of fish” on their cardstock to remind them of today’s Bible story.
- Give each child a piece of blue cardstock, netting, 2 craft sticks, fish, stickers, and a Bottom Line label.
- Have kids glue the netting onto the center of the cardstock.
- Next, place the two craft sticks across the netting and glue them down to create a frame.
- Let kids color and decorate their fish using markers and stickers.
- Attach the fish onto the netting using glue or tape.
- Add the Bottom Line label to the top or bottom of the page.
- Have leaders help kids attach the string as a handle to the top of their nets using tape.
- Encourage creativity while keeping the focus on the story.

What You Say

Do you remember what amazing thing Jesus did in our story today?
pause **That’s right! Jesus had the power to fill two boats full of fish when they hadn’t been able to catch any at all! Peter decided to leave everything behind to follow Jesus completely. Following Jesus means He shows us the best way to live—loving others, following His truth, choosing kindness, and trusting God no matter what.**

Today we’re going to make our own nets with fish!

Walk around as kids create and ask these questions, prompting kids to discuss with their crews.

1. Why did Jesus care about Peter when he was tired and frustrated?
2. How do you think Jesus felt when Peter chose to listen to Him?
3. What do you think Jesus likes about you?
4. What does this story tell us about what God is like?
5. What do you think it means to follow Jesus every day, not just at church?