**THE CHURCH NEW YORK CITY**

**CHILDREN’S MEETING LESSON**

**DATE:** September 24, 2017

**SUBJECT: GOD’S CALLING IN THE NEW TESTAMENT: In the Gospels—the First Disciples of the Lord Jesus**

**SCRIPTURE:** John 1:35-51

**AIM:** To impress the children that the Lord Jesus desires them to follow Him and He also wants to bring many more to follow Him, including our family, friends and neighbors.

**SUGGESTED MEMORY VERSES:** *We can assign shorter portions for younger children.* Ephesians 6:19 (And for me, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known in boldness the mystery of the gospel,); John 1:43b (The next day He wanted to go forth into Galilee, and He found Philip. **And Jesus said to him, Follow Me.**); John 1:45 (Philip found Nathanael and said to him, **We have found Him** of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, wrote, Jesus, the son of Joseph, from Nazareth.); John 1:46 (And Nathanael said to him, Can anything good be from Nazareth? **Philip said to him, Come and see.**)

**SUGGESTED SONGS:** 89 (Behold What Manner of Love); 190 (I am Called); 153 (Obey His Call); 52 (God is Always Near Me); 2820 (God Will Call You); 36 (Following Jesus); 15 (Walking with Jesus); 37 (I Have Decided to Follow Jesus); 1313 *BSS Matthew CD* (John the Baptist); 2511 (Follow! Follow! I would Follow Jesus); 39 (Step By Step); 9025 *BSS Go Jesus Song #6* (Jesus Passed By the Sea)

**CRAFT IDEAS:** Paper Accordion Disciples—using half a piece of 8.5 x 11 paper, fold it into 4 sections like a fan. Draw a template of a disciple on the topmost side, align the template to both edges of the folds. Cut out the figures so that they are all connecting when the paper is opened. Write Jesus, John the Baptist, Andrew, Peter, Philip, Nathanael, child’s name and a friend on each figure.

**BACKGROUND:**John the Baptist’s birth was very special.  It was prophesied long before in the Old Testament, and it was announced to his father, Zachariah, by an angel of the Lord (Gabriel) before he was conceived. Furthermore, his parents, Zachariah and Elizabeth, were very old to have had a child, especially their first. As a little child, John grew and became strong in spirit, and he was in the wilderness until the day of his presentation to Israel.  John was one called by God. As a prophet of the Most High, he had been sent before the Lord to prepare His way. In the wilderness, John told the people to repent and many did.

About six months after John’s birth, the Lord Jesus Himself was born of Mary in the town of Bethlehem. At about 30 years old, the Lord Jesus was at the point of beginning His earthly ministry. The Savior that John had been preaching about and preparing the people to receive was finally here! Although John had many disciples (followers), he now pointed those disciples to the Lord Jesus.

**CONTENT:** **John baptizes and tells others about Jesus.** John the Baptist was baptizing people in the Jordan River in a place called Bethany (east of the Jordan River). One day John was standing with two of his disciples. He saw the Lord Jesus walking and declared, “Behold the Lamb of God!” The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed the Lord Jesus. Jesus turned and saw them following and said to them, “What are you seeking?” They answered, “Rabbi (or Teacher), where are You staying?” Jesus said to them, “Come, and you will see.” So the two men went with the Lord. They went and saw where He was staying and stayed with Him that day; it was about ten o’clock in the morning. One of the disciples who heard this from John and followed the Lord Jesus was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother. Andrew first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, “We have found the Messiah.”  He then led him to Jesus. Looking at him, Jesus said, “You are Simon, the son of John, you shall be called Cephas.” (Cephas means Peter, or a stone.)

**Philip and Nathanael.** The next day, Jesus went into Galilee and He found a man named Philip. Jesus said to him, “Follow Me.”  Philip was from Bethsaida, of the city of Andrew and Peter.  Philip then found Nathanael and said, “We have found Him whom Moses wrote about—Jesus, the son of Joseph, from Nazareth.” Nathanael answered, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?”  Philip said, “Come and see.” When Jesus saw Nathanael coming to Him, He said, “Behold, a true Israelite in whom is no guile.” (A person with guile is someone who is smart but sneaky.)  Nathanael said to Jesus, “How do you know me?”  Jesus said to him, “Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.” Nathanael said, “Rabbi, You are the Son of God, the King of Israel.” Jesus said, “Do you believe because I told you that I saw you under the fig tree?  You shall see greater things than this. You shall see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man.”

**SUGGESTED APPLICATIONS TO CHOOSE FROM:**

* **The Lord chose us before we were even born.** When the Lord Jesus first met Simon, He already knew both his name and his father’s name. Actually, the Lord Jesus knew him even before the world began (1 Peter 1:2). The Lord Jesus also knew us—each one of us—before we were born. Even before the foundation of the world He chose us! Surely He has called us just like He called His first disciples. Through the years the Lord has had many disciples. Will we be those who follow the Lord? Yes!
* **We can bring others to the Lord.** The Lord not only wants us to follow Him, but He has many others that He wants to follow Him. Even though the Lord directly called Andrew and then Philip, He immediately used them to call others (Simon Peter and Nathanael). In the same way, the Lord wants to use us to call others. With whom should we start?
	+ **Our immediate family.** Andrew first found his own brother Simon and led him to the Lord. We should care for our own families first, just like Andrew did. Is there anyone in your family who does not yet know the Lord? It could be parents, grandparents, brothers, sisters, cousins. We should pray for them and tell them about the Lord Jesus.
	+ **Our friends.** After the Lord called Philip, he found Nathanael, probably a friend of his. We should be faithful, like Philip, to tell our friends and schoolmates about the Lord.
	+ **Our neighbors.** Philip and Andrew and Simon, and probably Nathanael were all from the same city, Bethsaida. Likewise, there may be some in our town or immediate neighborhood that we can bring to the Lord.

There are many around us that the Lord wants to call to follow Him, but the Lord needs us to call them! We must pray to the Lord to fill us with boldness to speak of Him to others.

* **We can speak about the Lord now; there is no need to wait until we know more.** We should not worry if we feel we do not know the Bible so well, or we might make mistakes, or that we are too young to speak for the Lord. Philip did not know so much. He had just met the Lord. What he said to Nathanael was actually inaccurate. Philip told Nathanael that Jesus was the son of Joseph and from Nazareth. Jesus was actually born of Mary in Bethlehem (*RV* John 1:45, Footnote 45).  But he told Nathanael to come and see, and Nathanael became a disciple of the Lord. We can be so simple like Philip. We can invite our friends to the children’s meeting, neighborhood children’s meeting, church activities such as Children’s Activity Day and Family Bible Camp, and to our homes to “Come and see.”

Adapted from the Church in New York City Children’s Meeting lessons 1/10/82; 12/10/89; 10/2/94; 09/17/00; 9/17/06; 9/23/12