



# FOLLOWING JESUS

**Goal:  
Follow in Jesus'  
Footsteps!**

**Scripture Verses:  
1 John 3:7-10  
Matthew 4:18-19**

When we know and love Jesus, we must follow Him. This means doing what's right in day to day living. Jesus calls all Christians to follow him—a task that's easier said than done in today's pressure- and pleasure filled society. Kids will look at ways they're "called" to follow ideas, products, and people. They'll discover Jesus' call to follow him, learning that following Jesus means becoming more like him.

## *Opening*

### **Calling All Dogs**

(For this activity, arrange for a friendly dog to visit your class at the start of your lesson time. You'll need some dog treats.)

Have kids sit around the room. Explain that you've invited a friend to join you today. Then give one of the kids dog treats, and let the dog into the room. It's likely the dog will visit everyone at first before choosing to become "buddies" with the kid holding the dog treats.

Have kids see if they can get the dog's attention away from the child holding the treats. Then, after a few minutes, have the kid with the treats feed them to the dog. After the dog has eaten the treats, have the dog's owner come and get the dog. Ask the following questions (try to get at least three answers to each question before moving on).

\*What did you notice about the way the dog decided where to go?

\*How is that like or unlike the way people choose where to go in life?

**Say:** The dog chose to follow the smells it liked.

**Ask:** What "smells" or "things" in life are hard to resist?

**Say:** People tend to follow things that appeal to them most, just as the dog did. Sometimes following Jesus doesn't seem to be the most appealing option. Today we'll explore why it's important to follow the path Jesus walks instead of the paths the world offers.



## Which Way to Follow?

(For this activity, you'll need one Bible for each child.)

Choose a leader. Have the kids follow their leader around the house or yard while reading 1 John 3:7-10. Have the leader lead through lots of different locations (under tables, over a fence, in and out of rooms, and so on). While they're still being led around, have kids discuss what this passage says about following Jesus. Encourage kids to explore all aspects of the Scripture passage, including why we're to follow Jesus, what pulls people away from following Jesus, and what Jesus does to attract people to following him. You might want to write these discussion ideas on a piece of paper for reference. After a few minutes have everyone return to your normal location.

Discuss the following questions:

- \*What was it like to be led on this unusual trek while trying to study the Scripture passage?
- \*Is following Jesus always easy? Why or why not?
- \*What does your study (and this experience) tell you about following Jesus?

**Say:** Unlike the advertising we see on television and in magazines, Jesus doesn't advertise all sorts of benefits for people who follow Him. Instead, he simply commands us to follow him because it's the right thing to do. But it's not always easy to follow Jesus, especially when others stand in our way. Still, with support from each other, we can do it.



# REFLECTION

## Pair Writing

(For this activity, gather a pencil, paper, and a Bible for every TWO children.)

Form pairs, and give each pair a pencil, paper, and a Bible. Have partners grip the same pencil and attempt to write the passage, not just hold onto the pencil while their partner does the work. Afterward, ask:

- \*What was this experience like?
- \*What made pair writing so difficult?
- \*Whose handwriting does the writing most resemble? Explain
- \*How is the way you struggled with each other to write the passage like the way people struggle when they try to follow Jesus and the ways of the world at the same time?

**Say:** It's impossible to follow Jesus and live your life your own way at the same time. When we choose to follow Jesus, we choose to give up our former lives and walk where Jesus walks. In other words, we let Jesus write out the story of our lives, and we walk confidently beside Him.

## *Choose Your Closing*

### **Option 1: Love Calls**

*(For this activity, you'll need a Bible)*

Have a volunteer read aloud Matthew 4:18-19

\*What does this passage tell us about how Jesus leads people?

\*How easy would it be for you to get up and follow Jesus without knowing where he'd lead you?

Explain that you're going to lead them somewhere to close this study. Don't tell them where you're going. When kids have lined up, lead them in a roundabout way to an area with snacks that you chose earlier. Before eating the snacks, have someone pray, asking God to help them to be confident followers of Jesus.

### **Option 2: Knowing, Loving, Following**

**Say:** In our last three lessons, we've studied the basics of Christian faith—knowing, loving, and following Jesus. And we've explored parts of 1 John to see how closely these three concepts are related.

Have kids take turns explaining to each other what it means to know, love, and follow Jesus. Tell kids to imagine they're explaining this to a non-Christian friend. Then have volunteers tell the whole group what it was like to explain the basics of faith.

Encourage kids to boldly tell their friends about what it means to know, love, and follow Jesus. Close in prayer, then tell kids to follow you for a surprise. Go have a snack together!