



3-5s











Leader's manual

SP11

Living for Jesus

Learning with John and Lydia

Contents

| | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------|
| How it works | | | 4 |
| Unit introduction | | | 6 |
|  1 | Come follow Jesus | Matthew 4:18–22 | 9 |
|  2 | Jesus is God’s Son | Matthew 17:1–9 | 15 |
|  3 | At the foot of the cross | John 19:23–30; 20:30,31 | 21 |
|  4 | In the name of Jesus | Acts 3 | 27 |
|  5 | God is love | 1 John 3:11; 4:7–12 | 35 |
|  6 | He will return | 1 John 3:1–3 | 43 |
|  7 | Lydia | Acts 16:11–15 | 53 |
|  8 | Rejoice in the Lord | Philippians 4:4,11–20 | 61 |
|  9 | Peace from prayer | Philippians 1:19; 4:6,7 | 69 |
|  10 | Together with God | Philippians 1:3–18 | 77 |



How it works

How the sessions are structured

Bible passage: All sessions are Bible-focused

Aim

This is the 'big idea' to be taught during this session. It is child-oriented.

Outcomes

These statements break down the aim into 'do-able' chunks. There are generally only three, so that the leader can keep them in mind and check up later whether or not they were achieved. They are broken up into:

- knowledge – information, concepts, beliefs
- understanding – more personal ways of grasping the concepts in the session
- life application – ways of making links between knowledge and children's lives, and reflecting on what kind of change might happen in response to God's word.

Memory verse

This verse will generally be based on the CEV Bible and will be taught during the session.

Notes

These notes for the leader give Bible context and background. There are hints regarding the theology of the passage, where it fits in salvation history and how it may properly be applied to both leader and child. There might also be comments about the management of the session content and special comments when needed about visual aids and activities.

Leader's prayer

This section links to the aim and outcomes, mentioning the way this session will actually call for a response from the child and make a difference in their lives.

Gear

A summary is given at the beginning of the session of all the equipment needed by the leader and when it will be used. Some items will be given as optional. The gear needed for the **Start up** and concluding **Activities** is given with the particular activity. Leaders should choose these in advance to ensure that they have all that is needed. It is advisable to try out any unfamiliar activity before the session to make sure it works.

Get ready

This section gives hints about important preparation to be done before the session starts.

Start up

During this time activities occur that introduce the theme, aim and ideas of the session. There may be a few activities to choose from. Each activity has a specified purpose.

Your choice of activities will often depend on the children in your group and the space available.

NOTE: Sometimes during **Bible focus** time there will be a special comment to the leader about an issue that may come up during the session.

Bible focus

Links



Links are made with the previous sessions.



Connections with life are raised and the children are encouraged to discuss 'real life' situations they face. We will raise the issue here and it will be drawn to a conclusion during **Bringing it together**.

Teaching time

This is the body of the session. It involves teaching and learning activities. For this youngest group the story time is usually presented first and activities done after to reinforce the main ideas raised by the story. The story time has as its central focus the explanation of the Bible text in an age-appropriate way so that the aim of the session is reached. The activities ensure that all the session outcomes are achieved.

What the leader actually says to the children is presented in bold text. Directions to the leader are in normal type.

In this part of the session the children are helped to understand the Bible. Concepts and activities are age-appropriate. The activities are designed to reinforce the Bible teaching by revising the main concepts and testing the children's recall.

Application is an important part of this section and it is done carefully, while being true to the passage and to the developmental needs of the children. At this youngest age group we are laying the foundations for further knowledge and understanding.

Regardless of the stage of their faith, they can be called on to respond and encouraged to know how God's word challenges them to love and trust Jesus as their Saviour and Lord.



This icon shows where in the session the Bible will be read to the children so they can listen to and interact with the word of God.



Music spot

Various songs, on readily available CDs, are suggested to link into the session and to provide a high-interest flow to the activities.

Think about it

Here the leader is encouraged to think through issues that occurred in the session and reflect on possible strategies for the future.

Bringing it together

This section is really important. The leader is encouraged to allow enough time for this as connections are discussed that impact the children's lives.

There may be open-ended questions that encourage children to respond in their own terms. We are aiming for honest responses from the children.

The Memory verse is often taught during this part of the session.

Prayer

This will normally follow **Bringing it together** and allows for the issues highlighted by the children to be prayed about. Leaders will model prayer and also teach children how to pray – both for themselves and for others, and for issues in the wider world.

Activities

After the more formal learning time the leader is encouraged to choose one or more of the activities included in each session as a way of reinforcing the main learning ideas and also allowing the children to interact with the adult leaders and also their fellow group members.

Munchies

Many of the sessions contain ideas for **Munchies** – food and drink that relate to the session for the children to enjoy. It is a good idea to check with parents for any allergies that their children might have before serving food and drink.

NOTE: The **Links** in each session help children to recall what they have already learned. Leaders may wish to include a reflective session also.

Think ahead

This is a very brief indication of what the leader will need to plan ahead for next session. It may involve equipment, people, and so on.



Unit introduction **Living for Jesus**

Learning with John and Lydia

Unit aim

To encourage the children to grow in faith as they learn about why people follow Jesus and how they can show others that they are following Jesus.

Unit outcomes

By the end of this unit the children will:

- know that Jesus is the Son of God
- know that Jesus calls each of us to follow him
- understand that God wants each of us to share the good news with others
- understand that one day Jesus will return again
- understand that God wants us to live both prayerfully and joyfully.

Memory verses

Sessions 1–4

Because of God's wonderful kindness, Jesus died for everyone. **Hebrews 2:9b (CEV)**

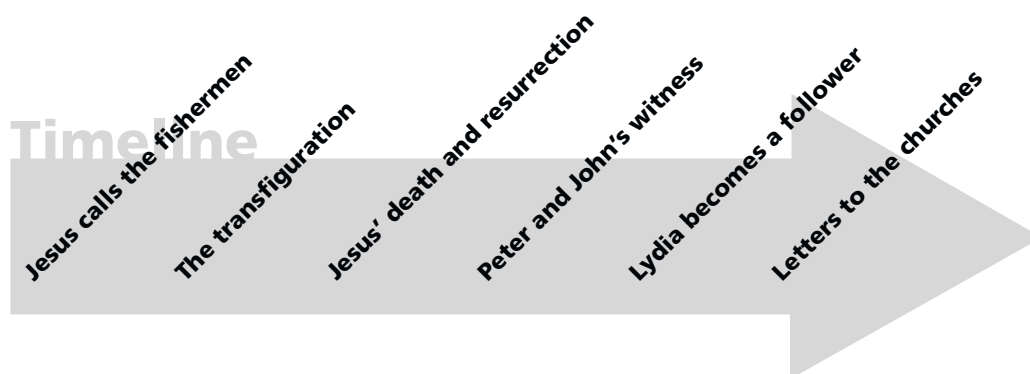
Sessions 5,6

God is love. **1 John 4:8 (CEV)**

Sessions 7–10

Rejoice in the Lord always. **Philippians 4:4 (NIV)**

Where this fits in the New Testament



We encourage the children to understand that Jesus is the 'centre-piece' of God's plan and that we can also be part of the plan by having faith in Jesus ourselves.

Notes

Bible background

These ten sessions focus on what God has done for his people and how we respond by living for him. The first six sessions look at the apostle John's discovery of who Jesus is and how we should live in the light of this discovery. The second group look at Lydia from Thyatira who was the first person in Europe to respond to the gospel message when Paul came to Macedonia.

These sessions begin with Jesus' call for the four fishermen (Peter, Andrew, James and John) to follow him (**Matthew 4:20–22**). The second looks at the true glory of Jesus as the Son of God revealed at the transfiguration (**Matthew 17:1–9**). The third focuses on John at the foot of the cross when Jesus gave his life for us (**John 19:23–30, 20:30,31**). The fourth to the sixth look at John's response to the person and work of Christ as he tells others (**Acts 3**), and encourages them and us to love one another (**1 John 3:11, 4:7–12**) and to live in the hope of Jesus Christ's return (**1 John 3:1–3**).

The second set focus first on Lydia's response to the apostolic message of salvation (**Acts 16:11–15**) and then on Paul's later encouragement for her and others in the church at Philippi to live joyfully (**Philippians 4:4,11–20**) and prayerfully (**Philippians 1:19, 4:6,7**), becoming partners in the spread of the gospel (**Philippians 1:3–18**).

Children are encouraged to hear what the Bible says about Jesus and to respond to him by trusting him, following him – as John and Lydia did – and living in the hope of Jesus' return. They will appreciate that God's intention is that those who live this way will share this good news with others and pray that they too will respond to and live for God.

Faith development

Children grow and develop physically, emotionally, cognitively and spiritually at different rates and in different ways. This unit aims to encourage growth in their knowledge of Jesus and the Son of God, for each child at his or her own pace. No matter what stage of their faith development, they can be challenged to respond to God in Christ and to live in the way he wants for us.

Faith has been described as having four aspects: believing, imagining, trusting and doing. (See *Children Finding Faith* by Francis Bridger, SU, England, 2000, available from CEP). Believing involves having faith in the truth of the gospel and a reliance on the promises of God in Christ. Imagining

involves creatively exploring our beliefs. Trusting involves the relational side of faith. Doing is the way we act as an outworking of our faith. Children, like adults, benefit from learning approaches that involve exploring faith from each of these four aspects. These sessions have been written with this in mind.

Special features

The leader's pack includes:

- the Leader's manual of ten sessions
- a large full colour **Storyboard poster**
- ten full colour **Leader's figures**
- a sample of the full colour **Children's figures**. Extra sets may be purchased from CEP so that every child has their own copy to work with in each session.
- a set of photocopyable masters
- a variety of visual aids and activities for each session.

Living for Jesus Storyboard poster and figures

Each session the leader adds a new **Leader's figure** to the **Storyboard poster**. There is a different figure to correspond with the **Bible focus** presented in each session. The **Storyboard poster** is displayed each session as a reminder of the learning of the previous sessions. The children also do a different activity using the matching **Children's figures** each session to encourage them to interact with the story. These activities can be taken home each week as a reminder of their learning in each session.

Activities

Children all learn in a variety of ways. *Serious play* is for three to five year olds who enjoy and learn through play, are either non-readers or beginning readers, and are active in the years before formal schooling. Because of this, the story-time component of **Bible focus** is kept short and to the point, and the main concepts of the Bible passages are then reinforced in the activities.

At this stage the children are beginning to learn how to relate to God through his word, the Bible, and also through prayer. It is important that the leaders model this behaviour and encourage the children to follow their example.

A Memory verse activity is included in each session and is presented in an interactive way so that the children will begin to build their own personal store of Bible verses.

Photocopiable masters

Photocopiable masters have also been included with most sessions to provide extra craft activities to reinforce key learning concepts or the Memory verse. The opportunity should be taken when helping the children with these activities to talk to them and learn more about each individual.

When choosing the activities you will include in each session, the number of children in your group, their individual skills and the space you have available will be important considerations. Try to encourage a wide range of activities so that the different learning skills of the children will be catered for.

Purchase of the Leader's kit entitles you to make one copy for each member of your group.



Music spot

The *Earth movers* CD has been especially developed by CEP for use with the 3–5 year old age group. On the CD are songs about God and his promises, movement music for dance, music to cue the children to come back to the leader and get ready to listen, music to 'get up and boogie' to, and music for popular games such as pass the parcel and musical chairs.

Often the music helps the children to remember the significant learning that has taken place in the session. You may make one copy only of the CD onto audio cassette for use in the context of your church. This CD is available separately from your kids@church supplier.

Each session recommends the song or songs from the *Earth movers* CD that are most appropriate for reinforcing the key concepts of the session or the unit as a whole.

Other children's CDs you may find useful are:

- *Promises, promises*, CEP
- *How cool is that*, Johnny Burns
- *10,9,8 ... God is great*, Colin Buchanan
- *Practise being godly*, Colin Buchanan
- *Remember the Lord*, Colin Buchanan
- *Follow the Saviour*, Colin Buchanan
- *The King, the snake and the promise*, Emu Music
- *Lovely jubbly*, Doug Horley

These CDs are available from CEP.



Come follow Jesus

Matthew 4:18–22

Aim

To recognise that Jesus calls each of us to follow him.

Outcomes

By the end of this session the children will:

- know that Jesus asked some fishermen to follow him
- understand that the disciples heard and obeyed Jesus' call to follow him
- appreciate that we all hear the call to follow Jesus at some time and we each need to choose whether to follow him or not.

Memory verse

Because of God's wonderful kindness, Jesus died for everyone. **Hebrews 2:9b (CEV)**

Notes

Read **Matthew 4:18–22**.

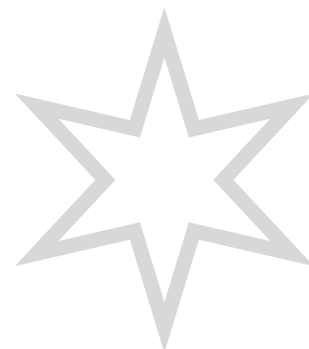
Jesus began his ministry with the calling of the disciples at Lake Galilee. He first approached Simon Peter and Andrew, and asked them to follow him. These two brothers immediately dropped everything and followed Jesus. Jesus then approached John, and his brother James, and also asked them to follow him. Again, their response was an immediate and decisive 'yes'. These fishermen gave up their day jobs to follow a man whose true nature they did not yet appreciate and they did not appear to be concerned about the economic consequences of their actions.

Although disciple means 'pupil' or 'learner', Jesus' disciples were followers first, and pupils second. Jesus disciples responded to a call and their response to follow him required complete allegiance and loyalty to Jesus and his claims. As it was for the first disciples, Christians today who respond to Jesus by following him, also become his students, and learn his ways. The relationship between Jesus and his disciples goes well beyond the normal student-teacher relationship since it involves a lifelong commitment.

Today the children will hear how John and his friends chose to follow Jesus, and they will begin to consider that Jesus wants them to make a choice too.

Leader's prayer

Consider the time when you heard and obeyed Jesus' call to follow him, and what led you to respond. Give thanks that you made this decision and for all that it means to you, both now and in eternity. Pray that the children will also respond to Jesus by choosing to follow him.



Gear

- ☐ A CEV Bible marked at **Matthew 4:18–22**
- ☐ **Leader's figure 1 – Follow**
- ☐ Blu-Tack
- ☐ **Storyboard poster**
- ☐ CD player and CD of choice
- ☐ A photocopy of the Fishermen photocopyable (page 14) for each child
- ☐ A **Children's figure 1 – Follow** for each child
- ☐ Coloured pens and pencils
- ☐ Squares of blue crepe paper or cellophane (optional)
- ☐ Glue sticks
- ☐ Gear for chosen activities in **Start up** and **Activities** sections
- ☐ Food for **Munchies**

Get ready

Prepare the **Leader's figure 1** and **Children's figure 1** components for this session.

Display the **Storyboard poster** in your area.

Using a 30 cm length of string, a long stick and a magnet, create a magnetic fishing rod. Attach one end of the length of string to the stick, and tie the magnet to the other end of the string.

Dress up as a fisherman for **Bible focus**, or ask a helper to do so. If you are able to organise a helper to come along and act the part of John, give them a photocopy of the dialogue on pages 11, 12 before the session so they can prepare their part.

For extra impact

Create a fishing display with a 'boat' (cardboard boxes, chairs or a table turned upside down), 'water' (blue tarpaulin or sheet), fishing nets, baskets, and some fish. This display can be as big and as adventurous as time, space and equipment allows. The children can sit near the display during **Bible focus**.

Start up

*Choose from the following warm-up activities to suit your group and the time you have available. These activities are designed to introduce content and concepts that form part of the session. Make sure that your group completes **Fish for it**, then choose from the other activities as time allows. For future reference, tick the activities you use.*

Fish for it

Purpose: To introduce the concept of fishing, as some of the disciples were fishermen.

Gear

- ☐ A **Children's figure 1** for each child, as well as one for yourself
- ☐ Paper clips
- ☐ A tray, bucket, tarpaulin or sheet
- ☐ Magnetic fishing rod prepared in **Get ready**

Attach a paper clip to each copy of **Children's figure 1**. Place each figure face down in a bucket, or on a tray, tarpaulin or sheet.

Invite the children to take turns fishing for the stickers using the magnetic fishing rod. When each child has 'caught' a sticker, ask the children to tell you what they can see in the picture.

Fish from a dish

*Purpose: To make a prop that will encourage interaction with the story in **Bible focus**.*

Gear

- ☐ Paper plates folded in half and stapled around the curved edge
- ☐ Coloured pens and pencils
- ☐ A selection of craft materials, such as glitter, glue, crepe paper, sequins, foil, and so on (optional)

The children will be transforming a folded paper plate into a fish. Give each child a folded paper plate. Encourage the children to colour the paper plate and add eyes, fins and a tail to the fish using the materials provided.

Put the fish aside for use in **Bible focus**.

Follow the leader

Purpose: To review the concept of following someone.

Gear

- A CEV Bible marked at **Luke 5:27–32** (optional)

Play a game of 'Follow the leader' or 'Do what I do'. Begin the game with the words: 'Come follow me', then invite the children to follow each of your actions.

When you have finished, ask the children if they can think of someone that they can follow, or any stories they have heard about following someone. Briefly review the story of Matthew, the tax collector, who decided to follow Jesus (see **Session 1, Serious play SP10** or read **Luke 5:27–32**). Mention that Jesus said, 'Come follow me' (or 'Come with me') to people he met.

Bible focus

Links



Briefly tell the children when and why you responded to Jesus' call to follow him, and how this has helped you. Encourage the children in your group who want to, to tell why they follow or love Jesus.

Today we're going to hear about some fishermen who decided to follow Jesus and become his friends.

Teaching time

Encourage the children to act as fishermen. If you set up the fishing display (see **For extra impact**) ask the children to hold the fishing net over the tarpaulin or sheet. If you did the **Fish from a dish** activity, place the fish into the net. If possible, dress up as a fisherman to tell the story.

There's a story in the Bible (show your Bible) **about a man called John. He was one of Jesus' good friends. Let's find out how John became Jesus' friend. I'm going to pretend to be John while I tell the story.**

I'm John and I'm a fisherman. Everyday my father, my brother James, and I have to get up very, very early to catch fish out on the lake. When we've finished fishing we have to row my boat back to the shore, put all of the fish into baskets, and then clean my boat and nets.

Mime the actions of fishing, rowing a boat, putting the fish into baskets, cleaning a boat, and so on. Invite the children to join in.

My friends are fishermen too. Their names are Simon Peter and Andrew. But the other day I made a new friend – someone who isn't like anyone I've ever met before. He is very special. Can you guess who I'm talking about? (Accept responses. Jesus.)

That's right, it was Jesus.

On the day I met Jesus, we had just finished fishing for the day. We were sitting in our boat at the edge of the lake. Some of our fishing nets were broken, and so James, my father and I were mending them.

Ask the children to pretend to sew up the net.

While I was mending, I looked up and I could see my friends Simon Peter and Andrew casting their net into the water one last time. Then I saw Jesus walk up to them and say something.

What do you think Jesus said to my friends? (Accept responses.)

All of a sudden Simon Peter and Andrew dropped their nets and followed Jesus. 'I wonder what Jesus said to them,' I said to James. James was wondering the same thing.

I kept on mending and then I saw Jesus walking toward us. 'Look! Jesus is coming this way,' I told James, 'I wonder if he's coming to talk to us.'

Jesus walked up to us and smiled very kindly. Simon Peter and Andrew were smiling too. Then Jesus said something that surprised me.

What do you think Jesus said to me? (Accept responses.)



Read **Matthew 4:19** from a CEV Bible.

Jesus said, 'Come with me.' Just like that. 'Come with me.'

Invite the children to repeat, 'Come with me.'

Well, I had to decide quickly. 'Should I follow Jesus and find out why he is so special,' I wondered, 'or should I stay here with my father?' I could tell that James was wondering the same thing.

What do you think I should do? (Accept responses.)

This is what the Bible says happened.



Read **Matthew 4:22** from a CEV Bible.

'I want to know about Jesus,' I decided, 'I'm going to follow him, because he asked me to.' So I stood up, hugged my father and said: 'Yes, Jesus. I will follow you!' Then James stood up,



hugged our father and said to Jesus, 'Me too! I will follow you.'

Why do you think James and I did that?

(Accept responses.)

I wanted to follow Jesus because I could tell there was something special about him. I wasn't sure what it was yet, but I knew that I would find out.

Bringing it together

Hold up **Leader's figure 1**. Ask the children what is happening in the picture. Point out that it is a picture of John and his friends following Jesus.

Stick a piece of Blu-Tack on the back of the figure and invite a child to attach it to the **Storyboard poster**. Tell the children that each week they will hear more about why people follow Jesus and how they can show others that they are following Jesus.

Why do you think John and his friends decided to follow Jesus? (Accept responses.)

John and his friends just knew that there was something special about Jesus and they wanted to know more.

Do you know what is special about Jesus?

(Accept responses. Jesus is God's son.)

When we hear about how special Jesus is at places like church or home, we each need to decide whether or not to listen to Jesus' call to follow him.

Do you know what people are called when they follow Jesus? (Accept responses. Christians.)

When we follow Jesus we are called Christians, and we try to live or behave the way he wants us to.

How do you think Jesus wants us to live?

(Accept responses.)

When we follow Jesus it means that we want to be his friend and that we want to do the things that he wants us to do. This includes praying to God, praising God, being kind, and loving others.

Prayer

Encourage the children to join you in the following prayer.

Dear God,

I know that Jesus wants me to follow him.

Help me to make the right choice.

Help other people I love to choose Jesus too.

Amen.



Music spot

Choose from the following songs:

Just like Jesus, track 10 of the *Earth movers* CD.

I'm gonna jump up and down (be happy!), track 5 of the *Lovely jubbly* CD.

I am a C-H-R-I-S-T-I-A-N, popular song.

Memory verse

Teach the children the Memory verse by repeating two or three words at a time and demonstrating the actions described in brackets.

Because of God's (*point up*) wonderful kindness, Jesus died (*make a cross with fingers*) for everyone (*spread arms out*). **Hebrews 2:9b**

When you hear this verse, can you tell why Jesus is so special? (Accept responses. He died for us.)

Take home

Hand each child a copy of the Fishermen photocopiable and the **Children's figure 1**. Ask the children to colour or decorate the picture and to stick the figure in the appropriate position. They can add crepe paper and cellophane for the water.

As they work on their pictures, ask them which choice John and his friends made when Jesus asked them to follow him. Ask the children what the other fishermen in the picture are doing.

Encourage the children to take their pictures home in their *Serious play* backpacks and to retell the story to their families.

Activities

Choose from the following activities to conclude the session.

Little verse

Gear

- ☐ Finger puppets (optional)

Say the following rhyme once or twice, inviting the children to join in. Make up some actions for the children to copy. Alternatively, use finger puppets as a visual aid. This rhyme can also be used in

Re-enactment or at the end of the **Take home** activity.

'Come follow me, come follow me,'
Jesus said to the man catching fish.
John scratched his head
And then he said ... (pause)
'I'll follow you, I'll follow you,
If that is what you wish.'

Re-enactment

Gear

- ☐ Fishing display (see **For extra impact**)
- ☐ Fish from the **Fish in a dish** activity (see **Start up**)
- ☐ Magnetic fishing line (see **Get ready**)

Invite the children to re-enact the story from **Bible focus**. Ask volunteers to be 'Jesus', 'John', 'Simon Peter', 'James', 'Andrew', and 'John's father'. Any other children can be fishermen and can pretend to catch the fish with the magnetic fishing line. You could use the **Little verse** rhyme to help the children re-enact the story.

Fish or follow

Teach the children the following words and actions:

Fish – the children pretend to catch a fish

Follow – the children line up behind you and follow you.

Now, call out the words randomly, decreasing the time between each one.

When you have finished, remind the children that John had to choose whether to follow Jesus or keep fishing. Ask if they remember what he decided.

Munchies

Gear

- ☐ Fish-shaped crackers
- ☐ Fish fingers and chips, and oven (optional)

Eat the fish-shaped crackers or, if you have a kitchen, ask a helper to prepare some fish and chips in the oven during the session.

NOTE: Be warned – if you choose to cook fish and chips you might have to share this with the children in other groups once they smell the delicious aroma! Eat on the blue tarpaulin or near the fishing display (see **For extra impact**).



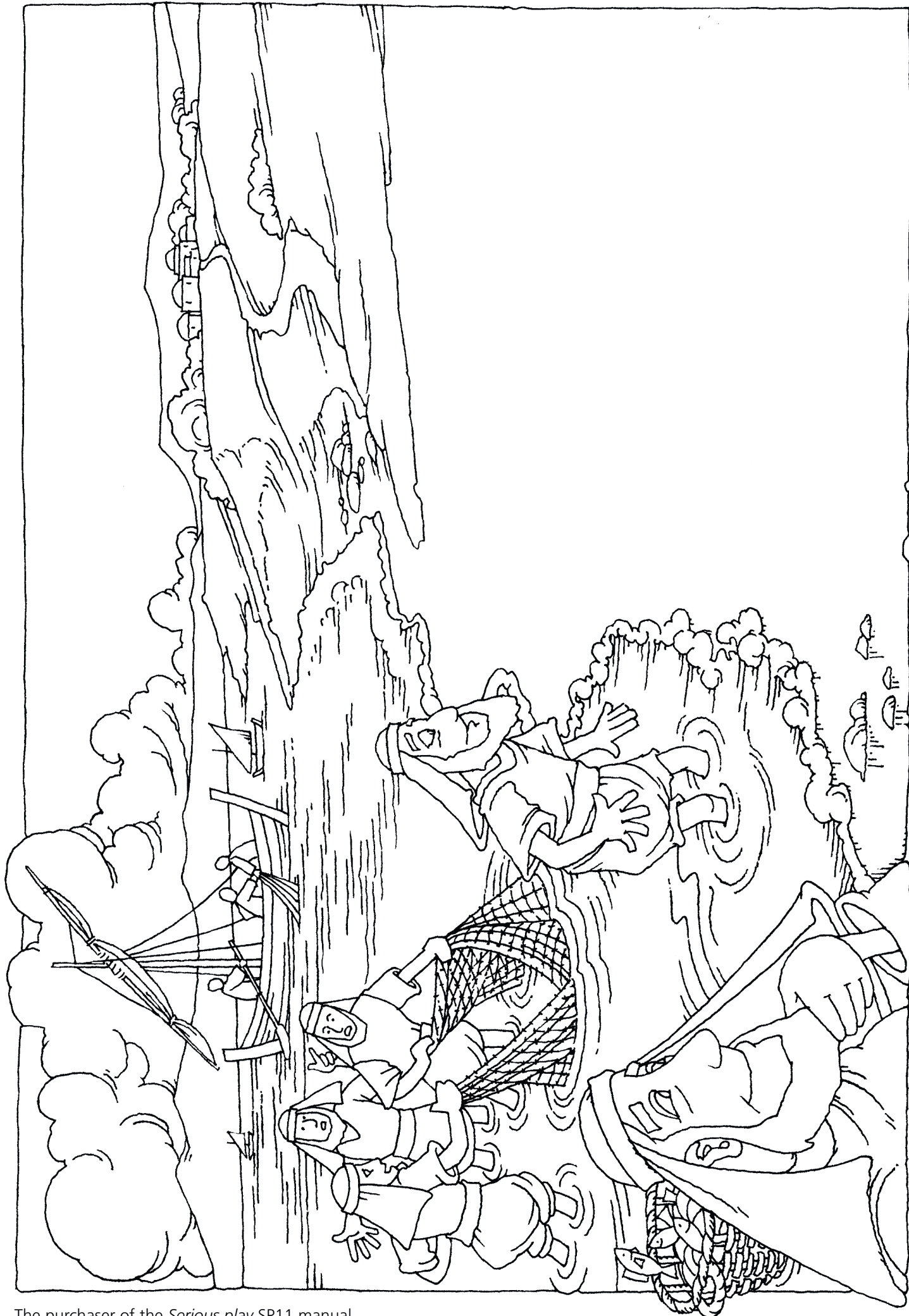
Think about it

Did the children understand that we each have to decide whether or not to follow Jesus?

Did the children consider some reasons why they could choose to follow Jesus?

Think ahead

You will need to prepare the photocopyables for the next session ahead of time. Prepare a copy for each child by cutting out the mountain shapes. Complete an additional copy to display in your area following the instructions on page 20.



The purchaser of the *Serious play* SP11 manual is entitled to photocopy this page for use with his or her group.