

The Apostles

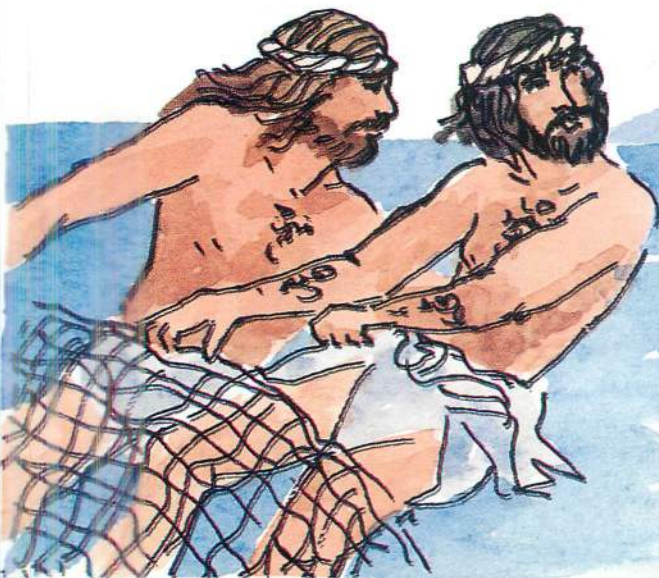
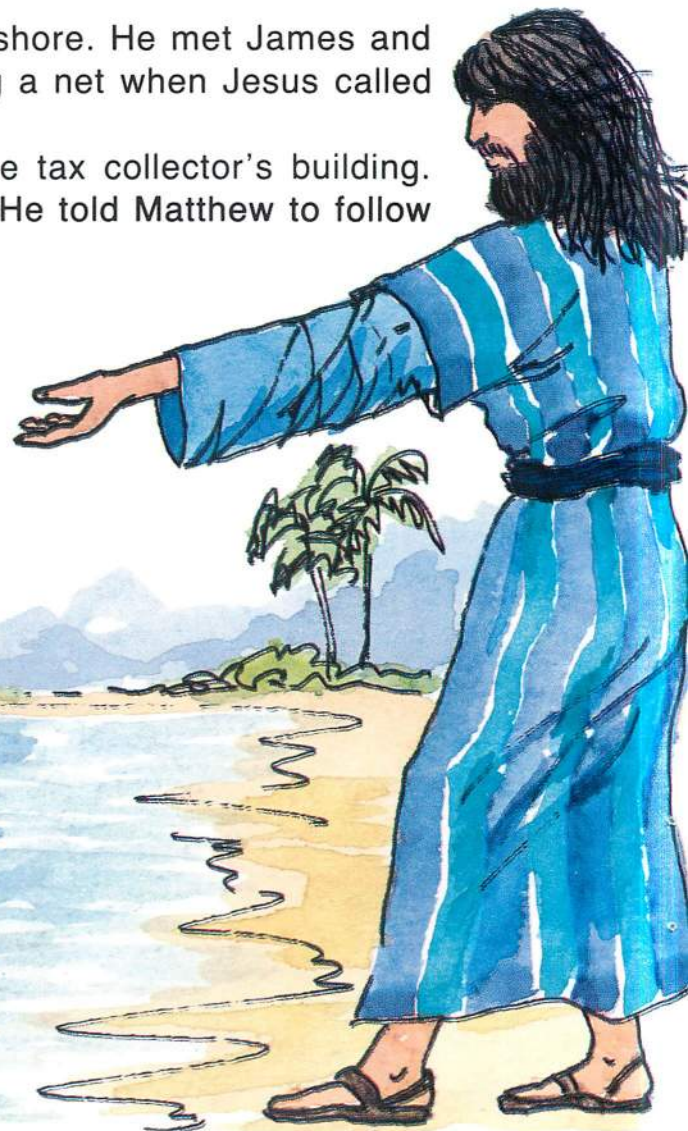
Jesus Calls Twelve Special Friends

Jesus was walking by the Sea of Galilee. He saw two brothers named Simon and Andrew. They were fishermen and they were just about to throw their net into the lake to catch some fish. Jesus called to them. "Follow me and I will make you into fishers of men." Simon and Andrew left their work and followed Jesus. Jesus had two special followers.

Jesus continued to walk along the seashore. He met James and John. They were in their fishing boat fixing a net when Jesus called to them. Now Jesus had four followers.

A while later Jesus was walking by the tax collector's building. He saw Matthew who was a tax collector. He told Matthew to follow

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him. Matthew left his work and went with Jesus. That made five followers.

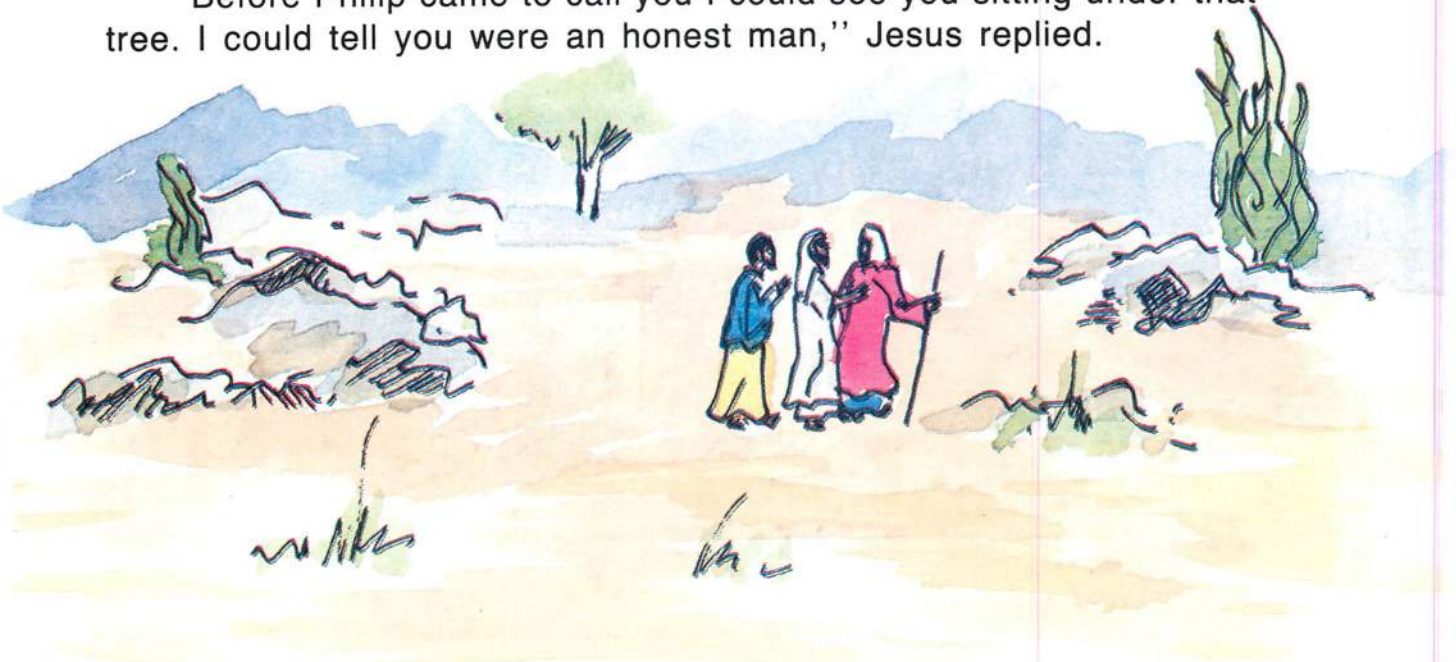
Philip listened to Jesus teach one day. Philip knew he had found the Messiah, the one God chose to help Israel. Philip was so excited he wanted to share his discovery with his friend Bartholomew. "Bartholomew," Philip called. "I've found the one that Moses and the prophets wrote about. His name is Jesus and he comes from Nazareth."

Bartholomew did not think a town as small as Nazareth could be the home town of the Messiah. He probably knew the Messiah was to come from Bethlehem. He said to Philip, "Can anything good come from Nazareth?"

"Come and meet him," Philip said. When Jesus came over to them, he said, "Here is a truly honest man," when he saw Bartholomew.

"Have we ever met before?" said Bartholomew because he did not know how Jesus could know that he was an honest person.

"Before Philip came to call you I could see you sitting under that tree. I could tell you were an honest man," Jesus replied.



“Teacher, you are truly the Son of God, the King of Israel, the Messiah,” Bartholomew said.

“You think it was unusual that I could know you before we met,” Jesus said. “I will tell you much, much greater things, I promise.”

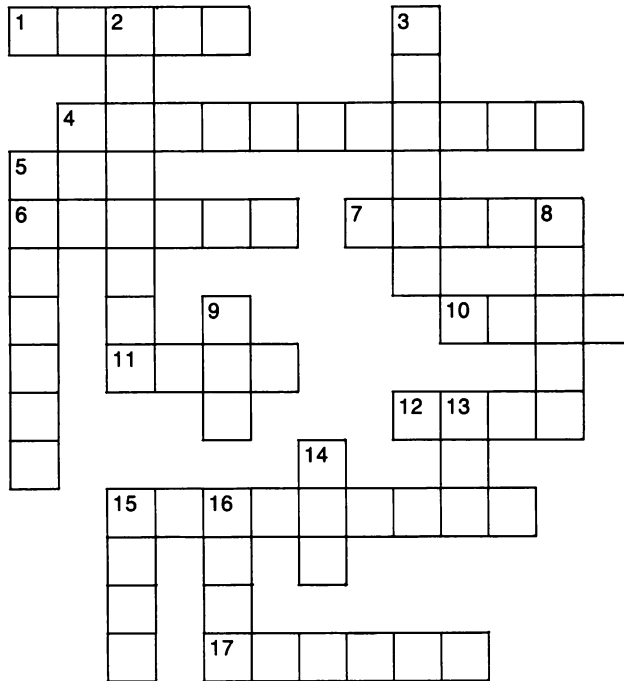
So Bartholomew, who is also called Nathaniel, and Philip became two more followers of Jesus. Lots of people were following Jesus now. He told them about God and about how to live the good life God wants us to live. From all his followers he chose 12 special ones to teach very carefully. Their names were: Simon (later Jesus changed Simon’s name to Peter), James, John, Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, another James, Thaddeus, another Simon, and Judas Iscariot. Judas later went against Jesus and helped the people who wanted to get rid of him. A new apostle was chosen to take his place. His name was Matthias. Many people call Saint Paul, the man we learned about last week, the thirteenth apostle.

These apostles followed Jesus everywhere. They learned special things from Jesus. Jesus was preparing them for the time when they would carry on his work after he died.



Apostles Crossword Puzzle

Using the information on the Apostles Chart, fill in the crossword puzzle.



Across

1. Denied knowing Jesus during his arrest.
4. Philip brought him to Jesus.
6. His symbol is an X-Cross.
7. Two apostles share this name.
10. Peter and Paul traveled there.
11. The old name for Paul.
12. The apostle called the Beloved.
15. Most common work of the apostles.
17. His symbol is loaves of bread because he did not think Jesus could feed the crowd.

Down

2. First Enlightener of Armenia.
3. Didn't believe Christ had risen.
5. His symbol is money bags because he was a tax collector.
8. He wanted the Jews to be free of Roman rulers by fighting the Romans.
9. John's symbol.
13. The number of apostles who betrayed Jesus.
14. Peter's symbol.
15. Simon's symbol.
16. Thaddeus' symbol.

Corinthians
Galatians
Romans
Philippians
Ephesians
Colossians
Philemon
Timothy
Titus
Hebrews

Session 4—The Apostles

Key Concepts

1. Through the Bible and Holy Tradition, we know that Jesus called twelve men with varying backgrounds, talents, and abilities to be his special students.
2. The apostles responded to God's call by learning from Jesus, then teaching others.
3. The Holy Spirit gave the apostles special gifts to help them in their missions.
4. The same Holy Spirit gives us special missions too.

Objectives

Students will

1. List their own talents and abilities on paper doves.
2. Read story about choosing the apostles.
3. Examine a chart about the apostles' names, occupations, and missions.
4. Complete a crossword puzzle about the apostles.
5. Read the story about the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost and make a mobile of the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Background for Teacher

The definition of apostle is one who is sent forth, a messenger; someone who is chosen and sent out with a special job as the fully authorized representative of the sender.

In the New Testament, the word apostle appears as the official name of the twelve disciples whom Jesus chose to be with him during the time of his ministry on earth, to see him after his resurrection, and to lay the foundation of his Church.

In the Gospels, the twelve are usually called disciples because as long as Jesus was with them, they were still learners. They are referred to as apostles after he left them.

The twelve were chosen by Jesus early in his ministry. Some had previously been disciples of John the Baptist (John 1:35-42). Four, at least, were fishermen (Luke 5:1-11) and one was a tax collector (Matthew 9:9-13). Their names are given in several places in the New Testament: Matthew 10:2-4, Mark

3:14-19, Luke 6:13-16 and Acts 1:13.

All were on equal footing, although three of them, Peter, James, and John, seem to have been somewhat closer to Jesus than the others. Judas Iscariot acted as the group's treasurer. He betrayed Jesus by agreeing, for a price, to point out Jesus to the soldiers who would arrest him. Later, Judas committed suicide. He was replaced by Matthias. (Acts 1:15-26)

Jesus gave much attention to the spiritual training of his chosen twelve right up to the time of his resurrection. But they failed to understand his mission completely. They were still expecting the kingdom Jesus spoke of to be an earthly one. (Matthew 20:20-28, Mark 10:35-45)

Although he told them of his imminent arrest and death, they did not understand until it was done. Then, they fled in fear and confusion. (Matthew 26:56) In addition, they did not expect his resurrection even though he had frequently told them about it.

It was only when his resurrection was undeniable that light entered their minds and they saw him for what he was, the savior of the world. It was the time between the resurrection and the ascension that Jesus spent much time opening their minds to understanding the Scriptures. (Acts 1:2, Luke 24:45)

The apostles, having experienced Pentecost ten days after the Ascension, became altogether different men. Where before they had doubts, they now fearlessly gave witness with power to the life, death and resurrection of Jesus.

The apostles went throughout the land to do missionary work. The majority died martyrs' deaths. In the early Church they consistently claimed to have unique authority to lay the foundations of the Church, given them by Christ.

Materials Needed

- Pencils
- Scissors
- White posterpaper
- String
- A hole punch
- Markers
- A large sheet of posterpaper
- Bibles
- Pre-cut paper doves (from activity packet)

Procedure

Getting the room ready: Have all the materials necessary on hand. Set out ahead of time and have on each desk one large dove and a marker

1. As children enter, have them sit and write their names on their doves, and list their talents and abilities.

Start class with a prayer. Suggestions: Hayr Mer. (10 min.)

2. Say to the children: "Today we are going to learn about the twelve apostles and also a little about the Holy Spirit. The dove you wrote your name on is a symbol of the Holy Spirit. I asked you to write a list of your talents and abilities on the dove. Some of you may have written a lot, others of you may have written very little. But whatever you wrote, you got these talents and abilities from God and you can use them to serve God. The apostles were talented and had a variety of abilities, and look what they did with what God gave them."

Direct the children to open their texts and read the first story on page 24. Discussion questions:

What talents and abilities were mentioned in the story? How could they be used to help Jesus? What other talents and abilities do you think they had that were not mentioned that would be useful to their work? (15 min.)

3. Review the apostles' lives on the student activity packet sheets to reinforce children's knowledge. The puzzle may be done now or saved for homework. (10 min.)

Answers to Apostles Puzzle

Across: 1. Peter; 4. Bartholomew; 6. Andrew; 7. James; 10. Rome; 11. Saul; 12. John; 15. Fishermen; 17. Philip.

Down: 2. Thaddeus; 3. Thomas; 5. Matthew; 8. Simon; 9. cup; 13. one; 14. key; 15. fish; 16. ship.

4. Read the second story and have the children discuss: God's gift of love comes in many forms. The Holy Spirit is working in the Church today. (10 min.)

5. Make the mobile to reinforce knowledge of the gifts of the Spirit. (15 min.)

6. End with the Lord's Prayer or another prayer of your choosing that would be appropriate to the lesson.

Homework: You may assign the puzzle in the text or give them the task of memorizing the names of the apostles. Remind them to hang the doves and mobiles in their rooms.

Notes

Extending the Lesson

Utilize the "talents and abilities" doves to discuss each one's abilities and talents and how they can be used to serve the Lord.

Have the children make up an acrostic puzzle of the apostles' names on graph paper, exchange and have them find the names.

Sing, to memorize the names of the apostles:

Row, row, row the boat

Peter, James and John.

Andrew rows with Peter and Matthew rows with Tom.

Row, row, row the boat, Philip, Simon, James.

Bartholomew and Thaddeus like to watch the waves.

Vocabulary

apostle

disciple

Pentecost

Review

As this is the last lesson in the unit, if time permits, review the stories studied.

Suggestions for reviewing:

1. Have children take turns telling about what they learned.

2. Ask specific questions such as: "Who was given the Ten Commandments?"

3. Have the children draw a picture of one of the lessons, then write a caption explaining the picture.

4. Have the children ask each other questions such as: "I was blinded. Who am I?"

5. Give the children a review quiz in written or oral form.

End the unit with this wrap-up of the concepts of the text and this unit. Recall the theme of the year: We believe that we are called to respond to God's gift of love. This unit concentrated on people in the Bible who were called by God to do something special. Ask the children what they think God might call them to do some day.