



St Lawrence
with St Paul
Longridge



Family Activities: Sunday 14th June 2020

Being a Disciple

Introduction: Children's Church at St Lawrence with St Paul is not meeting in person at present due to the advice given by the Church of England to suspend services. However, the team is putting together a sheet each week for families to do 'Children's Church at Home' and we are also meeting on Zoom on Sunday mornings at 10.45am to go through some of the activities together!

We are very grateful to the Blackburn Board of Education and their 'Weekly@' resources which we are drawing on to help us to put together each week's activities.

Please do e-mail Carolyn Barton at carolynbarton@hotmail.co.uk to be added to the Children's Church private Facebook group and/or to be sent the link to the Sundays @10.45am Zoom Children's Church Meeting.

Theme: To understand that God accepts us as we are and uses the gifts' he has given us for his glory.

Setting the Scene:

Gather together various types of fruit or vegetables, some of which might be getting rotten.

Hold up a piece of fruit, ask the children what it is. I love fruit, don't you? Do you have a favourite kind of fruit? (*Hold up several fruits and/or vegetables*)

What do you think would happen if fruit did not get picked off of the trees?

What if no one came to harvest the produce? Well, it would go bad. It would get old, and mouldy, and rotten and yucky! (*If available, demonstrate a piece of rotting or old fruit*).

No one would be able to enjoy it, and it wouldn't provide nourishment or joy. That seems a little sad, doesn't it?

Did you know that people can be like this? It's true! Jesus calls us all to be fruit pickers! See, if people never hear about the good news of Jesus, and they never experience the love of God, they won't be able to bless others and be blessed through faith. Without love and without the Gospel, people tend to "rot" in their hearts, and they miss out on amazing and beautiful opportunities. So, our job is to spread the good news. We are called to serve God's people.

In today's bible story, Jesus tells the disciples that the "harvest" was ready: He meant there were many people who needed to hear the wonderful story. This is no less true today! When people miss out on God's love or don't hear the Gospel, they tend to go sour, and can-do things they shouldn't. Jesus wants us to share His love. He wants us to recognize



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opportunities to serve each other. So many people need to hear this good news, and we as Jesus' disciples get to communicate it! Isn't that wonderful? And we can tell ALL people about God's love.

Song: Sing and dance along to 'Be Happy' <https://youtu.be/WodvQf0Jo9s>

and/or 'Every Move I Make' at: <https://youtu.be/MPvnZILn6EY>



Bible Passage: Matthew 9: 35 – 10: 8

A cartoon of the bible passage can be found here:

<https://youtu.be/xIFaz8FpCFQ>



...or you may prefer to read it:

Matthew 9:35-10:8 International Children's Bible (ICB)

³⁵Jesus travelled through all the towns and villages. He taught in their synagogues and told people the Good News about the kingdom. And he healed all kinds of diseases and sicknesses. ³⁶He saw the crowds of people and felt sorry for them because they were worried and helpless. They were like sheep without a shepherd. ³⁷Jesus said to his followers, "There are many people to harvest, but there are only a few workers to help harvest them. ³⁸God owns the harvest. Pray to him that he will send more workers to help gather his harvest."^[a]

Jesus Sends Out His Apostles

10 Jesus called his 12 followers together. He gave them power to drive out evil spirits and to heal every kind of disease and sickness. ²These are the names of the 12 apostles: Simon (also called Peter) and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John; ³Philip and



Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew, the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; ⁴Simon the Zealot and Judas Iscariot. Judas is the one who turned against Jesus.

⁵These 12 men he sent out with the following order: "Don't go to the non-Jewish people. And don't go into any town where the Samaritans live. ⁶But go to the people of Israel. They are like sheep that are lost. ⁷When you go, preach this: 'The kingdom of heaven is coming soon.' ⁸Heal the sick. Give dead people life again. Heal those who have harmful skin diseases. Force demons to leave people. I give you these powers freely. So, help other people freely.

Questions to ask:

- 1) Which part of the story did you like best and why?
- 2) Who do you like to follow? (Jesus? A singer? A footballer?)
- 3) Have you ever had to stand out from the crowd because you follow Jesus? How did you feel?
- 4) Can you remember a time you have helped someone?

Explaining the Passage (adapt for younger children):

Today's Bible passage tells us that Jesus travelled all around visiting many different towns and villages, and everywhere he went he saw crowds of people who were lost and helpless. It broke his heart. One day, he turned to his followers and said to them, "There are so many who need help, but there are not enough who are willing to help them." So, Jesus called his disciples and gave them the authority to help him. Jesus also calls us to be his disciples too.

Ask the children about the clubs they belong to. Is there something that allows other people to recognise that they are part of that club? Do they have a uniform or a badge to wear?

As disciples of Jesus we don't have a uniform or a badge, but other people should be able to tell that we are Christians. How? Maybe by the things we say and do that reflect Jesus, loving, forgiving, kind, compassionate, helpful. What about things that are the opposite of Jesus' character for example, Jesus' disciples shouldn't be mean or unforgiving, they shouldn't be unkind, hurtful, boastful, arrogant, be thieves or be dishonest or unfaithful.

The children might also list some more physical indicators – like recognising a Christian because they go to church, go to a Christian youth club, read the Bible and pray, talk about Jesus as their friend. Christians don't look any different. It is important to point out that there are loads of very kind and forgiving people who aren't disciples of Jesus.



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The change that Jesus makes when we follow him is on the inside. Jesus changes our hearts and our minds to be more like his when we are open to him and ask him to fill us and transform us. It is also important to point out that Christians often do the wrong thing. Being a disciple of Jesus doesn't make us perfect, but we believe Jesus forgives us and helps us to start again every time we mess up. When we are filled with the Holy Spirit people should notice we are different – for example more at peace, or filled with hope, able to ask the Holy Spirit to help us to have more self-control.

Prayer:

Dear God,
Thank you for letting us be part of your plan
Please show us ways to love one another
And to share the good news of Jesus
Show us ways that we can love one another
Thank you for your love
We love you, God!
In Jesus name, Amen!

Game:

Put some dried pasta shapes in a bowl (e.g. penne) and then add in one piece that is a different shape (e.g. fusilli). Give each person in the family 5 seconds to put their hand in the bowl and try to find the 'stand out' piece of pasta. Whoever finds it gets a small treat.

Activity:

Paper Chain

Provide the children with strips of coloured paper to write words such as loving, kind, compassionate, helpful, forgiving, on and to decorate. Once done, loop the paper strips together to make a paper chain, symbolizing that these are the qualities people should see in us as followers of Jesus and that we are all part of one family, encouraging each other when it is hard to be loving, forgiving or selfless. Put the paper chain up in the room as a display.