

**TEXT** Matthew 4:18-22; 11:28-30; 16:24-27

**SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURE** Mark 10:17-21

**OBJECTIVE** The students will be able to explain that if they wholly follow Jesus, placing Him first in their lives, He will enlighten them as to how their relationship with those around them can be in conformity with His teachings.

**KEY VERSE FOR ANSWER** He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. — John 8:12

**KEY VERSE FOR SEARCH** Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. — Matthew 16:24

**ANSWER TITLE: A Look at the Problem**  
**SEARCH TITLE: Follow Me**

**REFERENCE INFORMATION**

After John the Baptist’s arrest, Jesus traveled north making the lakeside town of Capernaum His headquarters. Here He called Peter and his brother, Andrew (Matthew 4:19), then James and John (Matthew 4:21), and began His public ministry.

**Lake of Gennesaret:** (Sea of Galilee) In most ancient records, its name appears to have been derived from the town of Cinneroth on its western shore. It was afterward called the Sea of Galilee, and finally in honor of the Emperor Tiberius, it was named Lake of Tiberias. The Sea of Galilee is about thirteen miles in length, and in its broadest part is six miles in breadth. Through the center

of this lake, from north to south, runs the River Jordan, which, coming down from its sources near the slopes of Mt. Hermon, passes onward to the Dead Sea.

**Simon, Called Peter:** A Hebrew and Greek name, according to the custom of that day. The Greek name, Petros, was given to Peter by our Lord in reference to his hardy nature and boldness. Peter was probably between thirty and forty years of age at the date of his call. He and his brother, Andrew, together with their partners James and John (the sons of Zebedee) were formerly disciples of John the Baptist when the call came (John 1:35-42).

**YOUR OPENER**

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# Follow Me

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**SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURE:** Mark 10:17-21

**KEY VERSE:** Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. — Matthew 16:24

Surrender to Christ brings a blessed relationship with the holiest, wisest, most powerful Being that is, was, or ever will be. This relationship affects all other associations we have, whether they are with the saved or unsaved. If we place Christ first in our lives, He will show us how our associations with those around us can be in conformity with His teachings.

## RESPONSES

1. Discussion of this question with your class will no doubt bring out the importance of conviction, repentance, and believing unto salvation. Other thoughts that might be mentioned are the importance of prayer, of having faith, or of being obedient.

2. Discuss with your students the advantages of being yoked together with Christ. Bring out that He leads, instructs, points the way, carries the heavy end of the load, and shares every difficulty and problem with us. (If we are yoked to Satan he will lead, guide, even drag us to destruction.) Using the account of the demoniac given in Mark 5, have the students contrast the effects of the yoke of Satan to the release and rest that Christ gives. Ask your students to offer some other Biblical examples which illustrate this Scripture.

3. Discussion of this question with your class should bring out that among the definitions given for the word *follow* are: "to come after or accompany; to take as a model; to act in accordance with; to accept the authority of; to support or advocate the ideas and opinions of; to watch or listen to closely." Using these definitions, talk about just what Christ was asking of these men—it was more than just the physical act of walking in His footsteps. Reinforce the thought that to follow Christ means the same today.

1. In the first portion of our text, Jesus called Peter and Andrew. In Matthew 11:28-30 the call was extended to become a universal invitation. Explain the steps necessary to enter into a relationship with Christ.

2. Christ's yoke is easy and light compared to the load of sin. Too often people have the idea that a yoke is heavy, and they don't get much farther than that thought. In reality, yoking shares the load and the effort. A weaker, less experienced animal is yoked to a strong, lead animal. In essence, the lead animal pulls the heavier load or carries the most weight. With this thought in mind, what are the advantages of having Jesus' yoke upon you?

3. When Jesus met Peter and Andrew, He used these words to call them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." How would you explain the word *follow*? Using your definition, what do you think Jesus was really asking of these men?

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## ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

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4. What was the reaction of these men? Give an example of one with an opposite reaction.
5. How did this relationship with Christ affect other people with whom they came into contact? See Acts 4:13. How do people today recognize a follower of Christ?
6. When Jesus spoke of taking up the cross, He was not referring to a symbol on a chain around the neck, a shiny pin on the lapel, or the smooth and varnished emblem at the front of the church. He was not speaking of a rough instrument of torture and death, but an evidence of self-denial and sacrifice. With this thought in mind, what can we determine regarding this command of Christ in relation to our lives? What advantage can there be for one in denying himself and taking up his cross?
7. Explain Matthew 16:26 in your own words.
8. Galatians 5:22,23 describes some of the characteristics we will evidence if we have a close relationship with Christ. How will these characteristics help us live in harmony with others?

4. Peter and Andrew straightway left their nets and followed Christ. Allow time for your students to offer their contrasting examples. Some possibilities might be: Felix, the rich young ruler, or the young man who wanted to return and bid his family goodbye. Use the contrasting illustrations to bring out that today, too, some accept “straightway” and others refuse. Develop the discussion to include the effects of the choice made.

5. The Jewish leaders knew that Peter and John had been with Christ and learned of Him. These men probably did not have much formal education, yet they had a wisdom that made the Jewish Council marvel. There was something about them that showed they had been with Jesus. Discuss with your class the evidences of being with Jesus that are in the lives of Christians today.

6. Discussion with your class should bring out that the one who follows Christ is not necessarily to expect an easy life. There will be trials and hard places, possibly persecution. Self-denial and sacrifice will be required. But the advantages of obeying this command far outweigh the loss suffered in making the consecrations. Allow time for your students to talk over some of these advantages. Conclude discussion of this question by directing their attention to Mark 10:21, helping them see that as well as the blessing of God in this life, they will also have treasures in Heaven.

7. Discuss some things that people in this world count important: material gain, political prestige, career, etc. Then point out to your students that the question asked in Matthew 16:26 is one of the questions in the Bible that Jesus left for us to answer. The answer is simple: There would be no profit if the soul were lost.

8. Use your students' responses to this question to summarize the benefits of maintaining a close union with Christ. This wrap-up to your lesson should lead into the following lessons for this quarter.

## YOUR WRAP-UP

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## SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

What is your soul worth?

How were John, Andrew, James and Peter related to each other?

What does the word *wholly* mean?

Name some ways in which God enlightens us as to our relationship with Him and others, our responsibilities to Him and others, and our entire Christian walk.

Why must we be saved before we can expect to understand the guidance God would give?

Peter and Andrew left their nets to follow Jesus. Name some things that people today might have to give up to follow Jesus.

How might some of the things we give up affect our relationships with others? family? friends?

How can putting Christ first improve every other relationship, even though at first it may seem to create problems?

In our ANSWER story, what parallel did Kirk draw regarding his personal problems and his transmission problem?

What place should Jesus fill in your life? Why?

How does your relationship with Jesus affect your relationship with others?

## THINGS TO DO

Bring an assortment of different sizes of gears (perhaps from a toy set), some with teeth missing and some that work smoothly together. Demonstrate that only those that fit are smooth-running and efficient. Explain that only as we are one with Christ, workers together with Him, can we have a smooth and harmonious relationship with Him and with others.

Bring a child's jigsaw puzzle made up of 8 to 12 pieces. Darken the classroom area, or blindfold a student, and ask him to put the puzzle together. Then demonstrate how easily it can be put together when the light is on or

the blindfold removed. Solutions to the problems of life, the answers we need, and harmonious relationships with others can be achieved when we have found the Light—Jesus Christ.

Bring a model train to class. Like the cars in a train, we must follow our engineer, Jesus Christ, if we want to reach our destination, Heaven. A railroad car, however, cannot move on its own. It must be connected to the power which moves it—the engine. We must be connected to the heavenly power if we plan to be a follower of Christ.

Have your students act out the story in Matthew 4:18-22. After they have finished, let them act out a modern scene showing how they should go about "fishing" for people.

## Answers for ANSWER

### Fishers of Men

Answer the questions and find the missing words. The answers can be found in the Scripture following each question or sentence. Then fill in the blank spaces of the fish net with your answers, matching the numbers.

1. Jesus said, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." Matthew 4:19
2. What was Peter's other name? Matthew 4:18
3. What sea was Jesus walking by when he saw Andrew? Matthew 4:18
4. "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden." Matthew 11:28
5. If you follow Jesus you will find rest for your soul. Matthew 11:29
6. What will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his soul? Matthew 16:26
7. I am one of Zebedee's sons. Matthew 4:21
8. What were Zebedee's sons doing to their nets when Jesus called them? Matthew 4:21
9. Jesus said, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself." Matthew 16:24
10. "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me," Jesus said. Matthew 11:29
11. When Jesus called Peter and Andrew they straightway left their nets. Matthew 4:20

