FOLLOWING JESUS VBS · DAY 1 · GRADES 7-8

Student Lesson

Jesus Calls Me: Follow Me! | Jesus Calls the Fishermen (Luke 5:1-11; Matthew 4:18-22; John 1:43-51)

Text: Luke 5:1-11; Matthew 4:18-22; John 1:43-51

Jesus Calls the Fishermen

Following Jesus begins with a call. In John 1:43 Jesus found Philip and said two words: "Follow Me." In the Gospels, the word follow is more than walking behind someone. A disciple followed a teacher to learn his words and copy his life. Jesus was inviting ordinary working men into a whole new way of living.

Luke 5:1-11 shows how that call worked in real life. Peter, Andrew, James, and John were professional fishermen on the Lake of Gennesaret. After a long night with empty nets, a carpenter from Nazareth told Peter how to fish. Peter's answer is the heart of discipleship: "Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing; nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net" (Luke 5:5). Peter did not understand, but he obeyed.

The result was overwhelming: breaking nets and sinking boats. Peter's response is worth noticing. He did not ask for a business partnership. He fell on his knees and said, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!" (Luke 5:8). Seeing who Jesus is always shows us who we are. Yet Jesus answered with grace and purpose: "Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch men" (Luke 5:10).

The cost was real. They "forsook all and followed Him" (Luke 5:11). Peter and Andrew left their nets. James and John left their boat and their father (Matthew 4:20-22). Jesus later said, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me" (Luke 9:23).

Why do people follow Jesus? Some follow a crowd. Some follow out of habit or because their family always has (compare 2 Timothy 1:5, where Timothy's faith had to become his own). Some followed Jesus only for the loaves and fish (John 6:26). The fishermen followed because they saw who He was. The real question for every teen is personal: Why do you follow Jesus, and will you follow Him when it costs you something?

> Then He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men."
>
> **Matthew 4:19 (NKJV)**

Four points to remember

- Jesus calls ordinary people, like fishermen, to follow Him (Matthew 4:18-22).
- Following Jesus means trusting Him even when we do not understand (Luke 5:5).
- Jesus knows each of us by name (John 1:47-48; John 10:27).
- Following Jesus means leaving behind anything that keeps us from Him (Luke 5:11).

Discuss

1. Peter said, "nevertheless at Your word." Where do you find it hardest to obey Jesus when it does not make sense to you?
2. Why does seeing Jesus clearly make us aware of our own sin (Luke 5:8)?
3. What are the "nets" people your age hold onto instead of following Jesus?
4. Read Luke 9:23. What does it cost to follow Jesus daily?

Live it

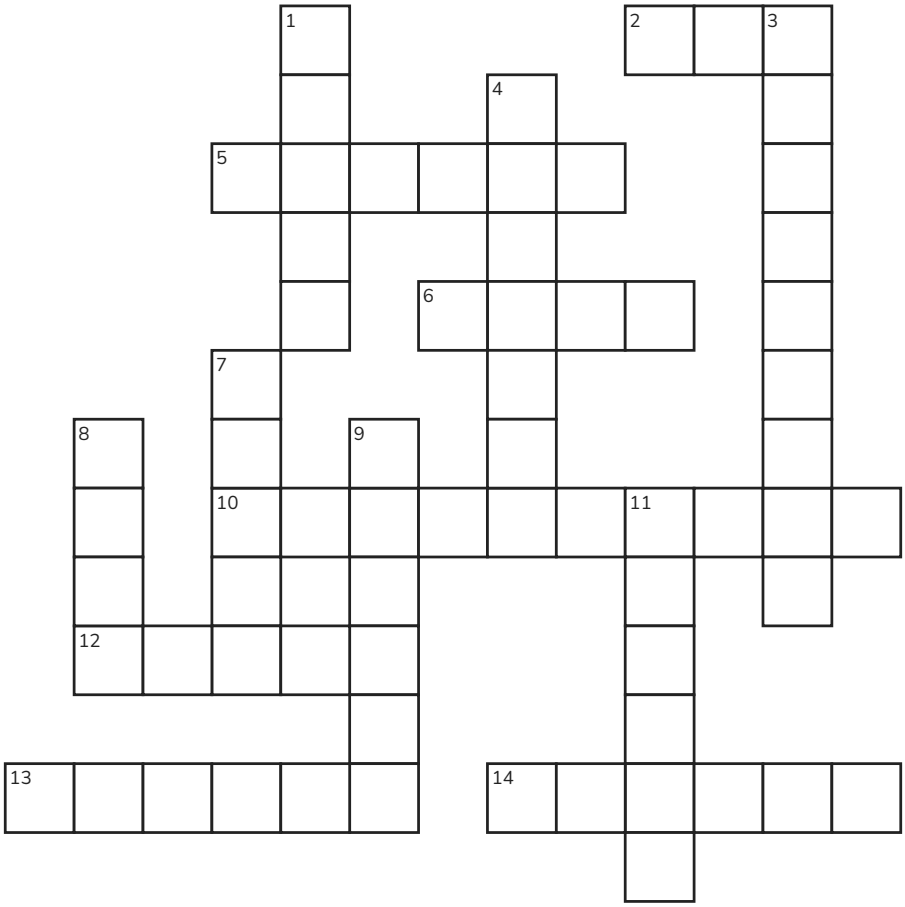
- Name one habit, distraction, or attitude you will put down this week so you can follow Jesus more closely.
- Read one chapter of a Gospel each day this week and write down one thing Jesus did or said.
- Invite one friend to come to VBS or worship with you. Say, “Come and see.”

FOLLOWING JESUS VBS · DAY 1 · GRADES 7-8

Crossword Puzzle

Jesus Calls Me: Follow Me! | Jesus Calls the Fishermen (Luke 5:1-11; Matthew 4:18-22; John 1:43-51)

Name: _____



Across

- 2. “I will make you fishers of ____” (Matthew 4:19)
- 5. What Peter called Jesus in Luke 5:5
- 6. They left their ____ and followed Him (Matthew 4:20)
- 10. The lake where Jesus taught from the boat (Luke 5:1)
- 12. Fisherman who said, “Depart from me, for I am a sinful man” (Luke 5:8)
- 13. Jesus said, “____ Me” (Matthew 4:19)
- 14. Jesus found him and said, “Follow Me” (John 1:43)

Down

- 1. The fish filled both ____ (Luke 5:7)
- 3. Philip told him, “Come and see” (John 1:45-46)
- 4. Father of James and John (Matthew 4:21)
- 7. “We have toiled all ____ and caught nothing” (Luke 5:5)
- 8. “Launch out into the ____” (Luke 5:4)
- 9. Peter’s brother (Matthew 4:18)
- 11. “Do not be ____” (Luke 5:10)

FOLLOWING JESUS VBS · DAY 1 · GRADES 7-8

Word Search (Challenge)

Jesus Calls Me: Follow Me! | Jesus Calls the Fishermen (Luke 5:1-11; Matthew 4:18-22; John 1:43-51)

Name: _____

Words go in all eight directions, including backward.

P	O	E	R	S	E	Y	R	Y	P	F	F	G	M	Y
M	T	J	G	R	R	D	A	C	D	I	X	A	J	E
H	W	I	E	Z	A	E	K	E	W	O	L	L	O	F
R	G	T	N	D	A	G	B	I	B	S	T	I	T	X
S	E	G	N	Z	Z	Y	C	X	C	N	N	L	H	O
P	E	T	E	H	J	Z	E	B	E	D	E	E	V	P
F	Y	M	S	Q	O	I	X	T	C	A	M	E	B	M
O	E	X	A	A	O	J	S	P	N	H	L	W	E	A
P	F	A	R	J	M	J	E	A	O	D	C	P	M	X
F	K	N	E	M	R	E	H	S	I	F	N	U	O	B
Z	H	D	T	G	D	T	D	L	U	Q	H	F	J	B
H	U	R	B	O	A	T	S	I	E	S	F	P	T	D
O	P	E	N	N	A	Q	F	P	C	N	J	L	U	T
O	J	W	U	V	E	I	Y	Z	Z	I	P	V	H	O
R	L	L	G	U	M	H	F	D	S	E	R	A	I	G

Find these words: ANDREW • BOATS • DEEP • FISHERMEN • FOLLOW • GALILEE • GENNESARET • JAMES • JESUS • JOHN • MASTER • NATHANAEL • NETS • PETER • PHILIP • ZEBEDEE

FOLLOWING JESUS VBS · DAY 1 · GRADES 7-8

Study Sheet

Jesus Calls Me: Follow Me! | Jesus Calls the Fishermen (Luke 5:1-11; Matthew 4:18-22; John 1:43-51)

Name: _____

> Then He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men."
> **Matthew 4:19 (NKJV)**

Read each passage and answer in your own words.

Luke 5:1–3

Why do you think Jesus taught from Peter's boat? What does this show about how Jesus uses ordinary things?

Luke 5:4–7

What was unusual about Jesus' command? What did Peter's obedience lead to?

Luke 5:8–10

How did Peter respond to the miracle? How did Jesus respond to Peter?

Matthew 4:18–22

What did each pair of brothers leave? How quickly did they respond?

John 1:43–51

How did Philip share Jesus with Nathanael? What can we learn from “Come and see”?

FOLLOWING JESUS VBS · DAY 1 · GRADES 7-8

Discussion and Journal

Jesus Calls Me: Follow Me! | Jesus Calls the Fishermen (Luke 5:1-11; Matthew 4:18-22; John 1:43-51)

Name: _____

Journal

Jesus called the fishermen right in the middle of their work. Where in your everyday life is Jesus calling you to follow Him?

Peter said, “nevertheless at Your word.” Write about one thing Jesus asks in Scripture that you need to obey even if you do not fully understand it.

What “nets” do you need to leave behind to follow Jesus more closely?

Real life this week

- Name one habit, distraction, or attitude you will put down this week so you can follow Jesus more closely.
- Read one chapter of a Gospel each day this week and write down one thing Jesus did or said.
- Invite one friend to come to VBS or worship with you. Say, “Come and see.”

My one step:

FOLLOWING JESUS VBS · DAY 2 · GRADES 7-8

Student Lesson

Jesus Teaches Me: Hear and Do! | The Sermon on the Mount and the Wise and Foolish Builders (Matthew 5:1-16; 6:9-13, 33; 7:12, 24-29)

Text: Matthew 5:1-16; 6:9-13, 33; 7:12, 24-29

The Sermon on the Mount and the Wise and Foolish Builders

Matthew 7:28-29 tells us how the first audience reacted to the Sermon on the Mount: "the people were astonished at His teaching, for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes." The scribes quoted other rabbis. Jesus said, "But I say to you." He spoke as the One who has the right to tell us how to live.

The sermon is a blueprint for disciples. It starts with character (Matthew 5:3-12). Your attitude is one of the keys to how you will receive the words of Jesus. It moves to influence: salt and light, so that others "may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven" (Matthew 5:16). Then Jesus goes to the heart: anger as well as murder, lust as well as adultery, honesty without oaths, and love for enemies (Matthew 5:21-48).

In chapter 6 Jesus addresses motives. Do you give, pray, and fast to be seen by people or by God (Matthew 6:1-18)? The pride of doing good to be praised by others is still with us. Then He addresses priorities: treasure in heaven, a single focus, freedom from worry, and "seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness" (Matthew 6:19-34).

Chapter 7 calls for decisions: how we treat others (Matthew 7:1-12), which road we take (7:13-14), which teachers we trust (7:15-23), and which foundation we build on (7:24-27). Notice that both builders heard the same words and faced the same storm. Storms come to everyone. The only difference was obedience.

Jesus taught by words, by actions, by being close to people, and by stories. But He never taught just to inform. He taught to transform. James says it plainly: "But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves" (James 1:22). Following Jesus is not proven by how much we know, but by what we do with what we know.

> "Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock."
>
> **Matthew 7:24 (NKJV)**

Four points to remember

- Jesus is the greatest Teacher. He taught "as one having authority" (Matthew 7:29).
- Jesus teaches us how to live: be salt and light, love others, pray, and seek God first (Matthew 5-7).
- Hearing is not enough. The wise person hears Jesus and does what He says (Matthew 7:24; James 1:22).
- A life built on Jesus' words stands strong when storms come (Matthew 7:25).

Discuss

1. What does it mean that Jesus taught "as one having authority"? How should that change how we read His words?

2. Jesus addresses the heart, not just actions (Matthew 5:21-28). Why does He go deeper than outward rules?
3. Matthew 6 talks about doing good to be seen. Where do you see that temptation today, including on social media?
4. What does “seek first the kingdom of God” look like for a student?

Live it

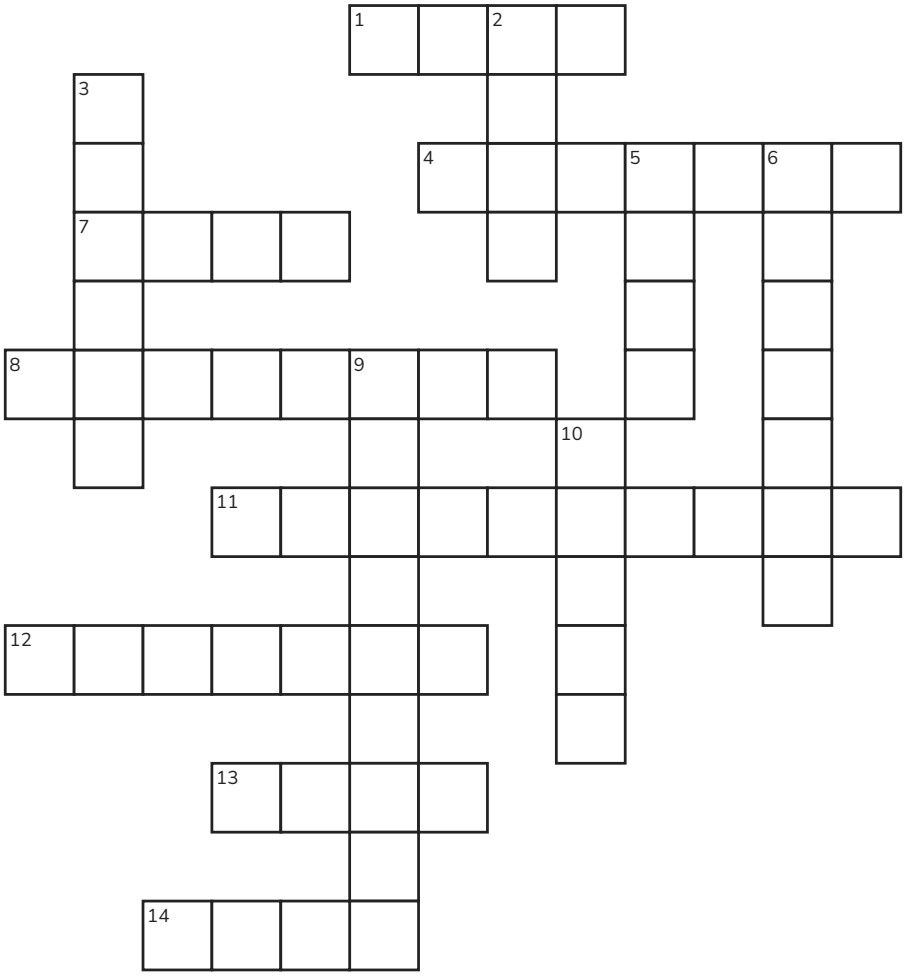
- Choose one command from Matthew 5-7 and practice it every day this week (for example, Matthew 5:44 or Matthew 7:12).
- Pray the model prayer (Matthew 6:9-13) slowly each morning, thinking about each line.
- Do one good work quietly this week without telling anyone (Matthew 6:3-4).

FOLLOWING JESUS VBS · DAY 2 · GRADES 7-8

Crossword Puzzle

Jesus Teaches Me: Hear and Do! | The Sermon on the Mount and the Wise and Foolish Builders (Matthew 5:1-16; 6:9-13, 33; 7:12, 24-29)

Name: _____



Across

- 1. Hearing and doing makes you like a ____ man (Matthew 7:24)
- 4. "____ are the pure in heart" (Matthew 5:8)
- 7. The wise man built on the ____ (Matthew 7:24)
- 8. Jesus went up on a ____ and taught (Matthew 5:1)
- 11. The people were ____ at His teaching (Matthew 7:28)
- 12. "Seek first the ____ of God" (Matthew 6:33)
- 13. "The ____ descended, the floods came" (Matthew 7:25)
- 14. "In this manner, therefore, ____" (Matthew 6:9)

Down

- 2. "You are the ____ of the earth" (Matthew 5:13)
- 3. "Enter by the ____ gate" (Matthew 7:13)
- 5. The foolish man built on the ____ (Matthew 7:26)
- 6. "Love your ____" (Matthew 5:44)
- 9. He taught as one having ____ (Matthew 7:29)
- 10. "You are the ____ of the world" (Matthew 5:14)

FOLLOWING JESUS VBS · DAY 2 · GRADES 7-8

Word Search (Challenge)

Jesus Teaches Me: Hear and Do! | The Sermon on the Mount and the Wise and Foolish Builders
(Matthew 5:1-16; 6:9-13, 33; 7:12, 24-29)

Name: _____

Words go in all eight directions, including backward.

G	B	Y	D	W	K	N	Z	X	Z	P	R	P	N	X
J	I	P	G	M	P	B	W	Z	S	J	F	H	K	B
K	D	Z	P	V	B	X	Q	A	X	L	S	A	L	T
J	W	L	Y	L	D	B	M	B	O	S	U	E	I	L
D	R	N	D	K	G	F	O	O	L	I	S	H	G	S
G	P	V	O	W	I	N	D	S	U	S	K	T	H	D
W	A	S	Q	E	E	S	G	W	E	N	P	R	T	E
Y	C	R	V	G	J	U	N	D	K	A	T	E	E	H
Q	O	E	X	G	A	Y	I	V	Q	R	U	A	S	S
P	C	E	U	H	Q	D	K	C	O	R	J	S	I	I
G	F	M	I	P	R	N	Y	S	E	O	G	U	W	N
X	Y	Z	O	N	B	A	X	Q	D	W	V	R	Y	O
V	Z	Y	M	R	Z	S	E	I	M	E	N	E	X	T
B	T	B	G	Z	B	H	Q	C	P	T	X	S	N	S
J	N	P	H	E	B	Y	T	I	R	O	H	T	U	A

Find these words: ASTONISHED • AUTHORITY • BLESSED • ENEMIES • FLOODS • FOOLISH • KINGDOM • LIGHT • MOUNTAIN • NARROW • ROCK • SALT • SAND • TREASURE • WINDS • WISE

FOLLOWING JESUS VBS · DAY 2 · GRADES 7-8

Study Sheet

Jesus Teaches Me: Hear and Do! | The Sermon on the Mount and the Wise and Foolish Builders
(Matthew 5:1-16; 6:9-13, 33; 7:12, 24-29)

Name: _____

> "Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock."
>
> **Matthew 7:24 (NKJV)**

Read each passage and answer in your own words.

Matthew 5:3-12

List three of the Beatitudes. Which one describes the kind of person you most want to become?

Matthew 5:13-16

What do salt and light do? How can a Christian student be salt and light at school?

Matthew 5:21-24, 43-48

How does Jesus go deeper than the outward command? What does He require of the heart?

Matthew 6:1-6

What warning does Jesus give about doing good? Who should we be trying to please?

Matthew 6:19-34

What does Jesus say about treasure and worry? What does it mean to seek first the kingdom?

FOLLOWING JESUS VBS · DAY 2 · GRADES 7-8

Discussion and Journal

Jesus Teaches Me: Hear and Do! | The Sermon on the Mount and the Wise and Foolish Builders (Matthew 5:1-16; 6:9-13, 33; 7:12, 24-29)

Name: _____

Journal

If someone looked only at your actions this week, what would they think you believe about Jesus?

Pick one teaching from Matthew 5-7 that you have heard but not done. Write a plan to do it this week.

What storms are you facing right now? Is your life built on the rock?

Real life this week

- Choose one command from Matthew 5-7 and practice it every day this week (for example, Matthew 5:44 or Matthew 7:12).
- Pray the model prayer (Matthew 6:9-13) slowly each morning, thinking about each line.
- Do one good work quietly this week without telling anyone (Matthew 6:3-4).

My one step:

FOLLOWING JESUS VBS · DAY 3 · GRADES 7-8

Student Lesson

Jesus Shows Me How to Love: Serve Like Jesus! | Jesus Washes the Disciples' Feet (John 13:1-17, 34-35; Luke 22:24-27)

Text: John 13:1-17, 34-35; Luke 22:24-27

Jesus Washes the Disciples' Feet

John 13 opens with one of the most moving sentences in the Gospels: "Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end" (John 13:1). Jesus knew the cross was hours away. Yet His focus was not on His own suffering but on teaching and serving His disciples.

The disciples, meanwhile, were arguing about rank and places of honor (Luke 22:24). Foot washing was the job of the lowest servant, and none of the twelve volunteered. So Jesus rose, prepared Himself like a servant, and washed their feet (John 13:4-5). It was genuine loving service, an act of humility, and a courtesy their pride had made them forget. He washed Judas' feet too, overcoming evil with good.

Peter's objection (John 13:6-8) sounds respectful, but good intentions become dangerous when they lead us to refuse the Lord's will. Peter was letting his own reasoning be his guide. Jesus' answer was firm: "If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me." Discipleship means surrendering to the way of humility Jesus came to teach, even when we do not yet understand.

Jesus explained His action: as Teacher and Lord, He had served them, so they ought to serve one another (John 13:13-15). The apostles never taught foot washing as a church ritual or act of worship. They taught what it pictured: lowliness of mind, subjection, and loving service (Philippians 2:3-8; Galatians 5:13; 1 Peter 5:5). The point is a servant's heart.

This kind of love comes from God. "In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:10). Real love acts: "If you love Me, keep My commandments" (John 14:15). When you are tempted to think about your place, your rights, or your reputation, picture the Son of God with a towel around His waist, kneeling at the disciples' feet.

> "For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you."
> **John 13:15 (NKJV)**

Four points to remember

- Jesus loved His disciples "to the end" (John 13:1), even the one who would betray Him.
- The Lord and Teacher took the lowest servant's job and washed dirty feet (John 13:4-5).
- Jesus gave us an example of humble, loving service to follow (John 13:14-15).
- People will know we are His disciples by our love for one another (John 13:34-35).

Discuss

1. Jesus knew the cross was coming, yet He served others. What does that tell you about His love?
2. Peter's intentions were good but he resisted Jesus. How can good intentions lead us away from obedience?

3. Why do you think the apostles taught humility and service instead of a foot washing ritual?
4. Where is the “who is the greatest” attitude strong in your world?

Live it

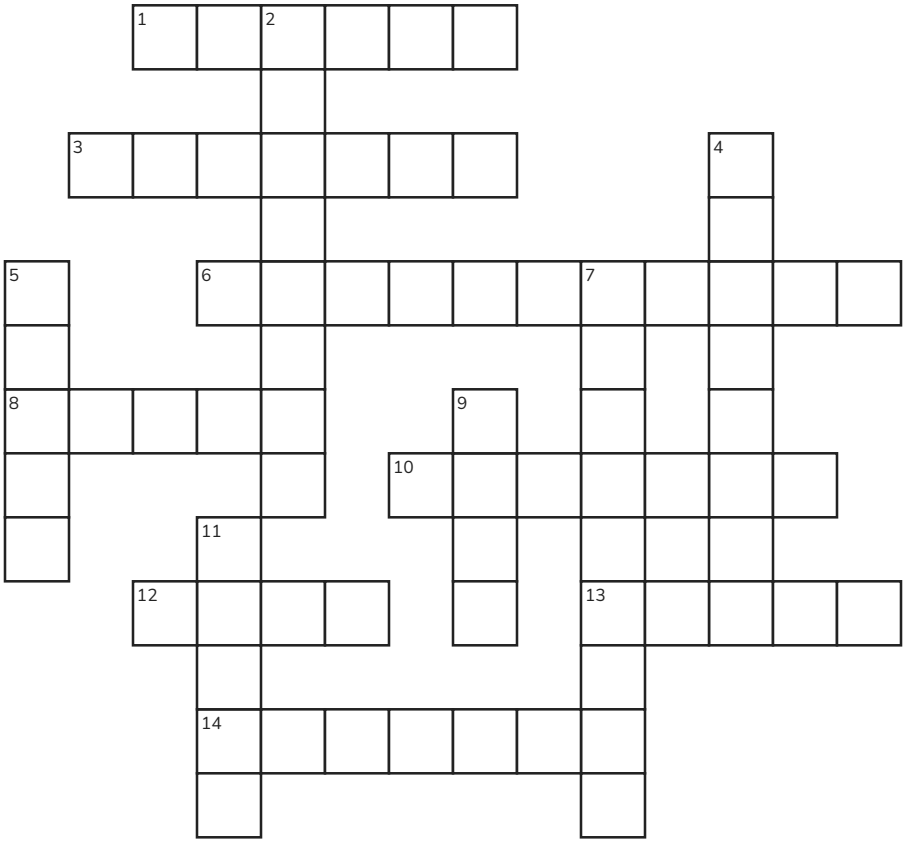
- Do one unseen act of service at home every day this week (dishes, laundry, cleaning) without being asked.
- Write a note of encouragement to someone who is often overlooked.
- As a class, plan a service project for the church or community (cards for shut-ins, cleaning, yard work).

FOLLOWING JESUS VBS · DAY 3 · GRADES 7-8

Crossword Puzzle

Jesus Shows Me How to Love: Serve Like Jesus! | Jesus Washes the Disciples' Feet (John 13:1-17, 34-35; Luke 22:24-27)

Name: _____



Across

- 1. Jesus rose from ____ (John 13:4)
- 3. "____ are you if you do them" (John 13:17)
- 6. "A new ____ I give to you" (John 13:34)
- 8. He came not to be served, but to ____ (Mark 10:45)
- 10. "You call Me ____ and Lord" (John 13:13)
- 12. "That you ____ one another" (John 13:34)
- 13. Said, "You shall never wash my feet!" (John 13:8)
- 14. "I have given you an ____" (John 13:15)

Down

- 2. The feast that was about to begin (John 13:1)
- 4. The disciples argued over who was the ____ (Luke 22:24)
- 5. He poured water into a ____ (John 13:5)
- 7. "By this all will know that you are My ____" (John 13:35)
- 9. He began to wash the disciples' ____ (John 13:5)
- 11. Jesus girded Himself with a ____ (John 13:4)

FOLLOWING JESUS VBS · DAY 3 · GRADES 7-8

Word Search (Challenge)

Jesus Shows Me How to Love: Serve Like Jesus! | Jesus Washes the Disciples' Feet (John 13:1-17, 34-35; Luke 22:24-27)

Name: _____

Words go in all eight directions, including backward.

I	F	V	L	R	D	T	K	O	L	G	D	N	W	Z
S	C	Z	F	D	E	L	H	O	U	M	S	P	P	E
F	Y	Z	T	I	E	U	U	Z	V	B	F	D	F	X
D	D	D	U	S	I	V	M	O	R	X	N	X	M	B
B	Q	E	M	C	V	D	B	B	E	U	U	S	X	M
O	R	J	H	I	O	B	L	R	L	R	B	H	A	C
Q	C	Q	R	P	E	M	E	Z	O	E	W	K	E	E
Y	O	F	X	L	V	V	M	E	X	T	S	T	V	S
D	P	Y	F	E	O	Z	W	A	T	E	R	S	R	A
L	A	Y	K	S	L	U	M	L	N	P	T	E	E	F
C	W	B	S	U	P	P	E	R	L	D	H	T	S	D
V	M	A	C	G	L	W	P	P	Z	C	M	A	I	A
F	P	S	B	E	O	O	P	G	A	E	S	E	Z	M
R	P	I	F	T	P	W	I	E	Y	D	P	R	N	O
X	Z	N	H	A	X	R	T	P	F	C	I	G	I	T

Find these words: BASIN • BLESSED • COMMANDMENT • DISCIPLES • EXAMPLE • FEET • GREATEST • HUMBLE • LOVE • PASSOVER • PETER • SERVE • SUPPER • TEACHER • TOWEL • WATER

FOLLOWING JESUS VBS · DAY 3 · GRADES 7-8

Study Sheet

Jesus Shows Me How to Love: Serve Like Jesus! | Jesus Washes the Disciples' Feet (John 13:1-17, 34-35; Luke 22:24-27)

Name: _____

"For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you."
John 13:15 (NKJV)

Read each passage and answer in your own words.

John 13:1-3

What did Jesus know as He came to this supper? What does verse 1 say about His love?

Luke 22:24-27

What were the disciples arguing about? How does Jesus define greatness?

John 13:4-5

List every action Jesus took. What does each one show about Him?

John 13:6-10

Why did Peter object? Why was Jesus' answer so serious?

John 13:12–17

What lesson did Jesus draw from His action? Where is the blessing found?

FOLLOWING JESUS VBS · DAY 3 · GRADES 7-8

Discussion and Journal

Jesus Shows Me How to Love: Serve Like Jesus! | Jesus Washes the Disciples' Feet (John 13:1-17, 34-35; Luke 22:24-27)

Name: _____

Journal

Who is the hardest person for you to serve? What would it look like to "wash their feet" this week?

When have you been more concerned about your place or reputation than about serving? What will you do differently?

Write a prayer asking God to give you a servant's heart like Jesus.

Real life this week

- Do one unseen act of service at home every day this week (dishes, laundry, cleaning) without being asked.
- Write a note of encouragement to someone who is often overlooked.
- As a class, plan a service project for the church or community (cards for shut-ins, cleaning, yard work).

My one step:

FOLLOWING JESUS VBS · DAY 4 · GRADES 7-8

Student Lesson

Jesus Saves Me: He Is Risen! | The Cross and the Empty Tomb (Matthew 27:27-28:10; Luke 23:33-46; John 19:30)

Text: Matthew 27:27-28:10; Luke 23:33-46; John 19:30

The Cross and the Empty Tomb

What does the cross of Christ mean to you? Many of us have heard about it so often that it can lose its effect. Paul warned that the cross could be "made of no effect" (1 Corinthians 1:17). "For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God" (1 Corinthians 1:18).

Roman crucifixion was a slave's punishment. The first-century historian Josephus called it the most wretched of deaths. Victims were usually scourged, made to carry the crossbeam, nailed to it, and left exposed, with their crime posted above their heads. Jesus endured all of this: Barabbas was released in His place, and Jesus was stripped, crowned with thorns, mocked, spit upon, struck, and nailed to the cross under the charge, "THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS" (Matthew 27:26-37; Isaiah 50:6).

Why? Luke 24 shows two disciples on the road to Emmaus who needed their eyes opened to this. The Who: God the Father gave the Son (John 3:16). The What: Jesus is the propitiation for our sins (1 John 2:2), the Lamb who takes away sin (John 1:29), our Passover (1 Corinthians 5:7). The When: at the appointed time, fulfilling Scripture (Matthew 26:18; John 19:30). The Why: "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23), and God "made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Corinthians 5:21).

The burial matters too. Jesus was laid in a rich man's new tomb, as Isaiah 53:9 foretold, sealed with a stone and guarded by soldiers (Matthew 27:57-66). Paul connects His burial to ours: "we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" (Romans 6:4).

Then came the first day of the week: an earthquake, an angel, a rolled-away stone, terrified guards, and the announcement, "He is not here; for He is risen, as He said" (Matthew 28:6). The resurrection is the foundation of our faith. It declares Jesus to be the Son of God with power (Romans 1:4) and shows that sin and death do not have the final word. The question is not only whether Jesus rose, but whether you have died to sin and been raised with Him.

> "He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay."
>
> **Matthew 28:6 (NKJV)**

Four points to remember

- Jesus, the sinless Son of God, willingly died on the cross for our sins (Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21).
- Jesus was buried in a borrowed tomb that was sealed and guarded (Matthew 27:57-66).
- On the third day Jesus rose from the dead, just as He said (Matthew 28:6; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4).
- Because Jesus lives, we have forgiveness, hope, and good news to tell (Matthew 28:7).

Discuss

1. Has the cross ever “lost its effect” on you? How can we keep from becoming hard-hearted about it?
2. Walk through the Who, What, When, How, and Why of the cross. Which one means the most to you?
3. Why is the resurrection the foundation of the Christian faith (1 Corinthians 15:14-17)?
4. How does Romans 6:3-4 connect Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection to baptism?

Live it

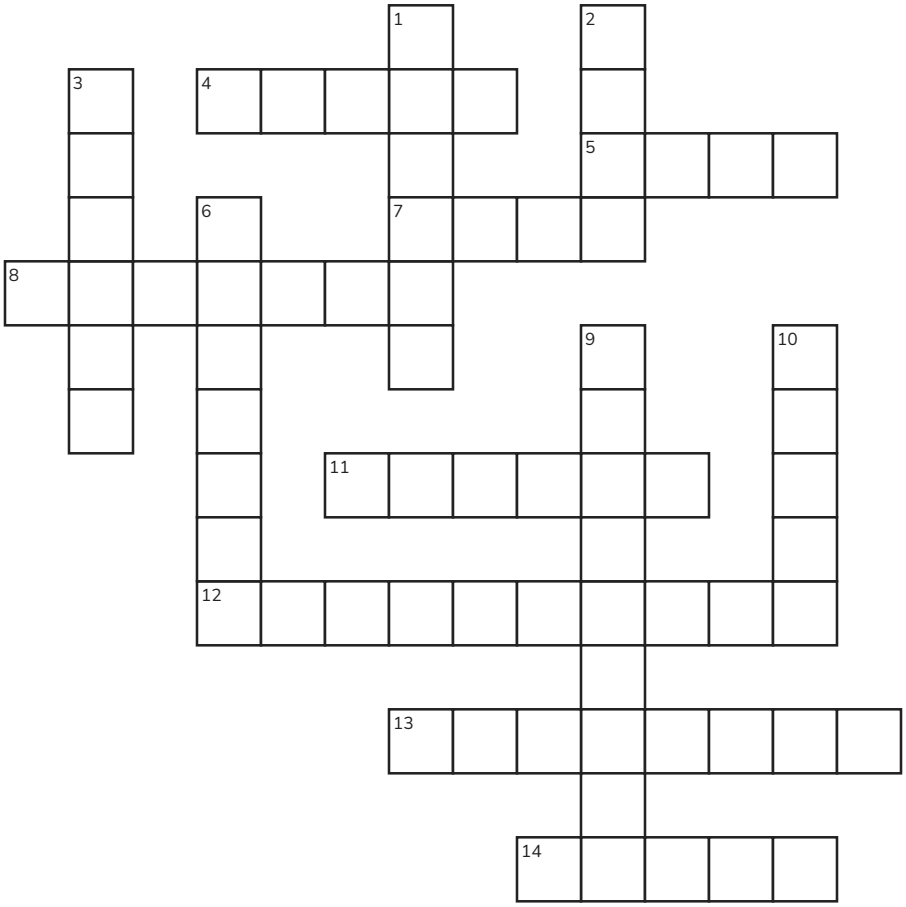
- Read one Gospel account of the crucifixion and resurrection this week (Matthew 26-28, Mark 14-16, Luke 22-24, or John 18-20).
- When you take the Lord’s Supper this Sunday, think about the Who, What, When, How, and Why of the cross.
- If you have questions about obeying the gospel, talk with your parents, a teacher, or one of the preachers or elders this week.

FOLLOWING JESUS VBS · DAY 4 · GRADES 7-8

Crossword Puzzle

Jesus Saves Me: He Is Risen! | The Cross and the Empty Tomb (Matthew 27:27-28:10; Luke 23:33-46; John 19:30)

Name: _____



Across

- 4. “He is not here; for He is ____” (Matthew 28:6)
- 5. ____ Magdalene came to see the tomb (Matthew 28:1)
- 7. “Behold! The ____ of God” (John 1:29)
- 8. Jesus met the women and said this (Matthew 28:9)
- 11. The soldiers put a crown of ____ on His head (Matthew 27:29)
- 12. There was a great ____ (Matthew 28:2)
- 13. “It is ____!” (John 19:30)
- 14. He rolled back the stone and sat on it (Matthew 28:2)

Down

- 1. They ____ the stone and set a guard (Matthew 27:66)
- 2. Jesus was laid in a new ____ (Matthew 27:60)
- 3. Rich man of Arimathea who gave his tomb (Matthew 27:57)
- 6. “Father, ____ them” (Luke 23:34)
- 9. He said, “Truly this was the Son of God!” (Matthew 27:54)
- 10. A large ____ was rolled against the door (Matthew 27:60)

FOLLOWING JESUS VBS · DAY 4 · GRADES 7-8

Word Search (Challenge)

Jesus Saves Me: He Is Risen! | The Cross and the Empty Tomb (Matthew 27:27-28:10; Luke 23:33-46; John 19:30)

Name: _____

Words go in all eight directions, including backward.

B	N	V	U	Q	U	X	M	O	W	N	V	G	P	D
C	S	U	B	X	M	N	M	Q	B	D	S	U	A	P
X	T	G	S	Y	I	T	N	I	L	M	E	I	I	G
S	O	U	A	E	Y	S	P	U	D	G	B	L	R	F
S	N	A	X	A	A	V	W	Y	U	S	X	L	P	T
O	E	R	Z	R	F	L	D	C	V	C	C	R	S	R
R	P	D	O	T	Z	L	E	G	N	A	K	T	U	K
C	Q	Z	D	H	E	N	H	D	E	B	I	B	U	J
W	Z	E	N	Q	T	V	S	C	S	H	V	M	B	C
M	K	I	J	U	R	K	I	I	I	P	J	A	I	O
I	O	C	R	A	Q	O	N	G	R	E	G	L	O	C
T	T	I	A	K	J	V	I	B	R	S	V	Q	I	L
B	O	D	C	E	D	G	F	V	I	O	M	Z	Q	T
N	M	U	R	F	G	L	Z	M	A	J	F	C	Q	D
D	B	P	Q	B	Q	F	U	A	U	S	P	Z	R	B

Find these words: ANGEL • CENTURION • CROSS • EARTHQUAKE • FINISHED • FORGIVE • GUARD • JOSEPH • LAMB • REJOICE • RISEN • SAVIOR • SEALED • STONE • THORNS • TOMB

FOLLOWING JESUS VBS · DAY 4 · GRADES 7-8

Study Sheet

Jesus Saves Me: He Is Risen! | The Cross and the Empty Tomb (Matthew 27:27-28:10; Luke 23:33-46; John 19:30)

Name: _____

> "He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay."
>
> **Matthew 28:6 (NKJV)**

Read each passage and answer in your own words.

Isaiah 53:4–9

List the details Isaiah gave hundreds of years before the cross. Which ones were fulfilled in Matthew 27?

Matthew 27:26–37

List the things Jesus suffered. Why would the King of kings accept a slave's punishment?

Luke 23:33–46

What did Jesus say from the cross? What do His words teach us?

Matthew 27:57–66

Who buried Jesus? What steps did the leaders take to secure the tomb, and why?

Matthew 28:1–10

Describe the scene at the tomb. What did the angel say and command?

FOLLOWING JESUS VBS · DAY 4 · GRADES 7-8

Discussion and Journal

Jesus Saves Me: He Is Risen! | The Cross and the Empty Tomb (Matthew 27:27-28:10; Luke 23:33-46; John 19:30)

Name: _____

Journal

Write a letter to Jesus thanking Him for the cross. Be specific about what His sacrifice means to you.

Have you become hard-hearted about the cross? What will help you remember it with fresh eyes (consider the Lord's Supper, 1 Corinthians 11:23-26)?

Because Jesus is alive, what fear or worry can you hand over to Him?

Real life this week

- Read one Gospel account of the crucifixion and resurrection this week (Matthew 26-28, Mark 14-16, Luke 22-24, or John 18-20).
- When you take the Lord's Supper this Sunday, think about the Who, What, When, How, and Why of the cross.
- If you have questions about obeying the gospel, talk with your parents, a teacher, or one of the preachers or elders this week.

My one step:

FOLLOWING JESUS VBS · DAY 5 · GRADES 7-8

Student Lesson

Jesus Sends Me: Go and Tell! | The Great Commission, the Ascension, and the Day of Pentecost
(Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 1:3-11; Acts 2:22-41)

Text: Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 1:3-11; Acts 2:22-41

The Great Commission, the Ascension, and the Day of Pentecost

Jesus did not leave His followers with a nice memory. He left them with a mission. “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:18-20). Mark records the same charge: “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved” (Mark 16:15-16).

Forty days after the resurrection, Jesus ascended (Acts 1:3, 9). The ascension was not the end of His work but the beginning of theirs. “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me” (Acts 1:8). The question from the two men in white still fits: “why do you stand gazing up into heaven?” (Acts 1:11). There was work to do, and Jesus will return.

Acts 2 shows the Great Commission carried out for the first time. Peter preached Jesus crucified and raised (Acts 2:22-36). The crowd heard, believed, and were cut to the heart. Their question, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?” (Acts 2:37), received an inspired answer: “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38). About three thousand obeyed (Acts 2:41).

Jesus Himself taught every step of this response: hearing (Matthew 7:24; Romans 10:17), believing (John 8:24; Mark 16:16), repenting (Luke 13:3; Luke 24:47), confessing (Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10), and being baptized (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:16). Paul does not describe baptism as a symbol of something that already happened; he describes it as the point where we are buried with Christ and raised to walk in newness of life (Romans 6:3-4; Acts 22:16). Then Jesus calls us to be faithful until death (Revelation 2:10).

Following Jesus always ends in going for Jesus. You do not need a pulpit to be a witness. Philip simply said, “Come and see” (John 1:46). The journey does not end at VBS. Keep seeking Jesus daily, obey Him fully, and share Him with the people He places in your life.

> And He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.”
>
> **Mark 16:15-16 (NKJV)**

Four points to remember

- Before He went back to heaven, Jesus sent His followers into all the world with the gospel (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15).
- Jesus ascended to heaven and will come again (Acts 1:9-11).
- On Pentecost people heard the gospel, believed, repented, and were baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 2:36-41).

- Every follower of Jesus has good news to share and a life of faithfulness to live (Acts 1:8; Revelation 2:10).

The response to the gospel (Acts 2:36–41)

Step	What it means	Scripture
Hear	Listen to and learn God's word about Jesus	Romans 10:17; Matthew 7:24
Believe	Trust that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God	John 8:24; Mark 16:16; Hebrews 11:6
Repent	Turn away from sin and turn to God	Acts 2:38; Luke 13:3
Confess	Say with your mouth that Jesus is Lord	Romans 10:9-10; Matthew 10:32
Be baptized	Be buried with Christ in water for the remission of sins	Acts 2:38; Mark 16:16; Romans 6:3-4; Acts 22:16
Live faithfully	Keep following Jesus every day	Acts 2:42; Revelation 2:10

Discuss

1. Why do you think Jesus gave His followers a mission instead of just a memory?
2. Trace each step in Acts 2: hear, believe, repent, confess, be baptized. Where is each one taught by Jesus?
3. What does Romans 6:3-4 teach happens in baptism?
4. What would "Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the end of the earth" look like for you?

Live it

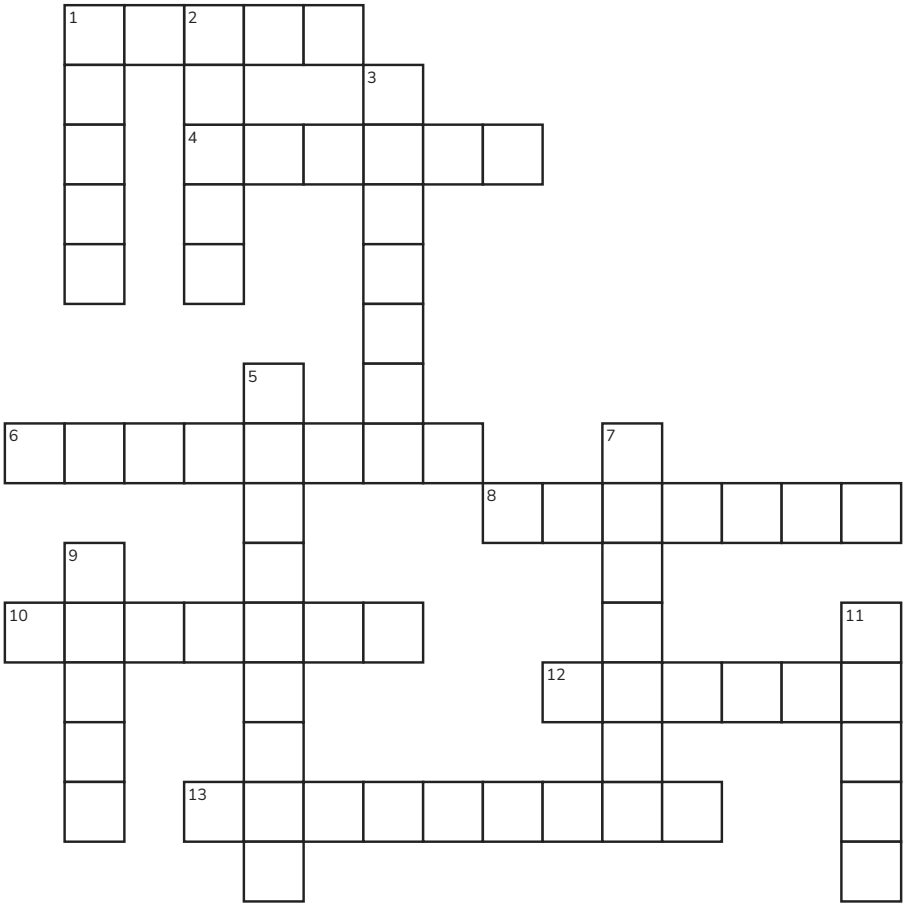
- Practice explaining Acts 2:36-41 from your own Bible to a parent or friend.
- Invite someone to worship with you this Sunday.
- Choose one way to keep following Jesus after VBS: daily Bible reading, faithful attendance, or serving at church.

FOLLOWING JESUS VBS · DAY 5 · GRADES 7-8

Crossword Puzzle

Jesus Sends Me: Go and Tell! | The Great Commission, the Ascension, and the Day of Pentecost
(Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 1:3-11; Acts 2:22-41)

Name: _____



Across

- 1. “You shall receive ____” (Acts 1:8)
- 4. “____, and let every one of you be baptized” (Acts 2:38)
- 6. “He who believes and is ____ will be saved” (Mark 16:16)
- 8. “Faith comes by ____” (Romans 10:17)
- 10. “If you ____ with your mouth the Lord Jesus” (Romans 10:9)
- 12. “Preach the ____ to every creature” (Mark 16:15)
- 13. The day the apostles first preached the gospel in Jerusalem (Acts 2:1)

Down

- 1. He preached on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:14)
- 2. “Go into all the ____” (Mark 16:15)
- 3. “And ____ in your heart that God has raised Him” (Romans 10:9)
- 5. “You shall be ____ to Me” (Acts 1:8)
- 7. “Make disciples of all the ____” (Matthew 28:19)
- 9. He was seen by them during ____ days (Acts 1:3)
- 11. A ____ received Him out of their sight (Acts 1:9)

FOLLOWING JESUS VBS · DAY 5 · GRADES 7-8

Word Search (Challenge)

Jesus Sends Me: Go and Tell! | The Great Commission, the Ascension, and the Day of Pentecost
(Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 1:3-11; Acts 2:22-41)

Name: _____

Words go in all eight directions, including backward.

Z	G	K	F	M	K	P	H	S	N	W	I	C	A	W
O	B	A	C	K	I	C	M	S	X	K	R	Z	P	B
Y	Y	H	G	N	I	R	A	E	H	K	R	X	F	L
U	E	M	K	K	C	T	N	F	O	A	I	M	Q	Y
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R	E	T	E	P	C	L	D	A	K	S	S	V	D	F
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N	P	O	W	E	R	U	D	L	E	P	S	O	G	Q
E	O	A	C	X	E	F	O	U	H	B	U	P	O	Y
A	B	W	C	M	P	U	D	Y	O	D	T	U	N	G

Find these words: BAPTIZED • BELIEVE • CLOUD • CONFESS • GOSPEL • HEARING • HEAVEN • NATIONS • PENTECOST • PETER • POWER • REMISSION • REPENT • THOUSAND • WITNESSES • WORLD

FOLLOWING JESUS VBS · DAY 5 · GRADES 7-8

Study Sheet

Jesus Sends Me: Go and Tell! | The Great Commission, the Ascension, and the Day of Pentecost
(Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 1:3-11; Acts 2:22-41)

Name: _____

> And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned."
>
> **Mark 16:15-16 (NKJV)**

Read each passage and answer in your own words.

Matthew 28:18–20

What authority does Jesus claim? List the commands in the Great Commission.

Mark 16:15–16

Who is to hear the gospel? What does Jesus say about who will be saved?

Acts 1:6–11

What did Jesus promise before He ascended? What did the two men in white say?

Acts 2:22–36

What facts about Jesus did Peter preach? What was his conclusion in verse 36?

Acts 2:37-41

What did the people ask? What was Peter's answer? How did the people respond?

FOLLOWING JESUS VBS · DAY 5 · GRADES 7-8

Discussion and Journal

Jesus Sends Me: Go and Tell! | The Great Commission, the Ascension, and the Day of Pentecost
(Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 1:3-11; Acts 2:22-41)

Name: _____

Journal

Have you obeyed the gospel the way the people did in Acts 2? If not, what questions or obstacles stand in your way? If so, how are you continuing steadfastly (Acts 2:42)?

Write the names of three people who need to hear about Jesus. Pray for them by name this week.

Write out, in your own words, how you would show a friend from the Bible what to do to be saved.

Real life this week

- Practice explaining Acts 2:36-41 from your own Bible to a parent or friend.
- Invite someone to worship with you this Sunday.
- Choose one way to keep following Jesus after VBS: daily Bible reading, faithful attendance, or serving at church.

My one step: