

Bible Heroes

Little James Teachers Story notes



Essential Teachers notes:

Being included, chosen, selected is a huge part of childhood and often a key fear. Children learn in some ways through imitation and therefore comparison, we all crave acceptance. This is great story to launch the Apostles from, it's a story about ordinary men with familiar stories, but also the idea that some stories are untold. Little James, perhaps younger, perhaps shorter, was by no means truly 'lesser', it may actually be the case that his contribution was greater, we will never know. Let the children use their imagination to fill in the blank spaces as you read.

Main Passage : Luke 6

Additional passages : Matthew 10, Mark 3, + others

Lets start by using our imagination.....there was a really big crowd of people and everyone was looking at Jesus. Jesus has just said that he wants to select his special Disciples, the Apostles. It's a bit like picking people for a sports team, but there is only Jesus' team and everyone wanted to be in it! How many people do you think were there? _____.

Today's hero is in the crowd, his name is James and he's not very tall so he's trying to move to the front to see. I wonder what's blocking his view? Can you imagine what may stop him from seeing? _____.

Jesus is talking. He's calling Peter. Peter's real name is Simon but Jesus gave him a new name. Peter will make a good apostle, though he sometimes opens his mouth when he should keep it shut! Next are the "brothers of thunder", James and John. They were tall and strong and very, very, loud, and they get very excited about things. Nobody is surprised Jesus chose these 3, he seems to spend most of his time with them already.

Do you have someone you spend most of your time with? _____.

Jesus also calls out Andrews name, he's Peter's brother, and then come the best friends Philip then Nathanael (who is also sometimes called Bartholomew). Andrew had told Peter about Jesus and Philip invited Nathanael to meet Jesus.

Have you ever told someone about Jesus like Andrew and Philip did? _____.

Now the crowd is getting restless. It wasn't hard to predict who Jesus would chose first but it's getting harder now. Matthew the tax collector is called, that surprises some people. Tax collectors were not liked, even when they gave up their job to follow Jesus. Then comes Thomas, he likes to make big statements, sometimes he's really clever and sometimes he gets it wrong.

I wonder if we know anyone like Matthew or Thomas. Do we find it easy to forgive people for their mistakes?

_____.

Then today's hero - James - hears his name being called. He looks round, perhaps there is another James? John's brother was called James perhaps Jesus is talking to him...?

"James, son of Alphaeus" calls Jesus

That's his dad's name, that means Jesus wants him! James shuffles forward to stand amongst the chosen apostles. John's brother James is much taller than him and much louder, perhaps I'll be little James he thinks.

Do you have a nickname? _____.

James is so busy imagining a nickname he misses who else Jesus calls, there is the serious Simon, the scribe Jude, and the money keeper Judas. Jesus chose 12 altogether. 12 is a special number, it stands for completeness. Why did Jesus pick James? There are no other stories about this James, no other mention of him in the bible, but Jesus doesn't make mistakes, I wonder what made Little James so special?

Can you use your imagination to give me some suggestions? _____.

James looked at the people Jesus didn't select to be Apostles, they looked disappointed. Jesus needed 12 Apostles to give special training, but the others were still chosen to be his Disciples and still very special to him. Jesus calls all of us to be his Disciples, some will be like Peter and become well known, others will be like James and we won't know their stories, but it doesn't mean that Jesus made a mistake picking them.

Today's hero is Little James because he show us the gift of selection