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Following Jesus ... it's the only way to know true rest, to experience an extraordinary life, even in the ordinary moments.

Inspire (for parents)

There are days when I think it'd be easier to just give in to my daughter's persistent pleas for more TV or fewer vegetables, to my taste buds' cry for just one more piece of chocolate cake, or to my body's desire to nap all morning, afternoon, and night.

But most of all, there are days when I want to settle for ordinary—ordinary marriage, ordinary kids, ordinary existence.

Yesterday was one of those days. It was hot out. Really hot (even for Southern California). We'd exhausted about every indoor activity in our repertoire—board games, pretend games, hopping and skipping and jumping games. There was just one thing left: the dreaded and always-messy watercolor paints. With a tiny brush in hand, Jalynn began crafting her newest masterpiece on a sheet of bright yellow paper. I recognized the circle and two lines as a three-year-old's version of a person. "Who's that?" I asked. "It's you," she explained. "You're lying down on a bed at Jesus' house."

As He so often does, God used this often-defiant, vegetable-deprived little person to show me a piece of Himself. "Come to Me, and I will give you rest," He

seemed to say. "Lie on the bed at My house, for My yoke is easy and My burden light."

Following Jesus—inviting Him into each moment—sometimes feels like the opposite of giving in. In reality, it's the ultimate act of surrender, of handing over the fight to the One who wears the gloves on my behalf. And it's the only way to know true rest, to experience an extraordinary life, even in the ordinary moments.

Thanks, God, for the reminder. You really are worth following!

by Sharron Jackson

Getting Started

Scripture: Luke 5:1-11

(Apostles Called to Serve)

Main Point: Jesus Is Worth Following

This resource is designed to allow your family to have time in God's Word **before your children attend church**. Because God's plan is for parents to be the primary spiritual nurturers of their children's faith, we know that as you grow spiritually, your children will grow spiritually as well.

Equip (for parents)

Understanding that God is worth following, most rabbinical students would have Genesis through Deuteronomy memorized verbatim by the time they were 10 years old. Those who had natural abilities and showed promise would then move to the next level of schooling, beginning to memorize the rest of the Hebrew Scriptures—Genesis through the book of Malachi, 39 books total. Children also began to develop their abilities to think critically and learn to ask thought-provoking questions. Having the aptitude to not only commit Scripture to memory, but also being able to understand its meaning was a key component of the rabbinical education.

Around the age of 14, students would apply to follow a particular rabbi. Rabbis would then question the applicants on their knowledge and understanding of the Scriptures. If they were considered to be the cream of the crop, the rabbi would accept the student as his disciple by saying, "Come, follow me." By applying to become a disciple of a rabbi, a student was committing to become like the teacher and one day follow in his footsteps, continuing to teach the message of the rabbi. Once accepted as a disciple, the student would leave his possessions and family home. This was considered to be the highest honor. The students who were not chosen would return home to learn the family trade from their fathers.

When Jesus called the first apostles, He said, "Come, follow Me." They had not applied to be students of this teacher. However Jesus, unlike the religious leaders of His day, didn't take applicants. He was unlike any other rabbi. Jesus was looking for faith and obedience. He called the men He knew would take His message and build His church. He singled out those who knew He was worthy of following.

REMEMBER VERSE

Serve one another in love.
Galatians 5:13b

Support (for parents & kids)

> JUST FOR FUN this week, play a game of reverse hide-and-seek with your kids. Have them go and find their best hiding spot and then tell them to listen for your voice. When they hear your voice calling them, have them run and see who can get to you the quickest. If you're playing with one child, you can count and see how long it takes her to answer your call. Repeat this game several times, finding different hiding places each time.

After playing, gather your family and tell them you're going to read a part of The Big God Story where Jesus called His disciples. Then read **Luke 5:1-11**. After reading this passage of Scripture, ask your children what they think it was about Jesus that made the apostles want to follow Him. Then discuss what it is about Jesus that makes your family want to follow Him today.

Remind your children that what they just heard from the Bible is a part of The Big God Story, and they'll hear more about this in church this week. Pray together, thanking God that He has made us fishers of men.