



DEEPER BIBLE

How Do I Follow Jesus When I Can't See Him?

[15 min]

Supplies

- Bibles*

Easy Prep

- Bookmark each of the following passages in a different Bible, 1 Bible for each small group:
 - Luke 2:41-52
 - Mark 2:13-17
 - Matthew 14:13-21
 - John 13:1-17

Follow the Leader

Say: **We're learning that we are followers of Jesus. Let's practice following someone!**

Play Follow the Leader for two or three minutes. Every minute, choose a new Leader who will walk around the room while everyone else follows him or her. The Leader might step over a chair, hop instead of walk, or wave hands in the air, and everyone else will follow as accurately as possible. If your group is particularly loud, you might have a leader for each small group leading their group members.

After a few minutes of play, have kids sit with their small groups and discuss the following questions.

Ask: • **How did you know what to do in this game?**

• **How is a game of Follow the Leader like following Jesus? How is it different?**

Say: **In a game of Follow the Leader, you can physically see what the Leader is doing and stay right behind them, doing the same thing. The fishermen Jesus called could do the same thing—see Jesus and walk right behind him, copying what he did. But we can't see Jesus! So how do we follow Jesus when we can't see him? Let's dig in to that.**

Dig Deeper

Say: **First, I want to tell you how to *start* following Jesus. If you're not sure you're a follower of Jesus yet, here's all you have to do!**

Read Romans 10:9-10.

According to your faith traditions, briefly expound on what it means to believe in your heart and declare your faith. Explain that Jesus died on the cross to take the punishment for what we do wrong, and he came back to life and wants to be our friend. If it fits with your traditions, you can pray a prayer of commitment to following Jesus and invite kids to pray with you.

Say: **Awesome! Anyone who believes in their heart that Jesus is Lord and declares their faith can say we are followers of Jesus! That's so exciting!**

But what does that mean for how you live? In our game, if the Leader hopped, you hopped. If the Leader crawled, you crawled. How can we follow Jesus' actions when we can't see him?

Well, even though we can't see Jesus, we can read all about how he lived. The books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John in the Bible tell us all about Jesus' life! Let's look at a few examples of how Jesus lived and think about what it would mean to follow his example today.

Give each small group a Bible, and assign each a passage below based on what you bookmarked.

- Luke 2:41-52
- Mark 2:13-17
- Matthew 14:13-21
- John 13:1-17

Say: **Read your passage and consider what kind of character qualities Jesus showed. What actions did Jesus do that you could do, too? Then work with your group to plan a one-minute skit of what a kid today could do to follow Jesus' example.**

Let groups work on their own, but if they need help, you can suggest the following qualities to focus on:

- Luke 2:41-52 (loved God and wanted to be at church)
- Mark 2:13-17 (loved people and accepted people who were unpopular)
- Matthew 14:13-21 (helped meet people's needs, showed compassion)
- John 13:1-17 (served people)

After about five minutes of prep, have each group perform its one-minute skit.

Say: **We are followers of Jesus when we show the kinds of qualities he showed! The more we read about Jesus in the Bible, the more we know how to follow him, even though we can't see him.**



OBJECT LESSON

Make It Zippy

[10 min]

Supplies

- "Make It Zippy Instructions" handout (download [here](#))
- disposable cups* (1 for every 3 kids)
- hole punches (1 for every 3 kids)
- chenille wires (pipe cleaners) (1 for every 3 kids)
- small rocks or similar small objects with some weight (about 5 for every 3 kids)
- yarn*
- scissors*
- painter's tape*
- empty water bottles (1 for every 3 kids)



Tip

- If you cut the yarn off the rubber bands from Core Bible Discovery, those pieces should be plenty long enough!

Make a Zip Line to Experiment With Gravity and Momentum

Say: **Today we're learning that being Jesus' friends means we are followers of Jesus. Since Jesus is a friend we can't see right here in front of us, it can be hard to know *how* to follow Jesus. Let's dig in to this more with a cool experiment!**

- Form groups of three.
- Have groups set up an empty water bottle across the room and then bowl a rock toward it, trying to knock it over.

Say: **Hmm, that's hard to do. I think our rocks need something to follow!** Have kids follow the directions on the "Make It Zippy Instructions" handout to make their own buckets.

- Invite one person from each trio to cut a length of yarn from the rubber band contraption they made in Core Bible Discovery.
- Have small-group leaders help you give the other two members of each group a disposable cup, a hole punch, and a chenille wire.
- Then those two members of each group can begin working on preparing a miniature "bucket seat" for the zip line by punching holes on opposite sides of the cup's mouth about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch down from the rim.
- After the holes are punched, thread one end of the chenille wire through one of the punched holes and twist the wire around itself to attach that end of the wire to the cup.
- Repeat with the other end of the chenille wire in the opposite punched hole to create and secure a chenille wire handle for the cup.
- When groups are ready with a trimmed length of yarn and miniature bucket seat, invite groups to thread the yarn through the handle of the bucket seat.
- Two group members can each hold an end of the yarn, and then groups can experiment with angling the yarn so the bucket moves along it. The steeper the slope, the quicker and easier the bucket will move.
- Allow a minute, and then give each group about five rocks. Allow groups to experiment with sloping the yarn and adding weight to the bucket with the rocks. Have them note what changes they notice about how the buckets move when they add weight.
- When groups have played with angles and speed, have one person hold the top end of the yarn and another hold the other end of the yarn so it's just an inch or so above the bottle. The third group member can send the bucket down to knock over the bottle.

Talk About It

Ask: • **What did you do that made the bucket move along the yarn best?**

• **Why do you think the angle of the yarn and the weight in the bucket made a difference?**

Say: **Your groups made little versions of something called a *zip line*. Zip lines work because of gravity and momentum. *Gravity* is a force our planet has that pulls everything on earth to the earth's surface—so we don't float away!**

When you held your yarn at an angle, a slope, it allowed gravity to pull the bucket along the yarn. Then when you added weight to the bucket, it gave gravity more weight to pull on, and that increased the *momentum*—how fast and easily the bucket moved along the yarn. So you found ways to use gravity and momentum to make it easiest for the bucket to follow the path of the yarn. And that all made it possible for the rock to easily knock over the bottle.

Ask: • **What else helped the bucket follow the zip line?**

Say: **One thing we needed is the handle! Without that handle, the bucket wouldn't have been able to stay connected to the line to follow it. It's important for us to stay connected to Jesus to be able to follow him, too.**

Ask: • **What are ways we can stay connected to Jesus?** Share an example of your own, such as through prayer or learning about Jesus at church. Then have kids share with their trios before allowing a few kids to share with everyone.

Say: **Staying connected to Jesus is how we show that we are followers of Jesus. We have to be connected to Jesus to follow him, and the**

longer we're connected to Jesus, the easier it is to follow him and do what he has called us to do—fish for people!