

# Chosen to be John the fisherman

Story based on Luke 5: 1-11

"It's a hard life, being a fisherman. I should know; I did it all my life... until the other day that is. Ever since I was a young boy I was out there, with my brother James and my dad in one of his boats. My dad's got a thriving business with Peter and Andrew. He's done very well out of fishing. Mind you, it's easy to sell a good catch and make money; everyone's queuing up for fish. You get used to the life, out in the boat all night, land the catch and bring it to the merchants on the shore, clean and mend the nets and sometimes the boat, sleep a little and go out again the next night. That's how it was... until the other day when something happened that changed my life, and me too! I can't really believe it happened, but it did.



We had been out all night and caught very little. The fish just weren't there for us, so we'd come in a bit early and we were washing the nets. A lot of people had gathered on the beach and we wondered why. Then a man came out of the crowd over to us. I recognised him as the Jesus man I'd heard a bit about. He'd been causing some excitement in the next town with what he was

saying about God, and lots of people were talking about him... something about making sick people better... how could anyone do that? Well, now Jesus was coming over to us and, as he stepped into Peter's boat, he told Peter to push out into the lake. We were very tired, but somehow it was clear we just had to do as he said. We all helped Peter push the boat out and then I leapt into it.

Jesus stood in the bows of the boat as we bobbed about a bit in the gentle waves. Then, to our surprise, he told us to row further out and throw the net over the side for a big catch. As I told you, it wasn't a catching night, so this seemed a waste of effort, but again we did as he said. Something made us trust him. Then...wow! When we tried to pull the net in, it was so heavy we had to call another boat out to help us. We heaved and hauled together till the catch was landed and we were puffed out. We've always been good at working together and we don't give up until the job's done, but we've never had to land such a big catch as that one. It felt like a miracle! That was amazing enough but then, as we stood ankle deep in those silver swirls of fishes, Jesus said the words that changed my life: "Come and follow me and I will make you fishers of people."

As he spoke, I looked up. His eyes were full of warmth and love. There was something in that look that made me feel he knew all about me; he liked me and saw what I could become. He had chosen me and he made me feel confident. I knew I would do my best for him, I would go to the ends of the earth for him. Afterwards, the others said they felt exactly the same.

We rowed ashore, pulled the boats up and left them on the pebbles, still full of fish. We walked away from our work, from our wages, from our families, from our old lives, ready to put all our energies into following Jesus and helping him; all of us, Peter, Andrew, James and me, just like that, without looking back. I know he's already changed us. And every time I look at Jesus, I remember that look in his eyes and how I felt..."

## Follow-up activities:

### Questions for discussion:

- What questions does that make you want to ask?
- Why do you think John wanted to follow Jesus?
- What do you think Jesus was like?
- Why do you think Jesus was a good leader? (draw out some of his characteristics of leadership: charisma, strength, warmth, insight, authoritative air, good judgement and confidence).
- who do you know who is a good leader? Who is a leader for you?

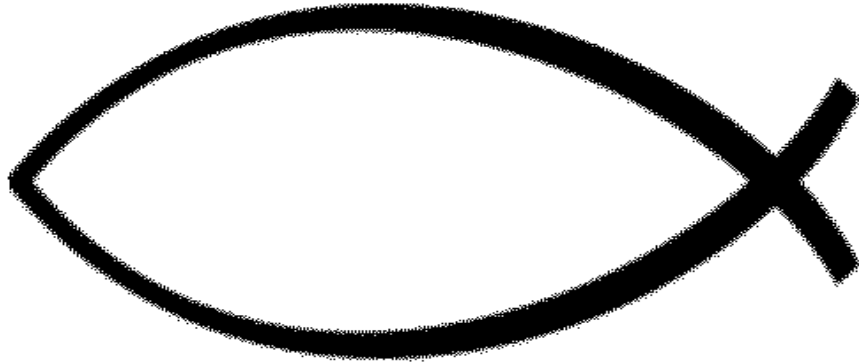
### For further exploration...

- I wonder what Jesus meant by 'fishers of people'. (Encourage children to explore the metaphor and to think of others). What do you think it was about the fishermen that made Jesus choose them?

### Using think, pair, share strategies:

- Invite children to identify the part of the story that they think is most important and illustrate it in some way, individually or in groups.
- They could annotate their work with captions or thought bubbles, or freeze-frame the episode.
- Find out more stories about John and the other disciples and their life with Jesus.
- Collect photographs of 'leaders' and talk about their roles.

## TALK ABOUT...



What do you think this looks like...?

Today some followers of Jesus wear a badge like this, or put it on their cars. What do you think it means?

Sometime it looks like this...



Find out what the letters mean.

Why might someone today wear this badge?