

Children and families talk for Sunday 15th January 2023

Hello everyone!

Did you know that Jesus was about 30 years old when he started his work of telling people about God and the kingdom of Heaven? This is sometimes called his 'ministry'. But before he really started, he needed to get some help and he chose some special friends to help him, called his disciples. Today's bible reading tells us about how some of these people started to follow Jesus. Perhaps you'd like to do some detective work and write down some of the people in our bible reading. We'll be doing some detecting of our own with Stan later. Today's reading is from John 1 verses 29 to 42.

John 1: 29-42

²⁹ The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him. John said, "Look, the Lamb of God. He takes away the sins of the world! ³⁰ This is the One I was talking about. I said, 'A man will come after me, but he is greater than I am, because he was living before me.' ³¹ Even I did not know who he was. But I came baptizing with water so that the people of Israel could know who he is."

³²⁻³³ Then John said, "I did not know who the Christ was. But God sent me to baptize with water. And God told me, 'You will see the Spirit come down and rest on a man. That man is the One who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.'" John said, "I saw the Spirit come down from heaven. The Spirit looked like a dove and rested on him. ³⁴ I have seen this happen. So I tell people: 'He is the Son of God.'"

³⁵ The next day John was there again with two of his followers. ³⁶ He saw Jesus walking by and said, "Look, the Lamb of God!"

³⁷ The two followers heard John say this. So they followed Jesus. ³⁸ Jesus turned and saw them following him. He asked, "What do you want?"

They said, "Rabbi, where are you staying?" ("Rabbi" means "Teacher.")

³⁹ Jesus answered, "Come with me and you will see." So the two men went with Jesus. They saw the place where Jesus was staying and stayed there with him that day. It was then about four o'clock.

⁴⁰ These two men followed Jesus after they heard about him from John. One of the men was Andrew. He was Simon Peter's brother. ⁴¹ The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother, Simon. He said to Simon, "We have found the Messiah." ("Messiah" means "Christ.")

⁴² Then Andrew took Simon to Jesus. Jesus looked at Simon and said, "You are Simon son of John. You will be called Cephas." ("Cephas" means "Peter.")

Let's talk about our bible reading:

S: Hi Stan, I'm glad you're here to help me today, but why are you wearing those clothes?

Stan: today I'm a detective, and I'm looking for clues!

S: ah, I see, so are you trying to solve a mystery then?

Stan: Yes, I'm working on the mystery of the first disciple!

S: the mystery of the first disciple?

Stan: that's right. Who, what, why and when.

S: Were you listening to the bible reading then?

Stan: I was. And I think I have my first clues!

S: What have you written there?

Stan: Here are the clues I picked up listening to the bible reading.

S: Let me see – ah yes there are some names; John, Lamb of God and Jesus. Well, I think I can help you here.

Stan: Okay.

S: Yes, John was Jesus' cousin, also known as John the Baptist – he was baptising people in the Jordan river one day when Jesus came and asked to be baptised. Baptising is where you are dunked down into water and then come back out again, it is an outward sign that you want to be washed clean inside of anything wrong you might have done. John baptised Jesus and saw the Holy Spirit come down on Jesus like a dove, so he knew that Jesus was really special. Then John told the people following him to follow Jesus because he realised that Jesus was God's Son.

Stan: Okay, but where does the Lamb come into it?

S: Well, Jesus was called the Lamb of God because in bible times people would kill a precious lamb as a gift to God to pay for the wrong things that they had done. Jesus came to change the way things were done – by dying on the cross, Jesus opened up a way for us to have a relationship with God without the need for constant sacrifices (killing of animals). This is why, in the bible, Jesus is spoken of as the Lamb of God. Do you have any more clues?

Stan: Yes, I wrote down, Andrew and Simon Peter.

S: Well Andrew and Simon Peter were brothers and fishermen. Simon Peter had been listening and following John the Baptist, so when he heard what John had to say about Jesus, he decided to find out for himself by following Jesus, and he told his brother Andrew about Jesus too.

Stan: ah, so were they some of the first followers, or disciples?

S: I believe they were, yes. Your mystery is solved! Well done detective Stan, you managed to get some great clues! How did you all do? The first followers of Jesus were right at the start of something that would grow and grow. Today there are an estimated **2.3 billion**

Christians in the world, which is a number that I find hard to imagine its sooo big! Jesus wants us all to follow in his footsteps,

Let's talk to our Lord Jesus now:

Lord Jesus, sometimes you call us, and we do not listen.
Sometimes we know you want to hold us close and care for us,
but we push you away.

We are sorry for those times
when we are just too busy to remember you.

Thank you for always forgiving us
and for calling us back again.

Amen.

And let's say the grace together:

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ,
The love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
Be with us all, now and forever more,
Amen.

Here is the children's activity page from Roots: [activity-sheet-15-january-2023.pdf](https://www.rootsontheweb.com/activity-sheet-15-january-2023.pdf)
([rootsontheweb.com](https://www.rootsontheweb.com))