

## Matthew 4 (NIV)

<sup>18</sup> As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. <sup>19</sup> 'Come, follow me,' Jesus said, 'and I will send you out to fish for people.' <sup>20</sup> At once they left their nets and followed him. <sup>21</sup> Going on from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John. They were in a boat with their father Zebedee, preparing their nets. Jesus called them, <sup>22</sup> and immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.

## Luke 5 (NIV)

<sup>4</sup> When [Jesus] had finished speaking, he said to Simon, 'Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch.' <sup>5</sup> Simon answered, 'Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets.' <sup>6</sup> When they had done so, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break. <sup>7</sup> So they signalled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them, and they came and filled both boats so full that they began to sink. <sup>8</sup> When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus' knees and said, 'Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!' <sup>9</sup> For he and all his companions were astonished at the catch of fish they had taken, <sup>10</sup> and so were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, Simon's partners. Then Jesus said to Simon, 'Don't be afraid; from now on you will fish for people.' <sup>11</sup> So they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed him.

1

READ THIS

2

•What do you think Jesus meant by 'fish for people'?

- Why do you think Simon Peter was so amazed at the catch of fish?

3

•What was it, do you think, that made these men want to follow Jesus?

- Has there ever been anyone or anything that has made you drop everything you were doing because you were so amazed or impressed? (If so, tell others about it)
- These men were still following Jesus 3 years later, and then after that were ready to die for Him. Read the true stories on the back page to see this still happens today.

What convinces you?

4

Have you ever had a prayer answered or heard of someone who has?

Has a Bible story or passage ever 'spoken to you'?

Simon Peter later said to Jesus: *Simon Peter answered him, 'Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and to know that you are the Holy One of God.'* (John 6:68,69)

He was convinced Jesus was for yesterday, today and forever. What would be *your* main reasons for being a Christian?

For each reason given by members of the group, can you think of a Bible story or passage that backs it up?

What are the main things for each of you *against* being a Christian? Can other members of the group help to overcome these reasons?

5

Spend some time praying together about this now.

DISCIPLES

READY TO FOLLOW

VERSES TO LEARN

John 17:3

Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.

John 14:6

Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No-one comes to the Father except through me."

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## *From drug addict to pastor*

Richard was a drug addict in remand for aggravated burglary, with 30 previous offences. To help cope with feelings of guilt, he began attending prison chapel, and found it made him feel much better, while he was there. The pastor offered him a Bible, but he already had one - the prisoners found the thin pages useful for rolling their own cigarettes.

One day he tore out a page to have a smoke, but an 'inner voice' told him he should read the page. It was from the Gospel of John, and he found it 'captivating' - and it allowed him to go to sleep in peace that night.

The next day he read more, and tried to visualise what this Jesus looked like. The only image which came to mind was of a statue of Jesus on the cross, in a nearby church. The image seemed to come alive in his mind, and Jesus seemed to look at him and say: *"Richard, I did this for you."*

Richard was deeply affected by this, offered his life to Jesus, and began to experience, slowly, day-by-day, a healing of his addiction, until he was completely free of his craving.

Today Richard is the pastor of a church in Wales, and is the director of a program which helps rehabilitate addicts and former prisoners.



## *Good news for Nicky*

Nicky was not brought up christian, and when she was old enough to decide, she chose to be an atheist. Her disbelief, at least in part, stemmed from her brother requiring chemo and radiotherapy for cancer.

She had a christian friend at school, but wasn't interested. However when she was 13, she was found to have a cancerous lump on her knee. She was so worried about what had been an ongoing problem, that she decided to pray, telling the God she didn't believe in that if he took away the cancer, she would look seriously into christianity.

When she was finally cleared of cancer, without any extensive treatment, she started to challenge her christian friend for answers to difficult questions. She found the answers to be *"annoyingly good"*.

Then a second lump formed, this time in her wrist. This time she went to her friend's family for help, and, after prayer, the lump and the pain disappeared. She understands this isn't proof of God, but found it convincing enough to choose to believe.

She doesn't pretend to have all the answers. *"But I kind of think God is a little like Dumbledore"* she writes, *"as in has all the answers."*

