

Grade 4—Unit 8

Jesus Models Discipleship

In this unit, students will learn about Jesus' baptism, his temptation experience, and the calling of the twelve disciples. In addition, they will understand that Jesus' life was the perfect model for followers of God. This model points us to discipleship that involves worshiping God in spirit and truth, being part of a community of believers that help us grow in our faith and commitment, and an understanding of our responsibility to serve.

LESSONS

1. Jesus Chooses Baptism
2. Jesus Resists Temptation
3. Followers of God Choose Discipleship

Plan ahead:

For Lesson 3, students should be collecting stories of mission and service from church periodicals and other sources that they will share.

Unit 8: Jesus Models Discipleship

Unit Information

SUMMARY

Just before beginning his ministry, Jesus publicly proclaimed his intention to obey God. Immediately following this, he spent 40 days praying and fasting, only to be encountered by Satan, whom he resisted by quoting God's word. Another night of prayer prepared him to call the twelve disciples who would be his fellowship community throughout his ministry. Following Jesus' example and teachings leads us into a life of discipleship that is defined as worship of God, fellowship with believers, and acts of mission to the world.

KEY BIBLE TEXTS

Lesson 1

Matthew 3

Lesson 2

Matthew 4:1-11

Luke 4:1-13

1 Corinthians 10:13

James 4:7

Lesson 3

John 4:23-24

Acts 2:42-47

Matthew 25:40

Matthew 28:19-20

Additional Scriptures:

Proverbs 29:11; Ephesians 4:28, 32; Colossians 3:20, 3:9, 3:23

BIBLICAL BACKGROUND

Baptism, a Public Commitment

Baptism was an ancient rite of Judaism. The act of baptism was considered part of the Levitical purification process. Gentile converts who were admitted to Judaism were required to undergo baptism in the presence of witnesses. The Hebrew prophets also used water as a symbol of purification.

John the Baptist's emphasis on baptism was an acceptable part of Jewish culture. His combination of teaching and baptizing gave John spiritual authority and began a genuine religious revival among the Jewish people.

It was at this time that Jesus publicly began his ministry. He identified himself with the revival work of John the Baptist and presented himself for baptism. Although Jesus was sinless, his baptism symbolized his affirmation of John's message.

In addition, baptism was a public symbol of Jesus' dedication to serving God. God's seal of approval on Jesus and his ministry came in the form of a voice from heaven and the appearance of a dove, symbol of the Spirit's empowerment.

In the Wilderness

Jesus, guided by the Spirit, spent a period of time in prayer and meditation in the wilderness. Most likely this was the desolate area of the lower Jordan Valley, forbidding and inhabited by wild beasts. During this time of prayer and fasting, Jesus was confronted with temptations.

The first temptation was an appeal to an economic messiah. Insufficient food was a social problem of the time. The Jewish people eagerly awaited a messiah who would bring economic prosperity. Even though material provisions would have lifted the burden of worry from the Jewish people, Jesus recognized that the kingdom of God was not built on food and drink.

To trust in someone other than God to supply physical needs would be to express doubt in God's power. Jesus never turned his back on people's material needs. He did, however, look deeper into their spiritual needs. His teachings and example modeled a new way of life. Rather than a quick fix of miracle bread now, those who were moved by God's mercy would share generously. Jesus resisted the temptation to be a bread messiah. It would have been an easy way to gain popular support, and he probably would have avoided the pain and agony of the cross.

The second temptation appealed to a spectacular messiah. Jesus was encouraged to introduce the kingdom of God through a display of supernatural power. If Jesus had jumped into the temple court, he could have had the immediate acceptance of the religious leaders. He would have found himself in the inner circle of religious power, instead of ministering to the common people. Expecting God to rescue him from a death-defying fall would have been a test and would have implied that Jesus did not fully trust God.

Throughout his ministry, Jesus healed the sick, exorcized demons, and brought the dead back to life. These miracles grew out of his love and compassion. Jesus used power as a means of helping people. He never abused power for his own gain.

Because of the people's expectations of the Messiah to be a ruler, Satan then appealed to Jesus as a political messiah. By establishing his kingdom as an earthly empire, Jesus would no doubt have won the loyalty of the Jews and Zealots who sought freedom from Rome's dominance. However, Jesus recognized that Satan offered what he had no right to give. The Messiah was *God's* servant. To establish an earthly empire would mean achieving goals through the ways of the world, which involves compromise, misrepresentation, and violence.

Jesus rejected coercive political power. He showed a new way of ruling—an upside-down kingdom of servanthood filled with images of the last being first. Jesus chose a life of obedience to God.

ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDINGS

- Jesus made choices that reflected his commitment to servanthood.
- Jesus calls people today to be disciples.
- A choice to follow Jesus is a choice to accept the responsibility of discipleship.

WORSHIP

1. The worship theme for this unit might be “discipleship.” The Scripture texts from Lesson 3 speak to one aspect of discipleship. The memory text, Psalm 1, includes a visual of godly living. Consider discussing them within the context of worship.

2. Many hymns have been written on the discipleship theme. One suggestion is to continue the use of “Listen, God is calling” (#42, *Sing the Journey*). Other suggestions from *Hymnal: A Worship Book*:

“God is here among us” (#16)

“Two fishermen” (#227)

“Will you let me be your servant” (#307)

“Help us to help each other” (#362)

“We are people of God’s peace” (#407)

3. Worship readings. *Hymnal: A Worship Book* contains several readings for congregational commitment and commissioning. It may be appropriate for students to become familiar with these as they think of discipleship, a commitment to a community of believers, and sharing God’s love with the world. Consider #793, #795, and #796.

MEMORY PASSAGE

There are three possible memory texts in this unit: Matthew 20:26-28; Philippians 2:5-11; and Psalms 1. There is no emphasis on memorization.

ASSESSING TEACHING / LEARNING

Several activity sheets in this unit could be used for assessment of student comprehension and understanding. Group work, research, presentations, and discussions give opportunities for informal assessment of student progress. The formal assessment at the end of the unit is, perhaps, more difficult than in previous units, because it requires a good deal of critical thinking.

Jesus Models Discipleship

LESSON 1: JESUS CHOOSES BAPTISM

Objective

Students will observe Jesus' obedience as he is baptised publicly to show his willingness to serve God.

Key Concepts

- Baptism was a historical practice of Judaism, to purify oneself.
- John the Baptist called people to repentance and baptism.
- John baptized Jesus publicly, in the Jordan River.
- God was pleased with Jesus' display of obedience.
- Baptism is a symbol for repentance, forgiveness, and desire to serve God.

Text: Matthew 3

Estimated Lesson Time: 40-45 minutes

Materials

- Bibles
- "Baptism" (pp. 249-250)
- For Extend the Lesson, option one: art materials (colored markers, sketching pens, paint, watercolors, etc.)
- For Extend the Lesson, option three: "Interview Form" (p. 253)

Teacher Preparation

- Carefully read the biblical background for this unit (pp. 244-245). You will need to share the first few paragraphs as a historical background to this lesson.
- Read the lesson and the Scripture passage.
- Make copies of "Baptism," one for each student.
- If using Extend the Lesson, option three, make a copy of the interview form for each student.

INTRODUCING THE LESSON

Discuss baptism. Begin by sharing the information about baptism as an ancient rite of Judaism (*found in the first two paragraphs of the biblical background*). This will give a historical context for the actions of John the Baptist and Jesus.

Write the word BAPTIZE on the board and discuss its meaning. What was its meaning in ancient Judaism? (*It was part of the Levites' purification process.*) Ask the following questions and brainstorm ideas: Why do you think John the Baptist was baptizing people? Why do you think Jesus chose to be baptized? What do you think baptism means today? Tell students you would like to see what the Bible says about John the Baptist's work and Jesus' baptism.

LESSON STEPS

1. Scripture study. As you hand out the “Baptism” activity sheet, ask students to form teams of two and find Matthew 3 in their Bibles. Help them get started by reviewing the answer to the historical question in Part 1. Then explain that this is a Scripture study. By reading Matthew 3 carefully, they will be able to answer the questions in Part 2.

2. Discuss the Scripture. Discuss Part 2 of the activity sheet to ensure that all students understand the concepts.

3. Define baptism. This is Part 3 on the activity sheet. As you work together to create a good definition for baptism, make sure that all students have a clear understanding of this symbol of the Christian faith. A definition is given in the answer key (pp. 251-252). Have students keep this sheet in their notebooks as a resource.

EXTEND THE LESSON

(These activities will extend the lesson to longer than 40-45 minutes.)

- **Words into pictures.** Find the description of Jesus’ baptism in Matthew 3:16-17. Have students create pictures that match the words. Invite them to work in their favorite media: black & white sketch, watercolor, paint, colored markers, etc.

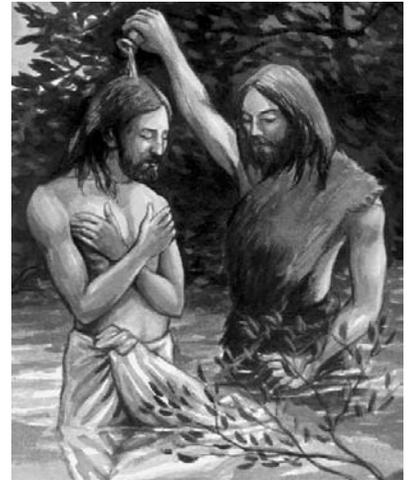
- **Write descriptions of John the Baptist.** Have students describe John the Baptist’s life work, his appearance, and his beliefs. John 1:1-34 gives additional details about John.

- **Baptism interviews.** Invite students to think of questions they would like to ask a person who has been baptized and write them on the interview form (p. 253). They will need to complete this before doing the interview. During the interview, they should write summaries of the answers on the form. *(An opportunity is given in the following lesson for students to share their interview experiences.)*

Name _____

Date _____

Baptism



Part 1

This is a historical question. Your teacher will help you answer it.

1. When Jesus first started his ministry, what did baptism mean to Jewish people?

Part 2

Read Matthew 3 and answer each question according to the Scripture.

2. Where was John the Baptist preaching? _____ What was he telling the people to do? _____ Check your Bible reference footnote and tell which prophet from the Old Testament John was quoting: _____

3. Describe John's clothing: _____
What did John eat? _____

4. What three groups of people came to listen to the message of John the Baptist?

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

5. What did John say the people needed to do? _____
What will happen to trees that don't produce good fruit? _____

6. With what did John baptize people? _____
With what did he say Jesus would baptize people? _____

7. Verse 12 is a metaphor about the work of Christ. The winnowing fork is a symbol for God's judgment. The fork was used to toss wheat in the air, so the wind could separate the wheat from chaff. People who repent and are baptized are the _____ in this picture, while the people who refuse to obey God are the _____.

8. Jesus was not sinful, so he did not need to repent, but he still asked John to baptize him. Why? It was "_____ to _____," which means to accomplish God's mission.

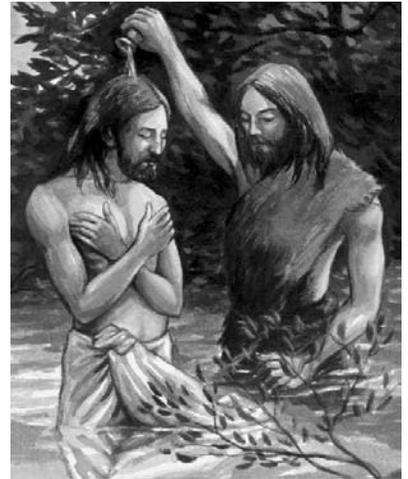
9. In your own words, explain what happened immediately after Jesus was baptized.

Part 3

Write a definition for the word "baptism."

ANSWER KEY

Baptism



Part 1

This is a historical question. Your teacher will help you answer it.

1. When Jesus first started his ministry, what did baptism mean to Jewish people?

Baptism was part of the Levites' purification process.

Part 2

Read Matthew 3 and answer each question according to the Scripture.

2. Where was John the Baptist preaching? desert of Judea What was he telling the people to do? repent Check your Bible reference footnote and tell which prophet from the Old Testament John was quoting: Isaiah

3. Describe John's clothing: made of camel's hair; leather belt around his waist

What did John eat? locusts and wild honey

4. What three groups of people came to listen to the message of John the Baptist?

a. People from Jerusalem, all Judea, whole region of the Jordan River

b. Pharisees

c. Sadducees

5. What did John say the people needed to do? produce fruit in keeping with repentance

What will happen to trees that don't produce good fruit? will be cut down and thrown into fire

6. With what did John baptize people? water for repentance

With what did he say Jesus would baptize people? the Holy Spirit and fire

7. Verse 12 is a metaphor about the work of Christ. The winnowing fork is a symbol for God's judgment. The fork was used to toss wheat in the air, so the wind could separate the wheat from chaff. People who repent and are baptized are the wheat in this picture, while the people who refuse to obey God are the chaff.

8. Jesus was not sinful, so he did not need to repent, but he still asked John to baptize him. Why?

It was "proper to fulfill all righteousness," which means to accomplish God's mission.

9. In your own words, explain what happened immediately after Jesus was baptized.

He came out of the water, the heaven opened, and the Spirit of God descended like a dove. The dove landed on him, and a voice from heaven said, "This is my son. I am pleased with him and I love him."

Part 3

Write a definition for the word "baptism."

Baptism is a public symbol of repentance, forgiven sin, and willingness to serve God. Baptism is a step of obedience in a Christian's life.

Interview Form

Name of interviewer: _____ Date of interview: _____

Name of person interviewed: _____

First question: _____

Answer: _____

Second question: _____

Answer: _____

Third question: _____

Answer: _____

Fourth question: _____

Answer: _____

Fifth question: _____

Answer: _____

For interviewer only: What did I learn about baptism from this interview?

Jesus Models Discipleship

LESSON 2: JESUS RESISTS TEMPTATION

Objective

Students will observe Christ as a model for overcoming temptation using the Word of God as a weapon.

Key Concepts

- Jesus, alone in the desert, was tempted by Satan.
- Jesus overcame temptation by quoting Scripture.
- God has promised that we also can overcome temptation.

Text: Matthew 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13; 1 Corinthians 10:13; James 4:7
(for *Extend the Lesson*: Proverbs 29:11; Ephesians 4:28; Colossians 3:20; Colossians 3:9; Colossians 3:23; Ephesians 4:32)

Estimated Lesson Time: 30-40 minutes

Materials

- Bibles
- “The Temptations of Jesus” chart (p. 256)
- Transparency/projection of completed Temptations of Jesus chart (p. 257)
- For *Extend the Lesson*: “Temptation Cards” (p. 258), “Scripture Cards” (p. 259)

Teacher Preparation

- Read the Scripture texts for this lesson and “In the Wilderness” from the unit biblical background (p. 245).
- Write the following vocabulary words on the board: tempt, sin, fast, worship
- If using *Extend the Lesson*, make copies of the Temptation Cards (*one each for half the students*) and Scripture Cards (*one each for the remaining students*).

INTRODUCING THE LESSON

Draw attention to the words you have listed on the chalkboard (tempt, sin, fast, worship). Explain that the students will encounter these words in the lesson and they need to have a good understanding of them. Discuss the words and write definitions beside them. Students should copy and keep these definitions in their notebooks.

tempt—to deceive or lure someone into doing wrong

sin—to break God’s law

fast—to go without food for a period of time

worship—to honor, praise, and serve God

LESSON STEPS

1. Continue the story. Ask students if they know what Jesus did right after he was baptized (*went into the desert for 40 days*). Why did he go into the desert? (*He was led by the Spirit.*) What happened to him while he was there? (*He was tempted by the devil.*) Why would the Spirit lead Jesus into a situation where he

would be tempted? *(Possible answers: to show that Jesus was the Son of God, able to overcome the devil; to show that he became human and faced the same things we face; obedience comes from opportunities to disobey.)*

2. Jesus is tempted. Jesus' baptism and time of temptation are recorded in Matthew and in Luke. Choose either Scripture text to tell about this experience. Have the students open their Bibles and follow the text while you tell it in your own words.

3. Satan's tricks. Display the transparency/projection, "The Temptations of Jesus," with only titles of the columns visible. Then distribute the activity sheet to the class. Use the projected chart to conduct a discussion about the story and how it applies to our lives. Ask students to fill in their copies as you move through the chart with your discussion. *(Do not reveal the questions at the bottom of the sheet and their answers.)* When you have completed the chart, ask students to answer the comprehension questions at the bottom of the sheet. *(This will be a resource for students' notebooks.)*

4. Mission story assignment. If you have not already done so, ask students to collect stories of mission and service from church periodicals and other sources, to share during the next lesson.

EXTEND THE LESSON

(This activity will extend the lesson to longer than 30-40 minutes.)

- **Resisting temptation activity.** Remind the students that Jesus used Scripture to resist the devil. We can also use Scripture to help us when we are tempted. Hand out Temptation Cards sheets to half of the class and Scripture Cards sheets to the other half.

Ask each group to cut their cards apart. Then form teams of two—one student with Temptation Cards and one with Scripture Cards in each team. The teams' task is to match the temptation with the Scripture they can use to resist it. When the teams are finished, briefly discuss the activity to make sure everyone has the correct matches. Recommend that the students mark these passages in their Bibles.

The Temptations of Jesus

Temptation	Real Need	What Satan said would happen	Jesus' Answer	Our Real Need	Satan could tell us to . . .

Jesus used the _____ to combat the devil.

Satan will use the things we want most to _____ us.

Being _____ is not sin. _____ on temptation is sin.

To keep Satan from overcoming us, we have to know _____ and act _____.

Read 1 Corinthians 10:13 and James 4:7. Thank God for these promises.

The Temptations of Jesus

Temptation	Real Need	What Satan said would happen	Jesus' Answer	Our Real Need	Satan could tell us to . . .
To make bread from stones	Physical need—Hunger	Jesus would prove he was the Son of God.	Deuteronomy 8:3 Depend on God.	I want something I can't have.	Steal, lie, get angry, act like a bully
To test God by expecting God to rescue him	Spectacular need—for supernatural power	Jesus would be accepted by the religious leaders.	Deuteronomy 6:16 Do not test God.	To look good in front of others—to be accepted, or famous	Brag, show off, be the class clown, defy authority
To worship Satan	Political need—for loyalty of Jews and Zealots	Jesus would establish his kingdom on earth.	Deuteronomy 6:13 Worship and serve God only.	To do something special and look important	Take credit for someone else's work or idea, be jealous

Jesus used the **Word of God** to combat the devil.

Satan will use the things we want most to **tempt** us.

Being **tempted** is not sin. **Acting** on temptation is sin.

To keep Satan from overcoming us, we have to know **God's laws** and act **obediently**.

Read 1 Corinthians 10:13 and James 4:7. Thank God for these promises.

Temptation Cards

1

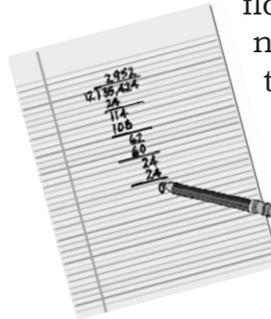
Someone kicked your brand-new remote control car that was underneath the coat rack at school.

You had warned everyone to be careful not to bump it. You feel so angry, you're tempted to throw some coats on the floor.



2

You forgot to do your math paper, and you find someone else's finished paper on the floor. The paper has no name on it, but you think it belongs to someone at the next table. You're tempted to pick it up quickly and pretend it's yours.



3

Your mom and dad have a rule that when you get home from school you must do your homework before playing games on the computer.

This afternoon your mom is at a meeting and your dad is at work. You're tempted to play games as soon as you get home.



4

It's against the rules to throw snowballs at school, but you just saw your best friend throw a snowball. When the recess teacher asks if you saw him throw it, you're tempted to say "No" and keep your friend out of trouble.



5

Your bedroom is a disaster area.

Mom said that as soon as you clean it up, you can go out to play with your friend. You're tempted to finish it in a hurry by shoving things in the closet and under your bed.



6

A girl in your Sunday school class is not well accepted by the others. One Sunday morning she walks into class wearing a dress that you and your friends would never wear. You're tempted to laugh and crack a joke to your friends about the dress.



Scripture Cards

A fool gives full vent to his anger, but a wise man keeps himself under control.

Proverbs 29:11



Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord.

Colossians 3:20



Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

Ephesians 4:32



Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices . . .

Colossians 3:9

He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need.

Ephesians 4:28



Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men.

Colossians 3:23

Jesus Models Discipleship

LESSON 3: FOLLOWERS OF GOD CHOOSE DISCIPLESHIP

Objective

Students will follow the example of Christ to define and understand discipleship.

Key Concepts

- Discipleship is defined as worship of God, fellowship with community, and acts of mission to the world.
- Jesus' life is an example of worship in spirit and in truth.
- Jesus called twelve disciples to be his community of believers.
- The fellowship of believers in Acts is an example of community.
- The Great Commission calls us to discipleship.
- Jesus calls us beyond ourselves to share with “the least of these.”

Text: John 4:23-24; Acts 2:42-47; Matthew 28:19-20; Matthew 25:40

Estimated Lesson Time: 40-45 minutes

Materials

- Bibles
- Transparency/projection of “Following Christ” (p. 263)
- “Ya Gotta Do What Ya Gotta Do” (pp. 264-265)
- Mission stories collected and brought in by students
- For Extend the Lesson, option two: “Discipleship” (p. 266)

Teacher Preparation

- The purpose of this lesson is to review Christ's model of discipleship and teach the children our responsibility as disciples. Read through the lesson, the Bible passages, and the story.
- If using Extend the Lesson, option two, make a copy of the “Discipleship” activity sheet for each student.

INTRODUCING THE LESSON

Jesus' model of discipleship. Tell the students that in this lesson you will be looking at the type of discipleship Jesus demonstrated. Ask: Who remembers what Jesus did before he called the disciples? (*Matthew 6:12—He prayed all night.*) This is a model of what? (*Worship*) Jesus called the disciples to follow him. This shows us that we need _____ (*other Christians to walk the journey with us*). We call this community. Finally, in the gospels we find many examples of Jesus helping others. This calls us to help others, too. Sometimes we call this _____ (*mission*).

LESSON STEPS

1. Display the “Following Christ” transparency/projection. Then share the following information and Scriptures about discipleship with the students:

Worship: What do we do when we worship? (*Sing, pray, read the Bible, meditate, listen for God’s message*) Jesus is our personal friend. We can tell him when we’re happy, sad, angry, thankful, etc. The friendship grows as we worship. We become more like Jesus. The Bible has a message for us about worshipping God. (*Find John 4: 23-24 and ask someone to read these verses. Ask another student to explain them in their own words.*) God is looking for people who will truly worship, even though they cannot physically see God.

Community: Jesus gave us an example of the importance of community. What did he do? (*Called twelve disciples to share his ministry with him*) Why is community important to discipleship? (*We need other Christians in order to grow as disciples. Others help us be loyal to our beliefs and morals. They help us remember to pray and read our Bibles. We learn from the lives and faith stories of others.*) Families and churches are examples of faith communities.

Let’s look at an example of a faith community in the Bible. (*Find Acts 2:42-47 and read the passage.*) What things did this community do together? (*Listened to teaching, ate together, prayed, shared with each other, met together daily, praised God, enjoyed each other*) What similar things do you do in your community? The last part of the verse says the Lord added to their number those who were being saved. What act of worship may have happened? (*Baptism*)

Mission: The disciples received the Holy Spirit and were called to spread the good news throughout the world. We often call this the Great Commission. Who can tell us what it says? (*Have students find Matthew 28:19-20 and read it together in unison.*) Since we are disciples this message is for us also. What are we asked to do? (*Go and teach others to be disciples, baptize them, and teach them to obey the Bible’s commands*) What does Christ promise his disciples? (*I will be with you always.*)

Jesus showed us by example how to walk with others in loving, creative, and liberating ways. He also spoke important words about sharing with others. We can find them in Matthew 25:40. (*Find the verse and read it to the students.*) Who is Jesus talking about when he says “one of the least of these brothers of mine?” (*Any person in need—physically, emotionally, spiritually*) What is the message of this passage? (*That Jesus needs our help to care for God’s children*)

2. Mission stories. Read or tell the story, “Ya Gotta Do What Ya Gotta Do.” Then have the students share the mission stories they have collected. They should show or tell where they found the story and then share it in their own words. You may want to ask the students to place these stories in the room where other students can read and enjoy them too. (*If students are eager to share their stories and there are an overwhelming number of stories, you might choose to divide into groups of six to eight students, so more children can share.*)

EXTEND THE LESSON

(*These activities will extend the lesson to longer than 40-45 minutes.*)

• **Looking at the disciples.** The website www.ebibleteacher.com/children/cards_free.htm includes “trading cards” and activities for many Bible characters,

including the disciples. You may want to work with one of these activities. The site grants free permission for use.

• **Discipleship is. . .** Distribute the activity sheet titled “Discipleship.” Students are asked to create their own symbol of discipleship and then write a statement of belief concerning discipleship.

Example of a symbol: Three circles within each other—1 small circle in the center to represent God’s love, 1 medium circle to represent community, and 1 large circle to represent the world. God’s love flows into the community, and from the community into the world.

Example of a belief statement: I believe that every person is called to be a disciple, which means a follower of God. Disciples are called to live according to the example and teachings of Jesus. This means as a disciple I will worship God by reading my Bible and praying daily. I will become a part of a Christian community, so I can learn and grow to be like Jesus. Finally, I will look for ways to help others, such as playing with my little brother, cheerfully helping with household chores, helping an elderly neighbor carry her groceries, and giving a tithe of my allowance.

Following Christ



WORSHIP

Discipling

MISSION

COMMUNITY

Ya Gotta Do What Ya Gotta Do

David smelled the baby before he saw it: a stinky bundle wrapped in a damp, brown-stained blanket that Mrs. Scott, the social worker, held away from herself as she entered the front door.

“Oh! Straight to the bathtub,” said David’s mother, wrinkling up her nose. “I don’t think she’s been changed all day.”

“Two days,” said Mrs. Scott. “At least, that’s how long the people next door heard her crying before they finally called the police. They found the baby’s mother unconscious on the floor.”

“Poor little darling,” said David’s mother. “David, go set up the crib in your room, please.”

“*My* room!” David protested; but at his mother’s glare, he turned and stomped upstairs.

“How come *I* always get volunteered?” he grumbled, as he struggled to fit the crib sides together. Why did he have to share his bedroom? Didn’t Mrs. Scott realize they already had two foster children sleeping in his brother’s room? Why couldn’t somebody else take this baby?

Later, as he did his homework, he heard his mom on the phone, talking to his dad. “Tony, I have no formula, and the driveway is blocked by snow. Could you please—I know, honey, but this baby hasn’t been fed in two days!”

David had started his last math problem when his dad walked in, carrying a box of baby formula. He looked tired.

“You’ve been out since early this morning, Dad,” David said. “How much longer do you have to work?”

Dad shrugged. “Who knows? There’ve been a lot of accidents on those icy roads. The highway patrol needs me and my tow truck out there.” He grabbed a handful of cookies from the cookie jar and hurried out the door.

David watched Mom try to feed a bottle to the baby, now clean and smelling of baby powder. But the tiny mouth sagged open, letting the warm milk trickle out.

“Come on, little one. Little—Jenny,” she coaxed. “Try it, please? You’ll feel so much better.”

Jenny hiccupped a few times; then, as if getting a new name had given her new life, began eagerly sucking.

If I can get to sleep while she’s eating I won’t

even notice I’m sharing my room, thought David as he headed upstairs. But it seemed only moments later that the baby’s screams jolted him awake.

“Why doesn’t Mom come get that baby?” he muttered, pulling the blankets over his head. She was probably in the basement, putting a load of clothes in to wash, David realized. And if someone didn’t pick that baby up, her screams would wake the boys in the next room. Then no one would get any sleep! With a groan, David rolled out of bed and stumbled toward the crib.

“Hey! What’s all that racket about?” he said gruffly, as he scooped Jenny up and propped her against his shoulder. A few sniffs and he knew what the fuss was about. He sighed, and headed for the supply closet.

“You’re lucky, you know that, kid?” David’s soft voice soothed Jenny. “You’re dealing with an experienced diaper changer here. With a mom like mine, I have to be.”

David didn’t like changing stinky diapers, but as Dad always said, “ya gotta do what ya gotta do.”

Changed and powdered and patted, Jenny quickly fell asleep. David tucked his old baby quilt around her, then went back to bed.

Just before he dozed off, he heard his parents quietly climbing the stairs.

“Sixteen hours is too long to be out on that highway,” Dad complained in a low voice. “But I gotta get what sleep I can, and go out again tomorrow.”

The house was dark when David woke again to the sound of the baby’s whimper. It wasn’t a real cry yet, but she was gearing up for one.

Without stopping to think, David rolled out of bed and hurried to the crib.

“Sh!” he whispered. “Dad needs his sleep! And I do too! So hush!” But the baby only whimpered louder.

“Hey!” David grumbled softly as he scooped Jenny up against his shoulder. “How will I stay awake in school tomorrow if you keep waking me up?”

Whispering soothing nonsense words into



the baby's ear, David carried her down to the kitchen, where Mom had left a bottle ready to heat. When Jenny's tummy was full, David held her against his shoulder and paced back and forth, patting her gently, until he felt her relax into sleep.

As he lifted her into the crib, she tensed and started whimpering again. Three times he walked her to sleep, then tried to lay her down; three times she woke up and clung to him.

"Guess I'll have to keep you with me, or no one will get any sleep tonight." David propped up his pillow, leaned back with Jenny on his shoulder, then pulled his blankets over both of them.

"Afraid if I put you down, you'll be left to cry for days again?" he whispered. "I guess you haven't found the world such a good place to be, have you, kid?"

He looked out his bedroom window at the night sky, black and cold, with stars like points of ice. "It looks awfully big and empty out there," he went on. "But you're not alone, Jenny. There's always somebody to love and take care of you. Somebody like my mom, who's always taking care of the 'poor little darlings' Mrs. Scott brings her."

And somebody like me, he thought, as he felt the warm moist breath of the sleeping baby

against his neck. *I'm here, even if I sometimes don't want to be.*

She's too little to understand a word I'm saying, he thought sadly. *And when she's big enough to understand, who's gonna tell her?*

He looked out again at the night sky. "Hey, God, who's gonna take care of this kid? She needs somebody. Her mom drinks, her dad's gone, and she's too little to look out for herself. You gotta find somebody!"

At least my mom and I were here today, he thought drowsily as he rested his head against Jenny's and closed his eyes.

"Good morning, David. Time to . . ." David opened his eyes in time to see the funny look on his mother's face. "How long have you been holding her?" she asked.

David shrugged, but gently, so as not to wake Jenny. "I don't know. Since sometime last night." He shifted slightly to ease his cramped muscles. "She started crying whenever I tried to put her down, and I knew Dad needed his sleep, so . . ." He shrugged again.

Mom lifted the baby, still sleeping, from David's shoulder to her own. "David," she said softly, "you are a saint!"

"I am not!" David scowled. What if his friends heard her say that! They'd tease him forever! "I was just—doing what I had to do."

"Funny," came Dad's voice from the doorway, "that's exactly what I told some lady last night who called me a saint for pulling her car out of a ditch." He grinned at David. "You know, I bet some of those 'saints' we've read about were just people like us, doing what they had to do." He nodded toward the kitchen. "Come on, son. We 'saints' better get some breakfast."

Jenny stayed with David and his family as long as her mother was in the hospital. David got used to the gurgling sounds and sweet powder smell of the baby in his room.

The day Mrs. Scott picked Jenny up, Mom told him to take down the crib.

David shrugged. "You might as well leave the crib up, Mom. We both know what's going to happen. Mrs. Scott will call and say she's got a baby with nobody to take care of it."

"And then?" Mom asked.

David grinned. "I guess we gotta do what we gotta do."

Name _____

Date _____

Discipleship

Create your own symbol of discipleship. Remember that discipleship involves worship to God, fellowship with community, and acts of mission for the world.



Write your own statement of belief about discipleship. Then explain what your belief means.

Jesus Models Discipleship

Unit 8 Assessment

Directions: Answer the following questions with words, phrases, or complete sentences.

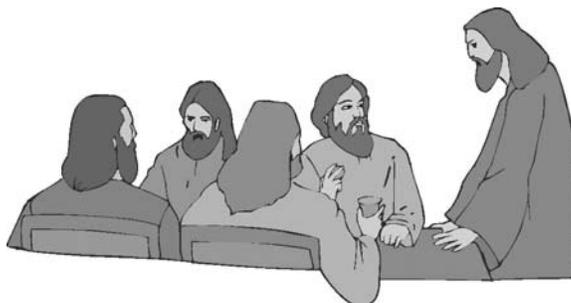
1. Explain the meaning of baptism. _____

2. The devil tempted Jesus three times. First, he told him to make bread. Then he told him to throw himself down from the temple. Last, he told him to worship Satan. What can you do when you are tempted to do something wrong?

3. John's friend asked him to go home with him after school to go skateboarding. John is tempted to go, because he loves to skateboard. However, his parents have strict rules that he must come directly home after school. How could John overcome this temptation?

4. What is discipleship? _____

5. Find Matthew 28:19-20 in your Bible. We call this the Great Commission. In your own words, explain what the commission is saying.



ANSWER KEY

Jesus Models Discipleship, Unit 8

1. *(Accept reasonable answers.) Look for these ideas: Baptism is a ceremony performed in the presence of other people, usually in the context of a church community. Water is used to symbolize cleansing. The person being baptized is making a statement of repentance from sin, acceptance of forgiveness, and commitment to God.*

3. *(Accept reasonable answers.)*

4. *(Accept reasonable answers.)*

5. *Discipleship is commitment to bring worship to God, becoming part of a fellowship of believers, and sharing God's love to the world.*

6. *Go, make disciples, baptize them, and teach them to obey God.*