

Sermon Outline

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Sermon Outline 'Follow me'

Introduction and welcome

If you have this paper in your hands, it means that you are entrusted with a sermon for the International Day of Children and Youth. Congratulations!

In this outline you can find some background information and some pointers to make your own sermon. You are a unique person and God speaks to you in a unique way. So make this sermon your own by reading and listening carefully to what God is saying.

Enjoy this journey with God and be blessed by it and be a blessing to others!

How do I make a sermon?

1. Take time to read the Scripture verses prayerfully. Do it several times and use three different translations or versions. What strikes you? What questions do you have? What challenges you? What is God saying to you? Write those down.
2. Read the background information. How does this impact your understanding of the Bible verses? Add your thoughts to your notes.
3. Think about the people you are talking to. Who are they? What is their background? How old are they? What do they need? You can always send a group of children and young people a WhatsApp or Messenger message. Ask them to read the Bible verses and to let you know what questions they have and what challenges them. This information is always very helpful and it will definitely give you a good direction for your sermon.
4. What is the message you want people to take with them? Write it down in one sentence.
5. Try to focus on one to three points in your sermon. Feel free to choose your own, but here is an example:
 - a. Seeing – Focusing on what Jesus sees in the new disciples and what he sees in us.
 - b. Following – Focusing on what it meant for the disciples to leave everything behind and follow Jesus. What does it mean for us to follow Jesus?
 - c. Fishing – Focusing on the meaning of Jesus' words about fishing for people. What does that mean in our lives?
6. You can unwrap these three points with the information and questions you had yourself or from a group of young people.
7. End your sermon with some 'wondering' questions that challenge people:
 - a. I wonder what part of this story is about you?
 - b. I wonder what part of this story is most important?
 - c. I wonder what challenges you the most in this story?
8. Invite people to respond in their own way to what God is saying to them. Does God ask for a new commitment? Does God challenge people to do something? Explain the place of the mercy seat and invite people to use the mercy seat as a place for prayer, surrendering or renewal of their commitment.



Scripture – Matthew 4:18-22 (NIV)

'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. "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will send you out to fish for people." At once they left their nets and followed him.

'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, and immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.'

Background information

(preferably not to be used in the sermon)

The bigger picture and Matthew

This must be an important story as it is mentioned in the Gospel of Mark (Mark 1:16-20), Luke (Luke 5:1-11) and slightly differently in the Gospel of John (John 1:35-44). All the writers of the gospels believed it was important to let the readers know how the adventure of the 12 disciples started, how they took their first footsteps with Jesus. And Matthew tells this story even before Jesus' first sermon, the famous Sermon on the Mount in chapters 5-7.

If you really go into the book of Matthew, you find that everything Jesus says and does points to God's new world; the Kingdom of God. You see it in the parables, the stories about the mustard seed, the leaven and the Sermon on the Mount itself. While Luke is focusing on a mainly Greek audience, Matthew focuses on the Jewish community and tells them that freedom is for everyone. You don't have to go through all kinds of rituals and follow all kinds of rules. It is available like water in a river (Matthew 3). In Matthew, but not just in Matthew, Jesus turns the world upside down. And we all can be part of that upside down Kingdom.

About the disciples

So, can anyone become a follower of Jesus? Jesus shows us the answer to this question by being very specific in who he calls. It's not random. I realise this sounds contradictory, but in fact it isn't. Let me explain why.

It wasn't uncommon in the Jewish tradition that rabbis invited pupils to follow in their footsteps. It was considered a huge honour if one of your sons was elected to follow a rabbi and learn what it means to be a Jewish scholar or teacher. In Jesus' society it was one of the highest honours only given to very gifted and upper-class boys.

So, it's not very strange that the disciples followed Jesus immediately when they were asked to follow him. It was a great honour to follow a rabbi! The remarkable thing was that these were men, not boys. The older you get, the more difficult it gets to learn, so it's an odd choice of Jesus that he picks 'older' men.

The second odd thing is that Jesus chooses men with an occupation. They were fishermen. Their path was set. They were destined to follow in the footsteps of their fathers'. Once a fisherman, always a fisherman.



Could it be that Jesus wanted the world to know that anyone can follow in his footsteps? Your footprints are not set in a fixed way. You can choose to follow Jesus anytime, any place, whatever your background, upbringing or race. This is for everyone, even those lowly fishermen.

As soon as the fishermen started to follow Jesus, their identity changed. They were no longer fishermen, but 'disciples. So, what is a disciple? We turn to the Oxford Learners Dictionary for the answer:

'One of the people who followed Jesus Christ and his teachings when he was living on earth, especially one of the twelve'

From that moment on, they would listen to Jesus' teaching, witness his wonders, eat with him, walk with him and talk with him. They would learn how to love God, our Father and how to love others. The disciples literally followed Jesus' footsteps to a wedding, a mountain, a lake and to many cities, houses and people.

What does it mean for us to follow Jesus' footsteps? We cannot do that like the disciples almost 2,000 years ago. But we can learn from his teachings and live the life of a child of God, just like him. The Bible shows us many of Jesus' teachings and fellow disciples (Christians) can share stories about how they follow Jesus. Have you ever noticed that Jesus chose 12 disciples in the beginning? And that this group of followers became bigger and bigger? Apparently, Jesus wants us to journey together with other followers. So, stay close to those who show you how to follow Jesus. And stay close to Jesus himself through prayer and times of solitude. If you really want to see where Jesus wants to lead you, you need to stay close!

Questions

There are a few questions in this story. Maybe you could leave the congregation with a few questions they can think about:

- I wonder what you would do if you were one of these fishermen?
- I wonder if Jesus ever asked you to follow him?
- I wonder how you responded to that question?
- I wonder what it is like to follow Jesus' footsteps in your situation?
- I wonder if you can follow Jesus without other followers or disciples?

Feel free to choose some of these questions, but maybe you also received questions from the young people around you or you have some of your own.

I pray that you will be blessed during your preparation and will feel the freedom to share Jesus' message freely.

Captain Marc Potters
International Youth and Children's Officer

