



UNIT 29 | SESSION 2

THE DISCIPLES REPLACED JUDAS

ACTS 1

CHRIST CONNECTION:

Matthias was chosen to join the disciples to tell others about Jesus. God wants us to work together to tell others about Jesus, too.

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

How does the Holy Spirit help Christians? The Holy Spirit comforts us, shows us our sin, and guides us as we live for God's glory.

KEY PASSAGE:

Galatians 5:22-23



LEADER Bible Study

In the latter half of Acts 1, Jesus' eleven disciples were at a turning point in their ministry. Jesus had ascended to heaven, and His followers recognized the gap Judas left. They came together, united in mission and motive as they waited for the promised Holy Spirit.

How did the disciples take their next step without Christ's physical presence guiding them like before? To what did they cling for hope and clarity?

Verse 14 explained that a zealous prayer life knitted together the eleven disciples and their fellow believers. This eagerness to commune with the Father not only bound them together in fellowship; it also unified them as they sought out the next leader to take Judas Iscariot's place.

While they followed Jesus' command to wait in Jerusalem, the disciples leaned on God's Word as the cornerstone of their faith. Peter stood up among their community of believers, reminding them of Scripture's supremacy and foresight. He reassured them of the Holy Spirit's movement throughout the Old Testament and emphasized His presence and guidance amidst this new turning point for the church.

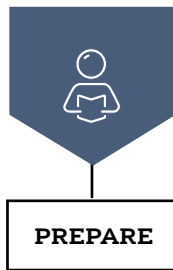
Continuing to unite themselves in prayer, they sought out the next apostle to join them

as a leader. They trusted the character and direction of the God whom they served and called for Matthias to join them. Through prayer and meditation over God's Word, they were certain about the call on this new disciple's life.

Consider the example set by the early church in Acts 1. When they found themselves at a crossroads, they turned to the same resources we have available today: prayer, biblical community, Scripture, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit. As you prepare to lead your preschoolers this week, be encouraged that you are using the same tools to prepare for your ministry as the early church used. God is faithful to use us for His kingdom purposes just as He faithfully used the early church to complete the mission He gave them.

PEOPLE TO KNOW

Matthias: Disciple who followed Jesus from the time of John's ministry of baptism until Jesus' ascension, who was chosen by lot and prayer to succeed Judas as an apostle and official witness to the resurrection



YOUR HEART TO TEACH

GATHER Supplies

Keep these items on hand for each session: Allergy Alert, Bibles, construction paper, copy paper, washable markers, crayons, scissors (adult use), blunt-tipped scissors, glue sticks, glue, blocks, baby dolls, play dough, world map or globe, snack food, paper cups, and napkins.



WELCOME

Welcome

- ☐ “The Fruit (Galatians 5:22-23)” song

Activity Page

- ☐ “How Many All Together?” activity page, 1 per child

Count to 12

- ☐ a variety of counters, math manipulatives, or other small items
- ☐ empty egg cartons that hold a dozen eggs

Transition

- ☐ countdown video (optional)



LEARN

Learn about the Bible

- ☐ bookmark
- ☐ Giant Timeline or Small Group Timeline

Tell the Bible story

- ☐ Bible Story Picture Poster
- ☐ “The Disciples Replaced Judas” video (optional)
- ☐ storytelling tips props (optional)

Practice the key passage

- ☐ Key Passage Marker
- ☐ Key Passage Poster
- ☐ “The Fruit (Galatians 5:22-23)” song
- ☐ “Key Passage” printable, 1 copy on cardstock
- ☐ small brown paper bag

Learn the Big Picture

Question

- ☐ Big Picture Question Poster

Missions moment

- ☐ “C.W. Pruitt Photo” printable



LOVE

Snack and talk

- ☐ hand sanitizer (optional)
- ☐ Bible Story Picture Poster
- ☐ Big Picture Question Poster

Draw people we can tell about Jesus

- ☐ large piece of butcher paper
- ☐ painter’s tape



LIVE

Pass the ice cream

- ☐ small plastic ball
- ☐ tape
- ☐ cone-shaped party hats with straps removed (optional)

Cut straws in a sensory bin

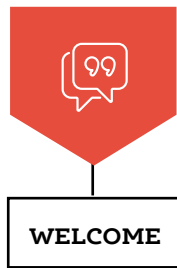
- ☐ package of straws
- ☐ plastic bin

Paint with chopsticks

- ☐ plastic tablecloth
- ☐ painting smocks
- ☐ cotton balls
- ☐ different colors of washable paint
- ☐ paper plates
- ☐ chopsticks or craft sticks, 1 pair per child
- ☐ heavyweight paper, 1 sheet per child

Transition

- ☐ “How Many All Together?” activity page, 1 per child
- ☐ “The Fruit (Galatians 5:22-23)” song
- ☐ Big Picture Cards for Families



WELCOME Preschoolers

Post an allergy alert, if needed. Set out supplies to engage preschoolers as they arrive. Play music as you welcome preschoolers. Greet children by name at eye level. Follow your church's security procedures.

1 ACTIVITY PAGE

Lead preschoolers to complete “How Many All Together?” on the activity page.

SAY “ You put the two sets together to find the total. The last picture shows the 11 disciples. We will learn in our Bible story how the disciples added someone to replace Judas. How many are there now? (12) Let’s listen in to hear how they chose this disciple. ”

2 SESSION STARTER

Use one or both of the following options to engage curiosity about today’s Bible story.

PLAY A CHOOSING GAME



Teach the children to raise their left hand and then their right hand. It may be helpful to face the same direction as the children or act as a mirror of the children to demonstrate. Tell the children that you will give them a choice between two things: if they would choose the first thing to raise their left hand and if they would choose the second thing to raise their right hand. Give choices like: ice cream or cake, beach or mountains, cat or dog, waffles or pancakes, vanilla or chocolate.

SAY “ It was fun to tell which thing you would choose. While we were playing, was it sometimes hard to choose one? [Allow responses.] In our Bible story today, the disciples had to choose someone to replace Judas. We will find out in our Bible story how they did it! ”

COUNT TO 12

Lay out the empty egg cartons with 12 spaces and a variety of counters or math manipulatives. Guide children to count out 11 manipulatives and put them in the carton. Instruct the children to choose one more to add to the 11 to make 12.

SAY “ You did a great job counting out 11 and then adding one more. In our Bible story today, the disciples had to choose someone to replace Judas to make 12 disciples again. We will learn in our Bible story how they made the choice. ”

3 TRANSITION TO LEARN

Gain preschoolers’ attention by showing the countdown video, turning the lights off and on, or clapping a simple rhythm for children to copy. Invite preschoolers to count to 12 as they transition to Learn.

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LEARN the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE BIBLE STORY

Talk about being the line leader and how it is a job many preschoolers want. Explain that it can be hard to choose one person for the job.

SAY “How many of you like to be the line leader? [Allow for responses.] I think almost everyone likes to be the line leader, so it can be hard to choose one person to do the job. In our Bible story today, the disciples had to choose one person to replace Judas as a disciple. Let’s listen in to hear how they did it!”

2 LEARN ABOUT THE BIBLE

Place a bookmark at Acts 1 in your Bible. Invite a preschooler to open it. Reverently display the open Bible.

SAY “What book is this? [Allow responses.] That’s right, the Bible. We know all the words are true and from God. Today we will open to the New Testament and continue in the book of Acts.”

Point to the Bible story picture on the giant timeline or small group timeline. Remind children that all the stories in the Bible fit together to tell an even bigger story. The Bible tells us the big story of how God rescues sinners through His Son, Jesus.

3 TELL THE BIBLE STORY

Tell the following Bible story using the provided storytelling tips or show the video. Use the bold version of the Bible story for younger preschoolers.

THE DISCIPLES REPLACED JUDAS

“Jesus’ disciples had seen Jesus go up to heaven at the Mount of Olives. They **went back to Jerusalem and met together in the upstairs room where they were staying.** These were the names of the eleven disciples who were closest to Jesus: Peter, John, James, Andrew, Philip, Thomas, Bartholomew, Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, Simon the Zealot, and Judas the son of James. They prayed together along with the other followers, including Jesus’ mother Mary and Jesus’ brothers.

Peter stood up and said, “The Scriptures said that Jesus would be hurt by His friend, so that is why Judas Iscariot turned against Him. Judas died, so we should pick someone else—someone who has followed Jesus too. This person will go with us and tell the truth about Jesus, that He is alive!”

So they decided to choose between two men: one man named Joseph and another named Matthias. Then they prayed, “Lord, You know our hearts. Show which of these two You want to take the place that Judas left.” Then they cast lots, and the lot fell to Matthias. So Matthias was added to the eleven apostles.”



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

4 CHRIST CONNECTION

SAY “Matthias was chosen to join the disciples to tell others about Jesus. God wants us to work together to tell others about Jesus, too.”

5 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “The 11 disciples went back to Jerusalem. They met and prayed together with the other followers, including Jesus’ mother Mary and Jesus’ brothers. Peter said that they needed to replace Judas since he had died. They were deciding between two men. Do you remember their names? (Joseph and Matthias) They cast lots to help them figure out who to choose, but what did they do before they cast lots? (They prayed and asked God to show them who should replace Judas.) Yes, they prayed that God would show them who they should choose. When they cast lots, who was chosen? (Matthias) Matthias was chosen and he joined the apostles to tell others about Jesus. God wants us to work together to tell others about Jesus, too.”

6 PRACTICE THE KEY PASSAGE

Before the activity begins, print and cut apart the cards from the “Key Passage” printable and put them in a brown paper bag. Place the key passage marker at Galatians 5:22-23. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Read the key passage aloud. Instruct the children to draw one card out of the bag and work together to put the verse in order using the bananas on the bottom of the cards.

SAY “We drew cards out of bag and worked together to put them in order! God wants us to work together to tell others about Jesus, too. Now that the cards are in order, let’s say the key passage together. [Lead children to say the key passage.]”

Sing the key passage song, “The Fruit (Galatians 5:22-23).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

STORYTELLING TIPS

Count up: Count to eleven and two with preschoolers when those numbers are mentioned in the story.

Use volunteers: Choose 11 children to be the disciples as you say their names in the Bible story. Then choose one more to come up to be Matthias.



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

7 LEARN THE BIG PICTURE QUESTION AND ANSWER

SAY “ In our Bible story today, the disciples chose someone to replace Judas. He would join the disciples to tell others about Jesus. God wants all His followers to work together to tell others about Jesus too. Jesus gave His followers the Holy Spirit to help tell others about Jesus. **How does the Holy Spirit help Christians? The Holy Spirit comforts us, shows us our sin, and guides us as we live for God’s glory.** ”

8 MISSIONS MOMENT

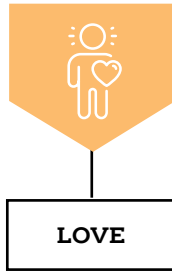
Print the “C.W. Pruitt Photo” printable and display it as you talk about his life and work.

SAY “ C.W. Pruitt was born in 1857. When he was a teenager, he trusted Jesus as His Savior. At this same early age, he felt a strong desire to preach in China. C.W. arrived in China at the age of 24. He served with missionary Lottie Moon. They were the only missionaries during this time at the North China Mission. In 1894, war broke out between China and Japan. The United States government encouraged them to leave to keep them safe, but the missionaries chose to stay and continue the work God called them to do. ”

Lead a prayer, thanking God for the life and work of C.W. Pruitt. Pray for missionaries that continue to share the love of Jesus with the people of China.

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





LOVE

THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God because of what we learned

1 PRAY

Invite preschoolers to close their eyes and think about God as they talk with Him.

SAY “God, thank You that You listen to our prayers, just like You listened to the prayers of the disciples. Thank You for sending us the Holy Spirit to be our Helper when we follow You. I pray the Holy Spirit would guide us to tell others about Jesus. Amen.”

2 SNACK AND TALK



Post an allergy alert. Wash hands or use hand sanitizer. Serve a snack. Show the Bible story picture poster as you ask the following questions. Retell parts of the Bible story as needed.

SAY “What was your favorite part of today’s Bible story?”

SAY “What did you learn about God in today’s Bible story?”

SAY “Who was the person that replaced Judas?”

SAY “How does the Holy Spirit help Christians? The Holy Spirit comforts us, shows us our sin, and guides us as we live for God’s glory.”

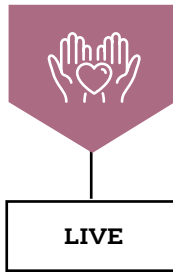
3 DRAW PEOPLE WE CAN TELL ABOUT JESUS

Tape a large piece of butcher paper to the floor, table, or wall. Encourage the children to draw pictures of the people they can tell about Jesus. This could be their friends, family, neighbors, teammates, or people they see at the store.

SAY “In our Bible story, the disciples chose Matthias to replace Judas. The disciples needed to work together to tell others about Jesus. God wants us to work together to tell other people about Jesus too. Who did you draw? [Allow for responses.] What will you tell them about Jesus? [Allow responses.] I am so excited that you have people you want to share Jesus with too!”

Transition from **LOVE** to **LIVE**





THE MISSION OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE for God out of love

- 1 Choose the activities that best fit your group, space, available resources, and time constraints. Set up activities in one of these ways: as a group, all at the same time; in small groups that rotate through each activity; or set up as centers, allowing preschoolers to browse and choose.

PLAY A RHYMING GAME



Teach the preschoolers the rhyme:

“Tap a friend and go real slow;
God wants all the world to know;
About His love, so we will go;
Who is someone you can show?”

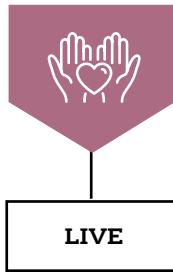
Gather the children and instruct them to sit in a circle. Play a game saying the rhyme as you tap in front of each child. Whoever you land on for the last word will tell the name of someone they can tell about Jesus. The child chosen gets to lead the game as you say the rhyme again. Continue as long as time and interest allow.

SAY “That is a fun game to pick who will be it. It is a little bit like casting lots from our Bible story. The apostles needed to choose a new disciple to replace Judas. They prayed for God to know their hearts and cast lots to make the decision. Matthias was chosen to join the disciples to tell others about Jesus. God wants us to work together to tell others about Jesus, too. Today, we don’t need to cast lots! We have the Holy Spirit, just like God promised. **How does the Holy Spirit help Christians? The Holy Spirit comforts us, shows us our sin, and guides us as we live for God’s glory.**”

PASS THE ICE CREAM

Before the session, make a cone for each child by rolling a piece of paper into a cone shape and securing the edges with tape. Make sure the opening is wide enough for the ball to fit inside. Consider using cone-shaped party hats with the straps removed to save time. Lead children to sit in a line on the floor. Distribute a cone to each child. Place the ball inside the first cone and demonstrate how to pass the ball to a friend by dumping it into the next child’s cone. Cheer for the children as they pass the ball down the line. Repeat the game.

SAY “We worked together to pass the ice cream (ball). The disciples prayed and worked together to choose a new disciple. They chose between two men: Joseph and Matthias. They prayed, ‘Lord, You know our hearts. Show which of these two You want to take the place that Judas left.’ Then they cast lots, and the lot fell to Matthias. Matthias was chosen to join the disciples to tell others about Jesus. God wants us to work together to tell others about Jesus, too.”



THE MISSION OF THE GOSPEL

CUT STRAWS IN A SENSORY BIN

Place straws in the sensory bin. Allow children to cut the straws to all different lengths. As the children cut and explore the straws, play a drawing straws game. Choose several straws that are the same length and one that is a different length. Show the straws to the children so they all appear to be the same length. Allow each child to choose a straw and compare the straws to see which child got the shortest straw. Continue to cut the straws and play the game as long as there is interest. Remind the children to not put straws in their mouths.

SAY “ It was fun to use the scissors to cut the straws to different lengths. We were able to use the straws you cut to play a game. This game was a little bit like casting lots from our Bible story. The apostles needed to choose a new disciple to replace Judas. They prayed for God to know their hearts and cast lots to make the decision. Today, followers of Jesus don’t need to cast lots! We have the Holy Spirit. **How does the Holy Spirit help Christians? The Holy Spirit comforts us, shows us our sin, and guides us as we live for God’s glory.** ”

PAINT WITH CHOPSTICKS



Cover the table with a plastic tablecloth. Assist preschoolers to put on smocks over their clothes. Pour different colors of washable paint on paper plates and set them on the table. Demonstrate to preschoolers how to use chopsticks to pick up a cotton ball, dip it in a paint color, and then use the cotton balls to paint their papers. (Preschoolers can use a two-handed technique to pick up cotton balls if needed.) As preschoolers paint, explain that chopsticks are a popular utensil in China. People can use chopsticks instead of forks when they eat. Pray, thanking God for C.W. Pruitt and other missionaries who go to faraway places to tell people about Jesus.

SAY “ Have you ever seen someone eat with chopsticks? Chopsticks are a popular utensil in China. C.W. Pruitt was one of eight missionaries who went to China many years ago. He stayed in the country for over 50 years to tell people about Jesus. ”

2 TRANSITION

Invite preschoolers to complete their coloring pages. Consider leading preschoolers to sing the key passage song or involving them in a simple game to practice the key passage or big picture question. If parents are picking up children at this time, tell them something that their child enjoyed doing or did well during the session. Give parents the completed activity page. Distribute the big picture cards for families. Encourage parents to engage with the family discussion starters and family activities during the week.