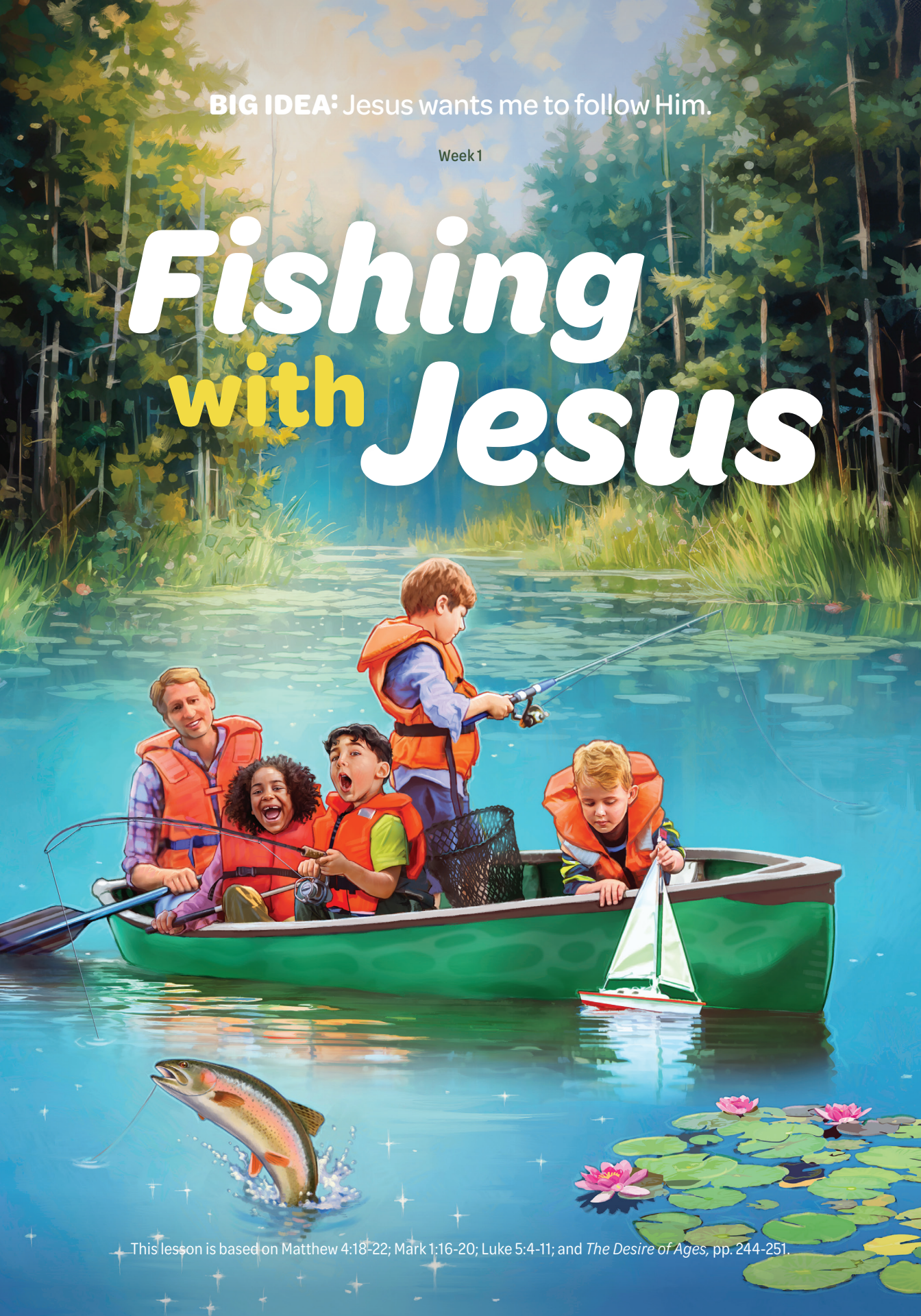
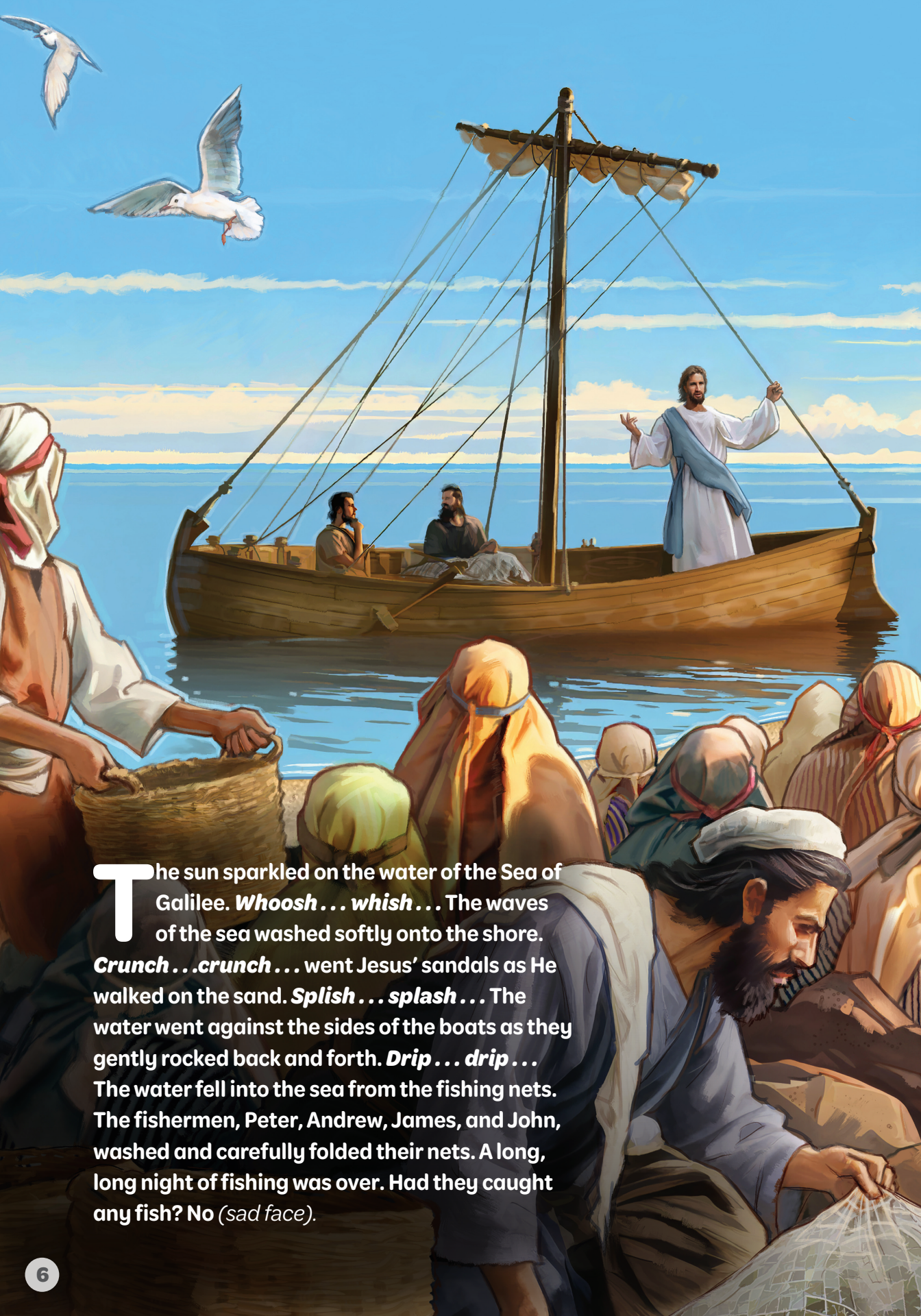
BIG IDEA: Jesus wants me to follow Him.

Week 1

Fishing with Jesus



This lesson is based on Matthew 4:18-22; Mark 1:16-20; Luke 5:4-11; and *The Desire of Ages,* pp. 244-251.



The sun sparkled on the water of the Sea of Galilee. ***Whoosh . . . whish . . .*** The waves of the sea washed softly onto the shore. ***Crunch . . .crunch . . .*** went Jesus' sandals as He walked on the sand. ***Splish . . . splash . . .*** The water went against the sides of the boats as they gently rocked back and forth. ***Drip . . . drip . . .*** The water fell into the sea from the fishing nets. The fishermen, Peter, Andrew, James, and John, washed and carefully folded their nets. A long, long night of fishing was over. Had they caught any fish? No *(sad face).*

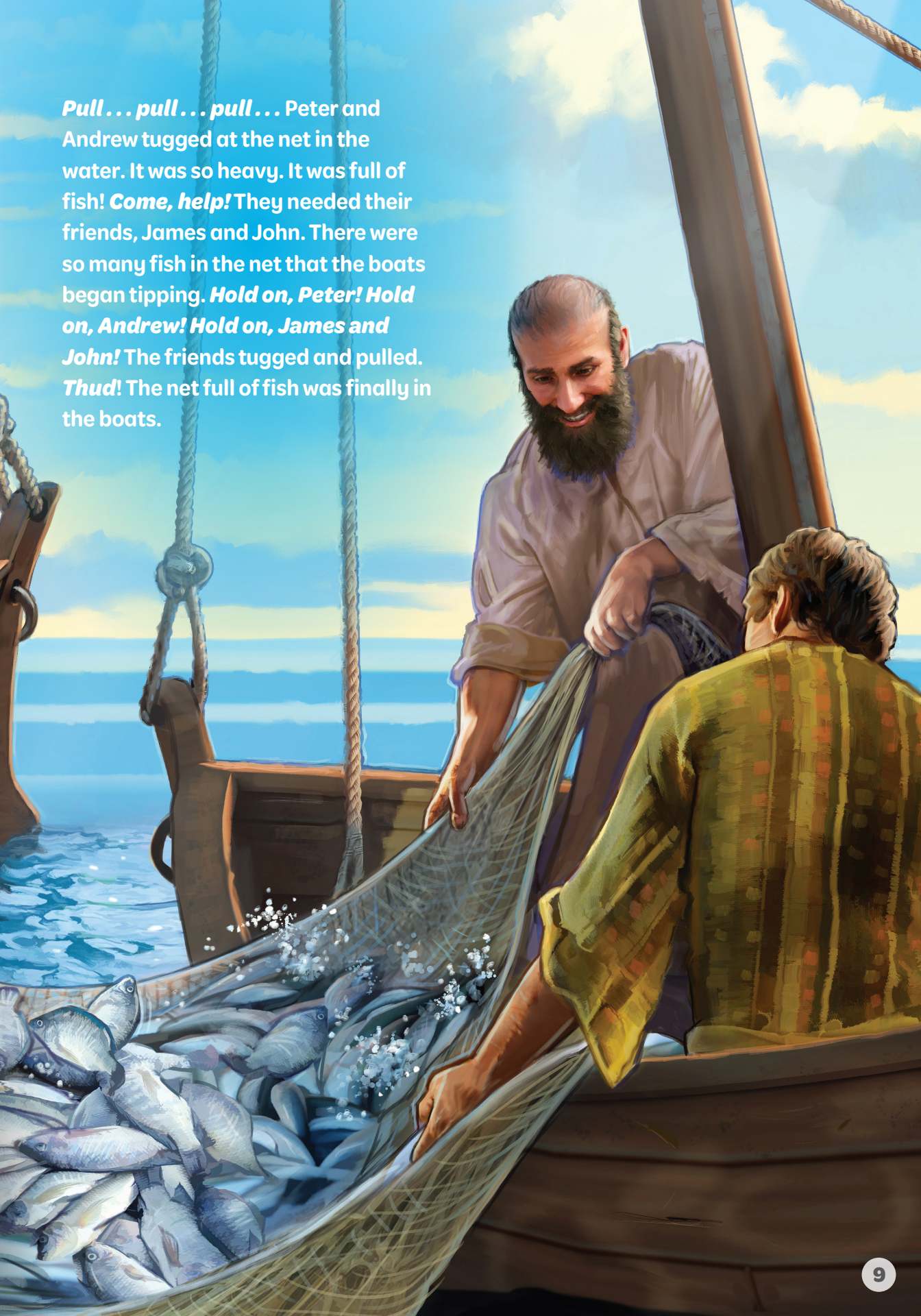
A crowd of people gathered on the sandy shore. They moved closer to hear Jesus talk. Jesus stepped into a boat. He asked Peter to push Him away from the shore. Now the people could hear and see Him better.

Rock . . . rock . . . went the boat on the sea. Jesus spoke about God, His Father in heaven. God loved the people very much! Jesus wanted the people to know God and to tell others about Him too.





Peter and Andrew listened to Jesus. Jesus finished talking. He smiled at the people. He smiled at Peter *(big smile)*. Then He told Peter to take the boat out on the lake and throw his fishing net into the water. Peter knew the only time to catch any fish was at night. How would they catch any fish now in the morning? But Peter didn't shake his head. He nodded yes to Jesus *(nod)*. He did as Jesus asked. Over the side of the boat, out into the deep water, he threw his fishing net. ***Splash***! It went out, then down into the sea.



Pull . . . pull . . . pull . . . Peter and Andrew tugged at the net in the water. It was so heavy. It was full of fish! ***Come, help!*** They needed their friends, James and John. There were so many fish in the net that the boats began tipping. ***Hold on, Peter! Hold on, Andrew! Hold on, James and John!*** The friends tugged and pulled. ***Thud***! The net full of fish was finally in the boats.

Shiny fish filled the boat—right to the very top. Peter, Andrew, James, and John were amazed. There were so many flip-flopping fish in their boat! Peter jumped out of the boat and knelt at Jesus' feet. He knew that Jesus had done a miracle. Only the Son of God could have put all those wiggly fish into their nets. Jesus looked at His friends. "Follow Me," He said (Matthew 4:19). **Jesus wanted them to be His special helpers. He wanted them to learn to be like Him. The four fishermen left their fishing boats and followed Jesus.**

Jesus loves you! He wants you to learn to be like Him too. He says, "Follow Me, *(say child's name).*"

(Say together) **Yes, Jesus, I want to follow You!**



play throughout the Day

Create

Use paint or ink to stamp your child's footprints on a blank piece of paper. Write on top of the footprints *"I want to follow Jesus!"* Share how we can follow Jesus by doing the kinds of things He loved to do: being kind and caring to those around us, helping, showing love with our words and actions, and obeying. Write or draw pictures of some things you could do to follow Jesus.

Play

Use a magnet, a string, and a stick to make a simple fishing rod. Put paper clips on some cut-out paper fish. Take turns catching fish.

Explore

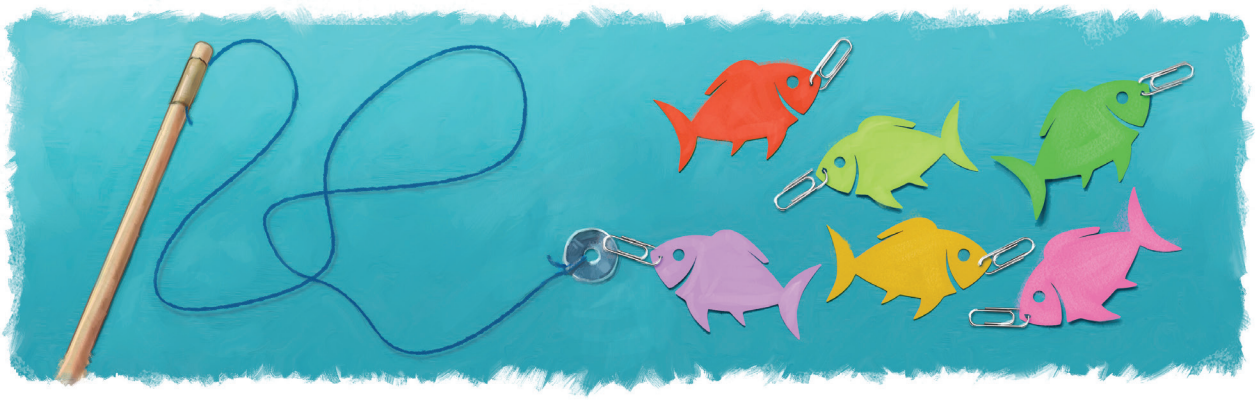
If there is snow, sand, or dirt nearby, go for a walk with your child. Go ahead of them and make footprints, encouraging your child to follow you by stepping in your footprints. Tell your child that Jesus wants us to follow Him.

Connect

Set up an obstacle course. Let your child watch you complete the course, and then say, "Follow me." Complete the course together. Share how Jesus is there to help us with every hard or happy thing we face.

Pray

In family worship, thank God for being the leader of your family. Share a prayer: *"Jesus, we want to follow You!"* Write it on a poster. Decorate this poster together with your child. You can draw a picture, decorate it with flowers, or glue footprints on the bottom. Place your poster in a prominent place in your home.



THE HEART OF THE MATTER

For You, Parents

Jesus is calling you to follow Him, just as He called His disciples. Will you, like Peter, jump in feet first?

Maybe you are finding it hard to focus on His call over the clamor of crying babies, toddler tantrums, or the pressure of working and providing for the family. Maybe the TV, your social calendar, or social media is trying to drown out His voice.

But Jesus is right there, by your side. He knows your name (Isaiah 43:1). He knows how many hairs are on your head (Luke 12:7) and created you intricately in your mother's womb (Jeremiah 1:5). He knows your thoughts before you do (Psalm 139:4), and He has a wonderful plan for your life (Jeremiah 29:11). He knows everything you have done and everything you will do, and yet His love for you is higher than the heavens and stretches out farther than the ocean (Romans 8:39).

It may not always be easy—but what a wonderful blessing is to be gained from saying yes to His call. Imagine if one of the disciples had said, "Now is not a convenient time," or "No, I have to focus on my business." Oh, what they would have missed!

When Jesus called Matthew, he didn't hesitate. "He gave no thought to the lucrative business he had exchanged for poverty and fatigue. It was enough that he would be in the presence of Christ, that he could learn wisdom and goodness from His lips, behold His marvelous works, and be a colaborer with Him in His arduous toil" (Ellen G. White, *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 2, pp. 187, 188).

What a privilege to have the opportunity to be a co-laborer with Jesus! May you be encouraged by the faith of those early disciples to say yes to following God in every part of your life.

