

# James and John

## Lesson At-A-Glance

Scripture Reference  
**Mark 10:35-45**

Lectionary Sunday/  
Church Season  
**Pentecost 20**

Lesson Focus  
**Jesus is with me  
when life gets  
tough.**

Bible Memory Verse  
**And whoever wishes to  
be first among you must  
be slave of all. Mark  
10:44**



### Gather (10 minutes)

	Spark Resources	Supplies
<b>Arrival Activity</b> Kids share something good and list stuff they'd like to have.	Activity Pages 	Paper, pencils
<b>Opening Conversation</b> Kids read the story about Sarah in the learner leaflet and respond as if they were the parents.	Leaflets	Necktie, woman's scarf
<b>Opening Prayer</b> Kids pray responsively with the teacher.	None	None

### Open the Bible (20 minutes)


	Spark Resources	Supplies
<b>James and John Story</b> Kids dig into the Bible story.	Spark Bibles, Spark Bible Stickers, Leaflets	Pencils
<b>Boasting of Our Shipwrecks</b> Kids engage in an activity to learn with Saint Paul that discipleship requires humility.	Spark Bibles, Spark Bible Stickers	Small paper bags, markers
<b>What Became of James and John?</b> Kids discuss where their discipleship paths led them.	Spark Bibles, Spark Bible Stickers	None
<b>Remember It</b> Kids memorize the Bible Memory Verse (BMV) and place I Memorized It stickers in their Bibles.	Spark Bibles, Spark Bible Stickers	Pencils

## Activate Faith (10 minutes)

	Spark Resources	Supplies
<b>Cup of Suffering</b> Kids dramatize the idea of drinking the cup of suffering.	Leaflets	Pencils, pitcher of water, cups
<b>Scissors, Paper, Rock</b> Kids play a familiar game with rules that are reversed.	None	None
<b>What Time Is It?</b> Kids begin to understand the church year calendar.	Leaflets	None

## Send (5 minutes)

	Spark Resources	Supplies
<b>Closing Conversation</b> Kids search for scriptures of encouragement to write on their journey drawings.	Leaflets	Paper, markers
<b>Closing Prayer</b> Kids pray with the teacher.	Family Pages 	Pitcher of water, cups

 Visit [www.sparksundayschool.org](http://www.sparksundayschool.org) for more Spark content! Watch a short Lesson Prep Video that will prepare you and give you confidence to explore this Bible story with the kids you are leading. You will also find four downloadable resources for this lesson: an Activity Page, a Family Page, and two additional in-class activities.

# Gather (10 minutes)

## Arrival Activity

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If some kids arrive earlier than others and you need a lesson-based activity, make copies of the downloadable Activity Page and set them out for kids to try.

**Let's each share something good that happened to us this week. Everyone gather in close to me, and I'll whisper mine. When I finish, I want you to let out big cheers, jump up and down, and give each other high fives like it is really great news.** Give each kid the opportunity to whisper her or his secret to the group. Celebrate with noisy enthusiasm after each kid has shared.

Invite kids to return to their places. **Imagine that you have a really wealthy friend. Now imagine that person says to you: "I'd like to buy you some things. Can you make me a wish list of what you want?"** Provide each kid with a sheet of paper and a pencil. Give them some time to make out their wish list. Invite them to share the three most desirable things on their list.

**How do you think you'd feel if there really was a person who offered to buy you these things? Do you think these things can really make you happy? Explain.**

**Who was able to try a Faith on the Go! activity this past week? Tell us what you did.** Allow some time for sharing.

**Who can tell me the Bible Memory Verse (BMV) from last week?** If kids remember the BMV, invite them to recite it for the group. Guide the kids to help them remember parts they don't.

## Opening Conversation

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Distribute the leaflets. Read through the Lesson Focus and the Life Question on the front page, and look at the photos. Then ask for a volunteer to read Wanting on the second page of the leaflet.

**Okay, now imagine that you are one of the writer's parents. Really try to put yourself in their shoes. We are going to act out our responses to this letter.** Have the boys wear the necktie and the girls wear the scarf to help them get into the part as they act out how they think the writer's parents would respond. Encourage them to ham it up.

After everyone has had a chance to play the role of parent, ask some questions about their responses. **How do you think a real parent would respond? What kind of person do you think the writer would be if he or she got everything he or she asked for? What can the writer learn by not getting the player?**

Ask a volunteer to read Did You Know? on the second page of the leaflet. **What have you thrown away in the last six months? How long do you think you keep things on average? If even really cool stuff can't give us lasting happiness, what can?**

Spark Resources  
Activity Pages



Supplies  
Paper  
Pencils

Spark Resources  
Leaflets

Supplies  
Necktie  
Woman's scarf

## Opening Prayer

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Ask kids to respond to each petition with "Jesus, be near us."

**You promised to be our Savior, so we cry to you . . .** (*Jesus, be near us*)

**We may have lots of stuff but what we need most of all is your love, so we cry to you . . .** (*Jesus, be near us*)

**Sometimes we have problems and we hurt a lot, so we cry to you . . .** (*Jesus, be near us*)

**Be with us now during this time of learning. We want to learn from you. Amen.**

### Spark Resources

None

### Supplies

None

## Open the Bible (20 minutes)

### James and John Story

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Distribute Spark Bibles and invite kids to look up Mark 10:35-45 on page 1114. Ask a volunteer to read verses 35-40 and another volunteer to read 41-45. Invite kids to place an I Read It sticker next to the text.

Read the instructions for the Assigned Seats activity on the third page of the leaflet. Then discuss the menus they designed and how they decided who should sit where.

**In biblical times, where you sat at a banquet table had a lot of importance. If you got to sit on the left or the right of the king, it meant you were special. It actually gave you great power to have one of these seats. So when James and John asked Jesus to give them whatever they asked, then asked for these seats, they were actually asking for power and glory. It is kind of like asking for an MP3 player that will give you status among your friends. But Jesus offered them service and suffering instead.**

**Choose a partner. One person will be the reporter and will interview the other. Ask about what acts of service the other person has witnessed. Share the random kindnesses you have seen other people do, and then trade roles.**

When the interviews are complete, ask about what they learned. **What are some of the acts of service that were mentioned in your interviews? How do these acts bring people closer to Jesus? Why do you think serving is more important than receiving power or material things?**

### Spark Resources

Spark Bibles  
Spark Bible Stickers  
Leaflets

### Supplies

Pencils

## Boasting of our Shipwrecks

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Give each kid a lunch-sized paper bag and a marker. **On your bag, I want you to write as many of your accomplishments as you can think of. Some examples are: good speller, on the soccer team, won coloring contest in kindergarten. Write every accomplishment you are proud of and do it as fast as you can because I won't give you very long. Ready? Go!**

After about a minute, invite kids to share two things from their lists with the class. Have everyone look up 2 Corinthians 11:21-30 on page 1285-1286. Ask for volunteers to read it a verse at a time. **Paul tells us not to get puffed up about our worldly accomplishments. So let's blow up our bags to show our puffiness. Now pop it!**

**Let's try to unrumple our bags now and smooth them down. What does Paul say we should boast about? (our weaknesses) God can even use our weaknesses to God's glory. So I want you to write down your weaknesses on the other side of your bag. Some examples would be: bad at math, talk too much, not patient.** Let them write for a little while. Don't ask them to share lists.

**Now you have your list of things to brag about! Seriously, Paul says to remember that it is okay to have weaknesses when you are a disciple of Jesus. How do you feel about your weakness list? Why do you think Paul wants us to brag about these weaknesses? (They help us remember how we need God's grace to help us.)**

## What Became of James and John?

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**We are going to explore what happened to James and John after this passage. Where did the path of discipleship lead them?** Have kids look up Acts 12:1-2 on page 1218 and place an I Looked It Up sticker by the passage. Ask for a volunteer to read it.

**In this verse, we learn that James was killed, but what about John? Scholars, or people who study the Bible, have thought about this for a long time. Some believe he was the John who wrote the book of Revelation and lived out the rest of his life in exile on the island of Patmos.**

**How do you think James and John were able to deal with their difficult lives and deaths? (They were confident that Jesus would be with them when life got tough—even when they were facing death.)**

**Spark Resources**  
Spark Bibles  
Spark Bible Stickers

**Supplies**  
Small paper bags  
Markers

**Spark Resources**  
Spark Bibles  
Spark Bible Stickers

**Supplies**  
None

## Remember It

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Have kids find the Bible Memory Verse, Mark 10:44, on page 1114. Teach these gestures to help them learn the BMV, or invite them to create their own.

**And whoever wishes to be first among you** (point index finger up)  
**must be slave** (point index finger down)  
**of all.** (open arms wide)

Repeat it several times with exaggerated gestures. When kids have memorized the verse, invite them to put I Memorized It stickers in their Bibles. They can also write in the margin.

### Spark Resources

Spark Bibles  
Spark Bible Stickers

### Supplies

Pencils

## Activate Faith (10 minutes)

### Cup of Suffering

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Ask a volunteer to read Cup of Suffering on the back page of the leaflet. Then ask kids to jot down in the cups on the page a difficult thing or two they've had to face, such as sickness, death in the family, divorce, or a move to a new city. Give each kid a cup and go around your group asking kids to name one or more of the challenges they've faced. As they do, pour water into their cup.

**Our cups may become full of suffering, but Jesus said he would be with us always, even when things get tough.** Invite kids to drink their cups of water. **Why do you think Jesus asks us to drink the cup of suffering with him? Can you think of a time you really suffered? What was it like? We may face suffering in our lives, but we can know that Jesus will always be with us, especially during these difficult times.**

### Spark Resources

Leaflets

### Supplies

Pencils  
Pitcher of water  
Cups

## Scissors, Paper, Rock

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**Jesus taught us that the first would be last and the last would be first. He said that whoever wants to be great must be a servant. He turned the rules upside down! Let's play a game that most of us may know: Rock, Paper, Scissors. But this time we'll play with the rules in reverse.**

**Rock covers paper.  
Paper covers scissors.  
Scissors cover rock.**

Have kids pair up to play several rounds of this game with the rules reversed. Ask kids to talk about what was challenging about the game. **Imagine how difficult it was for Jesus' disciples and others to understand how he could be reversing all the rules that they were so used to following. Jesus was considered radical because he was speaking out for the people who usually had no voice. He was calling those with power and wealth to serve others. These are still challenges for us today.**

Spark Resources  
None

Supplies  
None

## What Time Is It?

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Ask kids to locate the seasonal color and symbol on their leaflets. **What season are we in? (Pentecost) How does this lesson have to do with the season of Pentecost?** Talk about ways that serving others and putting others first is one part of growing in our faith.

Spark Resources  
Leaflets

Supplies  
None

## Send (5 minutes)

### Closing Conversation

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Ask a volunteer to read Faith on the Go! on the last page of the leaflet. Encourage kids to be last in the coming week and report back what that was like.

Spark Resources  
Leaflets

Supplies  
Paper  
Markers

## Closing Prayer

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Pour water in kids' cups again. Kids can hold their cups while you pray together.

**Dear Jesus, you teach us that to be first we must be slave of all.**

**You invite us to drink the cup of suffering with you.**

**Thank you for walking with us every step of the way.**

**Amen.**

Drink the cups of water together.

Send leaflets and a Family Page home with kids.

### Spark Resources

Family Pages



### Supplies

Pitcher of water

Cups