

**Lesson Plans that Work**  
**Year A – Second Sunday after Epiphany**  
**Lesson Plans for Younger Children**

**Scripture: John 1:29-42**

*Because in the mystery of the Word made flesh, you have caused a new light to shine in our hearts, to give the knowledge of your glory in the face of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord.*  
(*Book of Common Prayer, page 378*)

Accept the light we have received and shine it forth! It is not about shining the light in other's faces, blinding them, but holding the light in open hands.

**A Notation for This Week's Gospel**

The transfer of power: "Behold the Lamb of God!" exclaims John the Baptist. He now knows for sure that this man that he has baptized (his cousin) is the long expected Messiah. John is no longer the lone voice crying in the wilderness. This Jesus is the light to the nations.

**Theme: Following the Light**

**Before:** Bring back the construction paper candles the children made last week to leave in the classroom along with additional supplies (various colors of construction paper plus yellow for the flame, scissors, glue or staples, and transparent tape) in case you have a child that does not have a candle or wants to make another candle.

A "follow the leader" activity is suggested and if weather permits it would be good to do this activity outside. If not, think through a path you could take within your building that would not interfere with whatever else is going on, even if it means staying in your class and creating a mini obstacle course (under the table, around the chairs, etc.)

**Beginning:** Ask the children to find their candle to hold while we sing the song we learned last week, adding a new verse to the song. Holding the candles up in the air, sing:

This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine.

This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine.

All around the neighborhood (making a circle over their heads with the candle)

I'm gonna let it shine. Let it shine. Let it shine. Let it shine.

**Praying:** Thank you, God for showing us the way so we can follow Jesus. Amen.

**The Story:** Last week we had a story about Jesus getting baptized. John the Baptist was the one who baptized Jesus. Today we hear his story and the story of the first people who followed Jesus.

This is John talking: Hi, My name is John and I have been trying to get people ready for Jesus. I have been telling them someone special is coming so stop doing things that are not good and get ready. I can help you get ready. I can help you tell God you are sorry about the things you have done that you need forgiveness for and then I can baptize you.

I knew that this someone special would be coming soon. Then, one day, WOW! HE showed up, Jesus came to me and said will you please baptize me. WOW! OK I said to Jesus, I will baptize you if you think I should. So we walked into the river and I baptized him. And while we were standing in the water we both knew that Jesus is the Son of God.

I told my friends Andrew and Peter about Jesus and they went to see for themselves. Yep. They said, this is the Jesus we have been waiting for and we are going to follow Jesus.

**Activity: Follow the Leader**

Describe the space you and the children have in which to do this activity: outside if that is an option, or within the classroom. The object is to take turns being Jesus, the Leader. The leader will show us the way to go, and we will follow. The Leader will be careful, asking the teacher as needed for help, to lead in a way the rest can follow and not get too far ahead of the rest and not take them where they cannot go. Take turns so that each child who wants to be the leader can do so. (Some of the Simon Says type actions can go with the leading: I am patting the top of my head as I walk, I am hopping on one foot, etc.)

**Activity:** If you still have time, or were unable to do the previous activity, give the children paper and crayons and ask them to draw Jesus with the children and you, the teacher, all following Jesus.

**Getting Closure:** Gather the children in a circle and ask them to help you tell about the things we do to follow Jesus: we pray, we come to church, we help each other, etc. (if time permits, sing the song again.)

**Closing Prayer:** Thank you, God, for showing us how to follow Jesus. Amen.

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**Lesson Plans that Work**  
**Year A – Second Sunday after Epiphany**  
**Lesson Plans for Older Children**

**Scripture: John 1:29-42**

*Because in the mystery of the Word made flesh, you have caused a new light to shine in our hearts, to give the knowledge of your glory in the face of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord.*  
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**Theme: Following the Light**

**Before Class:** You will need enough copies of the scripture below so each child can have one. As a means of helping the children grasp the meaning from today's passage, the suggestion is that they "cover" the story as television reporters. In addition to the reporter, they will need John the Baptist, Jesus, Peter, and Andrew. If you have access to a tape recorder or video recorder, bring it.

**Beginning:** Tell the class that we are going to do a newscast on today's story, so as we read the passage, we can be thinking of ways to portray the story. If you have a tape recorder or video recorder, their production could be recorded for them to listen or watch later.

**Opening Prayer:** Thank you, God, for John the Baptist who understood his job and who willingly passed it on to Jesus. Amen.

**The Story: John 1: 29-42** Invite three people to read the passage as it is broken up below – the first will read verses 29-34, the second 35-39a, and the third 39b-42.

**Questions:**

- I wonder why John the Baptist referred to Jesus as The Lamb of God? (The Hebrew people understood the significance of a lamb as a sacrifice. John knew that Jesus was not going to go roaring around like a lion, that he was approachable, and that he would eventually be killed.)
- I wonder how John might have explained what happened at the Baptism of Jesus to a reporter who was trying to understand? (It was clearly an "Ah HA!" moment for John and not one everyone would understand.)
- Who are the two disciples of John who show up just as Jesus walked by? (Verse 35-36, Simon and Andrew.)
- What do they decide to do when they meet Jesus? (They follow him.)

- I wonder why Jesus gave Simon the name Cephas? (Cephas means rock. Jesus saw his strength.)

**Activity:** Invite the children to decide how they want to make this story into a newscast. If you have a larger group, you can divide them into smaller groups so you have two or three presentations of the story. The children will need to decide who will play which part, making sure there is also at least one reporter. The children can decide the format of the show (news, or some form of an interview show). Offer to be a resource person but ask them to produce and perform the show which you will watch.

**Option:** If you have taped the newscast, play it for them and invite them to respond to their work.

**Getting Closure:** We cannot follow Jesus exactly the way Andrew and Peter did — we cannot walk along beside them. I wonder what is involved in “following” Jesus for us here now? I wonder what we think Jesus is calling us to do? (If the children cannot articulate this, you could begin with offering an understanding of your own: staying close to Jesus through prayer, noticing things I can do that Jesus would probably want me to do, etc.)

**Closing Prayer:** Thank you, God, that you sent Jesus to work with ordinary people just like us to show us how to follow Jesus. Amen.

### **John 1:29-42**

The next day John saw Jesus coming towards him and declared, ‘Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! This is he of whom I said, “After me comes a man who ranks ahead of me because he was before me.” I myself did not know him; but I came baptizing with water for this reason, that he might be revealed to Israel.’ And John testified, ‘I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water said to me, “He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.” And I myself have seen and have testified that this is the son of God.’

The next day John again was standing with two of his disciples, and as he watched Jesus walk by, he exclaimed, ‘Look, here is the Lamb of God!’ The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus. When Jesus turned and saw them following, he said to them, ‘What are you looking for?’ They said to him, ‘Rabbi’ (which translated means teacher), ‘where are you staying?’ He said to them, ‘Come and see.’

They came and saw where he was staying, and they remained with him that day. It was about four o’clock in the afternoon. One of the two who heard John speak and followed him was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother. He first found his brother Simon and said to him, ‘We have found the Messiah’ (which is translated Anointed.) He brought Simon to Jesus, who looked at him and said, ‘You are Simon son of John. You are to be called Cephas’ (which is translated Peter.)

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**Lesson Plans that Work**  
**Year A – Second Sunday after Epiphany**  
**Gospel Lesson for Adults**

**Scripture: John 1:29-42**

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**Theme: Following the Light**

**Before Class:** You want to think about what the phrase "Lamb of God" conveys to you. Chapter 12 of Exodus reminds us what the symbol of the lamb would convey to Jesus' hearers who were devoted Jews. The following is from an early Church's Teaching Series (*Living in the Spirit* by Rachel Hosmer and Alan Jones, 1979)

"The church also understood the Lamb as the Servant of God, meek and silent before his oppressors. . . So the image of the lamb as both a sacrifice and as a sign of silent suffering for the people is very important for our entering more deeply into who Christ is." (Page 87)

You will need copies of the scripture, paper, and pencils or pens.

**Beginning:** Tell the group that today's Gospel takes the event we read in last week's Gospel (the baptism of Jesus) and tells us about disciples beginning to follow Jesus. It is written from the viewpoint of John the Baptist.

**Opening Prayer:** We ask you, God, for the grace to discover when to accept power given and when we are to surrender it. Be with us as we discover how to follow you as our Rabbi. Amen.

**Option:** Suggest the group take notes about how power is treated in this passage — where it is accepted, where it is released, and the lack of violence in each transaction.

**The Scripture: John 1:29-42** Invite three people to read – the first will read verses 29-34, the second 35-39a, and the third 39b-42.

**Questions:**

- I wonder what John's hearers have understood by "Lamb of God?" (They would have been familiar with the Exodus (12) explanation of the lamb as sacrifice. Perhaps they were still a bit puzzled.)
- What do we think John understood and what did John want to convey in verse 29? (That this Jesus was the long-awaited Messiah.)
- If you were to explain to a new believer what John is saying in verses 30-32 how would you paraphrase it? (Invite current language and not just "church" terms. John knew that his job was to be an advance man, preparing people for Jesus' arrival. He was walking in faith because he was not sure what this person would look like or even how he would arrive.)
- Verses 33-34 are John's eyewitness accounts of what happened at the baptism, how would you paraphrase this event? (Again, do not use churchy language. John was ready and what he saw completely convinced him that this is the Son of God.)
- How does John convey to his own disciples that he is passing the baton? (Verse 35-36)
- What decision do two disciples reach? (Verse 37)
- How does Jesus respond to their showing up? (He asked them what they were looking for and then invited them to come and see for themselves.)
- What does Andrew do? (He goes and finds his brother, Simon, and tells him he has found the Messiah.)
- What is Jesus' response to Simon? (He gives him a new name: Cephas, the Rock.)

**Getting Closure:** Invite the group to spend a few minutes in silence considering the places in their own lives where they are accepting power (in their work, in their relationships to members of their families, possibly even over their own parents) and where they are releasing power (possibly to children growing into adulthood, ministries that have always been thought of as theirs, etc.)

Invite them to reflect upon the ways in which they are following Jesus as the 'Rabbi' or teacher.

**Closing Prayer:** We ask your continual guidance, God, as we accept and release power. Help us to follow you and come and see what you are showing us. Amen.

### **John 1:29-42**

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