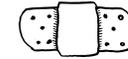


# 12 DISCIPLES



Jesus came to earth to bring God's message to people—a very different message from what they had heard before. He called 12 disciples to help him with his ministry, but even they didn't get it right away.

The **number 12** represents Jesus' 12 disciples. It was common for Jewish teachers like Jesus to call disciples. Jesus' choice of 12 is symbolic. He is Israel's long-awaited Messiah, and his 12 disciples mirror the 12 tribes of Israel.

## Mark 9:33–37

Jesus' disciples were arguing about who was the greatest among them and who would take over when Jesus was gone. Jesus overheard their argument and turned the idea of "great" upside-down. In Jesus' eyes, being great meant being last and serving all.

Check out these other Bible passages that connect with the theme of the 12 Disciples!

- > **Mark 10:35–41** Why did the other disciples get mad at James and John?
- > **Matthew 28:16–20** Can doubters be disciples?
- > **Acts 2:14–17** How did Peter and the other disciples carry on Jesus' ministry?

## Talk about it!

Use these questions to connect with each other.

- > Why do you think Jesus' message was so difficult for the disciples to understand?
- > If you were one of the disciples, what would you want to talk to Jesus about? What questions would you have for him?
- > After this lesson, how has your definition of what it means to be "great" changed?

## What are preteens thinking?

Preteens don't always realize their words have power. Jesus' words inspired his disciples to leave their fishing nets and follow him. Peter's words motivated 3,000 people to become followers of Jesus. Help your preteen realize that words can be both motivational and destructive.

## Try this!

For the next 24 hours, intentionally put yourself "last." Be the last to be served dinner or the last one in line. How does it feel? How does this help you understand what Jesus meant about being "great"?

## Prayer

Teach us, O Lord, that true greatness is found in welcoming the least and the last. Amen.