

Further up, Further in

Resources for Continued Study



LOOKOUT
MOUNTAIN
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

"FOLLOWING JESUS"

For individual study or discussion

Becoming and being a follower of Jesus, as we hear in today's sermon, involves surrendering to Jesus' divine authority (vv. 1-7, 9-10a), seeing our pervasive sinfulness (v. 8), and submitting to his gracious call (vv. 10b-11).

Luke 5:1-11 tells the story of Jesus calling his first disciples. From our previous studies in Luke, we know that Simon Peter had already witnessed Jesus heal his mother-in-law. In today's passage, Simon Peter will undergo his own "healing" as he witnesses the miracle of the catch of fish.

Looking closely at verse 4, we see Jesus instruct a seasoned fisherman on how to fish when he directs Simon Peter to "Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch." Simon Peter had been toiling all night to no avail. Jesus' direction must have seemed absurd to him.

- What circumstances made the command look foolish?
- Refer back to Luke 4:38-39. What knowledge of Jesus did Simon Peter have that would persuade him to let down the nets?

Simon Peter answers, "Master, we toiled all night and took nothing! But at your word I will let down the nets" (v. 5).

- Do we ever have such thoughts arise when Jesus commands us?
- Suppose Simon Peter had given way to his discouragement. What do you think would have been the consequences? When you feel discouragement creeping in, remember God's promises. Meditate on the following passages this week: Isaiah 41:10, Joshua. 1:9, and Matthew 6:31-34.
- What in Simon Peter's reply to Jesus should we follow by example?

In his commentary on Luke 5, John Calvin reminds us that "As Peter yielded so readily to the command of Christ, whom he did not yet know to be a Prophet or the Son of God, no apology can be offered for our disgraceful conduct, if, while we call him our Lord, and King, and Judge, (Isaiah 33:22,) we do not move a finger to perform our duty, to which we have ten times received his commands."¹

Simon Peter and those with him were clearly stunned (and a bit fearful) at the magnitude of fish in the nets, at once recognizing the complete dominion Christ has over the animal kingdom. In verse 10 Jesus tells them, "Do not be afraid..." Why would Simon be fearful? When he realized he was in the presence of God, he was uncertain of what fate might await him. But Jesus quickly allays Simon's fears with his gracious call, "...from now on you will be catching men."

- If we truly know ourselves and truly know Jesus, will our cry to him be to depart (Isaiah. 6:5.)?
- Did the time ever come when the recognition of who Jesus was drew Peter to Him? (John 21:6, 7)

We see in verse 11 that the fishermen, "left everything and followed him." They left behind the largest catch of fish they probably ever had and didn't ask Jesus for time to take it to the marketplace, sell it, and give the proceeds to their families first.

- In what sense must everyone who would be a disciple of Jesus forsake all? (Luke 14:26,33; Philippians 3:7)

DATE: November 21, 2021

SPEAKER: Chad/Brian

SERIES: Luke

PASSAGE: Luke 5:1-11

Family Dinner Table

Being a Christ follower means we have the duty and privilege to share the Good News with others, "and make disciples of all nations" (Mt. 28:19). In a New York Times interview, North Korean missionary and pastor, Kim Tae Jin, describes what it means to him and his non-profit, NK Gulag, to be followers of Christ:

After spending 18 months illegally in China in the mid-1980s and converting to Christianity, Kim Tae Jin was locked up for four years in North Korea's infamous prison camp No. 15 at Yodok.

He fled North Korea a few years after his release and in 2001 found his way to South Korea, where he is a co-chairman of NK Gulag, a private group focusing on human rights in North Korea. For Mr. Kim, while securing those rights is an important goal, it comes second to a far more consequential one: evangelizing in North Korea.

"God never ordered us to fight for human rights, but he ordered us to spread the word to the end of the earth," Mr. Kim, 50, said, adding that the group's leaders were North Korean converts to Christianity. Their faith, he said, buttressed their political work.¹

- If the primary calling for a follower of Christ is to be "fishers of men," discuss with your family how this truth affects the way you live and work, especially in light of Lk 5:11 and Matt. 28:19-20.

¹ Onishi, Norimitsu. *Campaigning for Human Rights, and Fishing for Souls*, 24 February 2006. nytimes.com/2006/02/24.

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Reconciliation Ministries, supported missionary partner

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Agape Mission in Africa, world missions partner

¹ Calvin, John. *Calvin's Commentaries*, Vol XVII. Baker Book House, 1996.