

STORY

Peter's Catch of Fish and Jesus' Call of Apostles - Luke 5:1-11 & 6:12-16
(Also see: Matthew 4:18-22; 10:1-10, Mark 3:13-14)

TEACHER PRAYER

Dear Lord Jesus, you have called me to be your teacher of the students entrusted to me. Help me to faithfully carry out my calling and let nothing distract me from serving You. Enable me to lay aside any doubts about my abilities but rather to trust You to provide the "catch" as I follow your command to throw the net of Your Word into the waters. Bless Your Word carried through me that my students will hear of Your great power and grace in sending Jesus and also sending those who tell others of Jesus so that in the end You may gather in an abundance of souls into heaven with You for all eternity. In You, Lord Jesus, I trust as I pray, Amen.

VOCABULARY

Multitude - A large group of people. Many people came to hear and see Jesus at this point.

Lake of Gennesaret - also known as the Sea of Galilee, Sea of Tiberius (N.T.), or Sea of Chinnereth (O.T.). Located 60 miles NE of Jerusalem and 27 miles from the Mediterranean Sea. (see Rupprecht p 123) {see map}

Forsook - Left behind

Simon the Zealot - Zealots were a group of Jews who opposed the rule and authority of the Romans over the Jews. Sometimes they used violence for their cause. Jesus chose Simon, and delivered him from that bad company.

Apostles - people "sent out" - these were particular men whom Jesus would send out to preach the Gospel as eyewitnesses of Jesus' work and words. Their calling had a special authority needed in the early Church and their job was more specific than that of other believers who are called to spread the Word.

OUTER AIM

Jesus called some fishermen to preach the Gospel.

INNER AIM

Jesus enables those He calls to preach the Gospel.

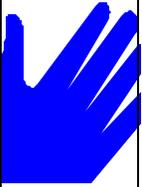
BACKGROUND

(*Rupprecht Bible History References Vol.2, pp. 122-130*)

This event happened after Jesus had been preaching for a year in Palestine (see Rupprecht p 122). Jesus had already called these men to faith (John 1:35-51, elsewhere), so they were believers. He then called them to apostleship - witnesses to the world of the crucified and risen Jesus. The emphasis is not on the miracle, or on these men and their faith. It is on Jesus and the power of His influence in their lives.

Luke 5:1

- ▶ Jesus had a large following of people by this time. They came to hear "the word of God."
- v. 2
- ▶ Most fishing was done in the early morning or late evening. This was the middle of the day so they were washing their nets between shifts of fishing.
- v. 3
- ▶ Jesus asked Simon (Peter) to take him out a little way from the land. This allowed Jesus a little space from the people and also made use of His location on the water to carry the sound farther to more people.



v. 4

- ▶ After Jesus had given the crowds enough to think about for a while, He commanded Peter to do a peculiar thing. Both the time of day and the location went against the usual rules of fishing. But Jesus said they would have a catch of fish.

v. 5

- ▶ Peter noted what also made the request peculiar, that after fishing the previous night, they had not caught anything. But Peter acted by faith at the command of Jesus.

v. 6

- ▶ The fishermen caught so many fish in their net that the net began breaking!
- ▶ This was a miracle because the catch was contrary to what anyone could have expected to happen.

v. 7

- ▶ The fishermen needed reinforcements, and even with two boats they had so many fish that the boats started to sink from the weight.
- ▶ This caused a strong message, preparing these men for what Jesus would ask of them next.

vs. 8-10a

- ▶ Peter, James, John, and those who saw the miracle recognized that only the power of God could have created such a huge catch of fish, despite.
- ▶ And in the presence of the holy God, all sinners (should) feel fear because of their sins and feel undeserving and thankful for even the smallest of blessings.
- ▶ Yet the sinner needs to turn to the Lord to receive forgiveness of sins through the Lord's grace in Jesus Christ.

v. 10b

- ▶ Jesus dispelled their fear with the command to "fear not," an echo of the angel's tidings to the shepherds.
- ▶ But Jesus continued with the promise to Peter, "from now on you will be fishers of men."
- ▶ Beyond the blessings of the catch of fish, God had a special calling for them. Jesus called them to be full-time apostles who would, by the power of the Word given to them, bring people into the kingdom of God, even as they had gathered the fish placed in the nets.
- ▶ They were not to fear that they did not have the power or abilities, for Jesus would gather in the souls of men as they faithfully followed His guidance.

v. 11

- ▶ With faith in what Jesus had said, these four men left behind the amazing catch of fish (which would have brought them great profit), their homes, and their trade and all else in order to take up the work to which Jesus had called them.
- ▶ Here is the powerful lesson of the miracle. By faith we are able to let go of all other blessings for the sake of Jesus and the particular callings He gives us. (Cf similar messages: Mark 8:34-38; Luke 9:57-62; 14:25-35)

Luke 6:12

- ▶ Jesus went to an isolated place and prayed. Especially before selecting the twelve particular men who were to serve as apostles, He knew He had to talk with his heavenly Father. And His prayer wasn't a quick, last minute prayer but He took the entire night to weigh the selection, even as He knew the shortcomings of those chosen.

v. 13

- ▶ Jesus had many disciples, people who believed in Him and followed Him to learn what He had to teach them. But from these many, He chose twelve whom He would send out with special authority as His chosen leaders to help carry the Gospel into the world.

vs. 14-16

- ▶ Scripture reveals more about some of these men, but we know that all of them were sinners in need of a Savior.
- ▶ They were called from a variety of common class trades, not highly educated, yet by God's grace enabled to serve in the special calling Jesus gave them.
- ▶ Although all of these men would show their sinful failings, it is only of Judas Iscariot, that we hear of a fatal sin.
- ▶ Jesus issued the call and gave the ability to serve in that calling, but the responsibility rested upon the person how faithfully he would carry out that work.

STUDENT PRAYER

Dear Jesus in Heaven, Thank you for calling people to special tasks within Your Church to regularly teach us Your Word. Help us to appreciate them as your servants given for our good. We know that you have given each of us a calling for our lives, to serve You. Bless the work that we do in Your name that many people may be gathered into Your family as believers in You for their salvation. When we fail to serve You faithfully, provide those who will bring Your Word to us, calling for repentance and assuring us of Your forgiveness through Your death in our place, that in the end, we and many others may be gathered into heaven with You, in Whom we trust when we pray, Amen.

PRESENTATION

Briefly review the previous story as time allows. Make links to the new story when possible.

Tell the story: Teachers, be encouraged to tell the story in your own words while remaining faithful to the scriptural account. When scripture records the story in more than one place, you may want to harmonize the accounts (including extra details found in each account.) Let the students know where they can find the additional details in the Bible. Point out details and commentary from teachers' notes. (i.e. Why Peter was so incredulous at Jesus' suggestion of fishing at that time and place.)

Discuss the story: While reviewing the major events of the story, discuss the possible applications to the students' lives. Ask questions that make them think about the story and show that they understand the story.

APPLICATIONS

1. Jesus called Peter and these other men to be preachers and teachers of God's Word. He wanted them to concentrate on bringing the saving Gospel to people so God could gather them into His kingdom. That would be their full-time calling for life. Throughout history, God has continued to call certain individuals (both men and women) to full time service to Him as pastors and teachers. God provides the call, the gifts, and the results of the work. What a joy and privilege it is for a person to serve in this way for an entire lifetime, telling others of Jesus, their Savior. Every believer should consider carefully whether God has called him or her to serve Him as a public teacher or preacher.
2. If you personally are not led to become a full-time worker in the Church of God, you still have been called to preach and teach His Word. Every believer, no matter what his other roles in life may be, can share with others the comfort and assurance of the message of salvation in Christ. God gives the gifts and will bless the work that you do for Him.

3. Following Jesus can be both a test and a reinforcement of faith. The Lord gave a command Peter obeyed even though it was not a very reasonable or logical thing for him to do. Faith trusts God and takes Him at His Word, no matter what the cost. Discuss why Peter and the others left behind that great catch of fish and all that they had.

PASSAGES

These passages can be assigned as memory work or simply discussed in class as to how they fit the lesson.

Lower

Matthew 6:33 - But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

Middle any of the above and...

Matthew 16:24-25 - Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it."

Philippians 1:6 - being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;

Upper any of the above and...

Ephesians 4:8, 11-12 - Therefore He says: "When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men." ... And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.

HYMN CHOICES

"Blessed Jesus, at Thy Word" (TLH 16 all)

"All Depends on Our Possessing" (TLH 425: 1-3, 5-6)

"Thou Who the Night in Prayer Didst Spend" (TLH 493:1-4)