

# Session 3

## CALLING OTHERS TO THE MISSION

*Luke 5:1-11*

### Memory Verse

*“Don’t be afraid,” Jesus told Simon. “From now on you will be catching people.”<sup>11</sup> Then they brought the boats to land, left everything, and followed him.*

– LUKE 5:10B-11, CSB

## Calling Others to the Mission

**THEOLOGICAL THEME:** Following Jesus involves both trusting in His person and work as well as obeying His Word.

**?** When was a time you thought you knew someone pretty well only to realize later that you actually didn't know him or her at all? What caused you to develop the wrong idea about them?

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**?** How was the truth revealed to you? How did it make you feel? How did it change the way you acted around them?

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We've all heard the axiom, "Don't judge a book by its cover." We've also had the experience of doing exactly that, only to find out later that we had misjudged. It may have been a literal book or maybe you saw a movie trailer and thought you knew what the movie would be about only to be surprised when you actually watched it.

This can also happen with people. We may meet someone briefly and develop some ideas about them based on a bit of conversation, their clothes or vehicle, or something someone said about them. Sometimes we have already decided about a person's character before we've even personally spoken to them.

This happened to William Tyndale (1494-1536), the great reformer who labored tirelessly to have the Bible translated into the English language, which was against the law in the 1500s. The authorities desperately wanted to stop Tyndale, trap him, and kill him. But he was able to stay safe until he was betrayed by a friend—at least Tyndale thought Henry Phillips was a friend. It turns out he wasn't a friend at all, but a spy sent by the authorities to betray him and lead him into the hands of the English government. Tyndale was burned at the stake. His dying words were a prayer, "Lord, open the King of England's eyes!"

Misjudging someone doesn't always end so tragically, sometimes it goes in the opposite direction. This is what we see in our text today.

Perhaps Peter misjudged Jesus as he overheard some of His sermon that day on the shore of Galilee. He had no doubt heard stories about Jesus and had probably formulated some ideas about Him. But, Peter was in for a surprise that would change his life forever.

## Session Summary

In the passage that comes just before this section, Luke described how Jesus refused to stay in Capernaum because He had been sent for the purpose of preaching the good news to all people, saying, "It is necessary for me to proclaim the good news about the kingdom of God to the other towns also, because I was sent for this purpose" (Luke 4:43).

So, in this passage, we have a particular example of Jesus' preaching in one of the towns in Judea. He wasn't in a synagogue in this episode, but on the shore of the Sea of Galilee. Luke included this instance because it held special significance. It was this time of preaching that occasioned the calling of the three primary disciples: Peter, James, and John. These three men would come to comprise the inner circle of Jesus' relationships. Peter would become the leader of the early church.

Luke's overarching purpose in writing his Gospel was to give an orderly account of Jesus' life and ministry so that his readers would have certainty about Jesus, the Christ. The main emphasis of this section of Luke's account was to give an account of how these three important disciples came to know and follow Christ.

# 1. Jesus Fulfilled His Purpose (Luke 4:43-5:3)

It's impossible to get away from the New Testament motif of the importance of God's Word. It permeates the Gospels, Acts, and Epistles. This is a distinguished theme because it is the framework of God's activity and purposes among His people. From the beginning, God has chosen to reveal Himself to His people by using human grammar, syntax, and vocabulary. He has chosen to make known His will and character through Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek. Furthermore, over the course of time, God has seen to it that His Word be preserved and propagated through the technology of writing.

Jesus said in Luke 4:43, "It is necessary for me to proclaim the good news about the kingdom of God to the other towns also, because I was sent for this purpose." And, this is what we find Jesus preaching on the shore of the Sea.



**What caused Jesus and Peter to interact? How might Peter have misjudged Jesus in their initial interaction?**

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Jesus' preaching was the occasion for their interaction. Particularly, it was the fact that Jesus needed a better way to address the people crowding around Him, and Peter happened to have a boat that could serve as a floating platform from which Jesus could teach the crowd.

This, of course, was no accident. Peter's presence and Jesus' need wasn't a happy coincidence that turned out to benefit both parties. Our God is too wonderful and powerful for us to think that He lucked out in this story. Applying Ephesians 1 to this situation shows a different way of understanding these kinds of "coincidences": "[God] chose [Peter] in him before the foundation of the world, that [he] should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined [Peter] for adoption to himself as [a son] through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will."



**How did Jesus' actions in this passage foreshadow the work He would call Peter to in the future?**

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Isn't it wonderful to consider that God prepared for Peter's initial call to be while Jesus was preaching to the crowds; and then consider Peter's work starting in Acts 2. Jesus, the herald of the kingdom of God, called Peter to be a herald of the kingdom of God. This is what Jesus meant when He told Peter, James, and John that they would be "catching people." (v. 10)

All people are called to preach, teach, tell, share, explain, or disclose the gospel to a lost and dying world. God has chosen to reveal Himself through human language, and He has given His children the gift of human language. This capacity is for God's glory and for the fulfilling of His purposes.

**?** Application: Do you have a habit of bearing testimony of the person and work of Christ to others? When was the last time you shared the gospel with someone? How did they respond?

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## 2. Jesus Showed His Power (Luke 5:4-7)

**?** Why do you think that Jesus provided so many fish for Peter?

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**?** How might these events have provided a foundation for Peter to follow and trust Jesus in the future?

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Peter said that they hadn't caught a thing after fishing all night. The nets were drawn in empty time after time. No doubt Peter and his companions were exhausted and ready to get home. Maybe Jesus had compassion on them and wanted to provide for them their daily bread. Or, maybe Jesus wanted to show Peter thanks for allowing him to use his boat to preach from. It is quite possible that Jesus felt both thanks and compassion toward this lowly fisherman.

But there was a greater purpose in performing this miracle. Through it, Jesus revealed to Peter that He was no mere man. Peter was already interested. After all, he had let Jesus use his boat. Then, when Jesus told him to go into deeper water and cast out the net, he obeyed.

But it wasn't until he saw the nets filled with fish that he responded appropriately to the only begotten Son of God.

**?** Application: If the accounts of Jesus' miraculous works are true what does that mean about who Christ is? How should that change the way you live?

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### 3. Jesus Called to Follow (Luke 5:8-11)

**?** How did Peter respond when he realized that Jesus was much more than he had previously thought?

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The text says that Peter fell at Jesus' knees and said, "Go away from me, because I'm a sinful man, Lord!" (v. 8). Here we see key elements of Peter's response that ought to inform how Christians approach the Lord Jesus Christ. The text says he fell down at Jesus' knees. This is an indication of reverence, submission, and fear. These taken together make up an act of genuine worship. We should be careful not to make Peter's physical posture regulative for the church today, but his internal state certainly should be. The only proper way to approach God is with this same heart posture. However, reverence, submission, and fear cannot be fabricated.

How do Christians cultivate a heart of worship? They find their answer in Peter's statement, "Go away from me, because I'm a sinful man, Lord!" Here Peter expressed that he understood two fundamental truths about the situation: 1) Jesus is holy; 2) Man is sinful.



## How does recognition of God’s holiness and our sinfulness lead us to proper worship?

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When Christians reflect upon the fact that God loved them and rescued them even when they were His enemies, they can’t help but offer thanks and praise to the One who showed such mercy and kindness. When they know that they have been saved by grace through faith and that it has nothing to do with their own works, then they will leave all boasting and self-righteousness behind and approach His throne with hearts that are humble, reverent, and fearful. They will be thankful, joyful, and obedient in all things.

It is noteworthy that when Peter fell at the knees of Jesus to worship, Jesus accepted it. He didn’t tell Peter to stop and worship God alone (Rev. 19:10). This is one more instance in the New Testament that proves that Jesus was God in flesh, not merely a teacher or a prophet.

Commands accompany calling. When a person’s heart is opened to see their desperate spiritual state and that Christ is the cure for their sin-sick soul, they not only respond with faith and reverence, but also with obedience. In fact, those two things (heart and hands) are two sides of the same coin. They always go together in the Christian life. Jesus told them, “From now on you will be catching people” (v. 10). The text says, “Then they brought the boats to land, left everything, and followed him.”

God’s commands are a joy to those who have been redeemed by the blood of Christ. For the person who has been justified and adopted into the family of God, the duties of the child of God become a life-giving, joyful pursuit. Milton Vincent put it this way: “[T]he gospel changes my view of God’s commandments, in that it helps me to see the heart of the Person from whom those commandments come. When I begin my train of thought with the gospel, I realize that if God loved me enough to sacrifice his Son’s life for me, then He must be guided by that same love when He speaks His commandments to me. Viewing God’s commands and prohibitions in this light, I can see them for what they really are: friendly signposts from a heavenly Father who is seeking to love me through each directive, so that I might experience His very fullness forever.”<sup>1</sup>

The fact of the matter is that the way a person responds to the commands of Christ reveals their spiritual state. Those who willfully ignore, nullify, and disobey the commands of Christ show that they love their sin more than Christ and that they don't belong to him. They reveal a soul that is still dead in its sins and transgressions and in desperate need of resurrection.

**?** Application: How does your reverence for God lead you to carefully obey His Word? How does your desire to love and obey God lead you to spend more time in His Word?

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## Conclusion

Jesus preached the good news of the coming kingdom to many people, but he only called a few. Peter, James, and John were common fishermen whom Jesus called to leave behind their old lives and follow after Him. Their calling was accompanied by the miracle of an inexplicable catch of fish. Peter believed in Christ, worshiped Him, and then left all to follow after Him. Those who are in Christ today have experienced the miracle of conversion in their hearts and are now compelled to worship Jesus Christ and follow after Him by obeying His Word.

**?** How seriously do you take talking with those around you concerning the gospel of Jesus Christ? When was the last time you shared the gospel? What happened?

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**?** What is your typical posture and your attitude when you approach God in worship? What might this reveal about your heart toward Him?

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 How do you endeavor to root out sin and grow in Christlikeness through obedience to God's Word? What needs to change?

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**CHRIST CONNECTION:** As the eternal only begotten of the Father, Jesus has the authority to call disciples, to save them, and to send them out into the world to call more disciples in His name.

**MISSIONAL APPLICATION:** Those who come to Christ for mercy are also sent out as ambassadors of the Lord's mercy.



# FOR NEXT WEEK

## The Mission For a Transformed Life

### Main Passages

- Luke 7:36-50

### Session Outline

1. Greatly Abased (Luke 7:36-39)
2. Discouraged Not (Luke 7:40-43)
3. Our Advocate with the Father (Luke 7:44-50)

### Memorize

*“Don’t be afraid,” Jesus told Simon. “From now on you will be catching people.”  
<sup>11</sup> Then they brought the boats to land, left everything, and followed him.*

- Luke 5:10b-11, CSB

### Daily Readings

- Monday - Luke 5:1-11
- Tuesday - Luke 5:12-16
- Wednesday - Luke 5:17-26
- Thursday - Luke 5:27-32
- Friday - Luke 5:33-39
- Saturday - Luke 6:1-5

### References

<sup>1</sup>Vincent, Milton. A Gospel Primer: For Christians. Bemidji, MN: Focus Publishing, 2008.