

## CALLED TO SIGNIFICANCE

Bible Background – LUKE 5:1-11

Printed Text – LUKE 5:1-11

### The First Disciples

**5** One day as Jesus was preaching on the shore of the Sea of Galilee, great crowds pressed in on him to listen to the word of God.

**2** He noticed two empty boats at the water's edge, for the fishermen had left them and were washing their nets.

**3** Stepping into one of the boats, Jesus asked Simon, its owner, to push it out into the water. So he sat in the boat and taught the crowds from there.

**4** When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Now go out where it is deeper, and let down your nets to catch some fish."

**5** "Master," Simon replied, "we worked hard all last night and didn't catch a thing. But if you say so, I'll let the nets down again."

**6** And this time their nets were so full of fish they began to tear!

**7** A shout for help brought their partners in the other boat, and soon both boats were filled with fish and on the verge of sinking.

**8** When Simon Peter realized what had happened, he fell to his knees before Jesus and said, "Oh, Lord, please leave me—I'm such a sinful man."

**9** For he was awestruck by the number of fish they had caught, as were the others with him.

**10** His partners, James and John, the sons of Zebedee, were also amazed. Jesus replied to Simon, "Don't be afraid! From now on you'll be fishing for people!"

**11** And as soon as they landed, they left everything and followed Jesus.

-----New Living Translation

### Lesson Introduction

What does it mean to "Forsake all" and follow Jesus? What type of commitment does following Jesus take and what does that look like in today's world? This week's lesson should cause us to examine what Jesus calls us to do when He invokes us to "forsake all." What do His instructions mean and are we eager to obey?

**Background:** Previously in Luke, the Lord Jesus was in Capernaum (Luke 4:31) healing many people who came to Him after the Sabbath (vv. 40-41). After these many mighty works, Jesus slipped away to pray in a deserted place near the city. His disciples found Him and reported how many people wanted Jesus to stay there among them. But Jesus told them that He had to go to the other cities and preach the kingdom of God, for that is what He was sent

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to do (v. 43). His mission was not to call others from a single place but to go to people throughout Judea—where they worked, where they lived, where they studied—and call them as they were where they were. Jesus left Capernaum to preach in other cities of the Decapolis (see Matthew 4:25). His first stop was Lake Gennesaret (i.e., the Sea of Galilee) where He makes contact with a crowd of people and with some of the men whom He would call to be His disciples.

-----*Precepts for Living*, the UMI Annual Commentary 2020-2021, p. 226

### The Teaching

**Luke 5:1-3:** The Lake of Gennesaret, also called the Sea of Galilee, was the center of commerce for the region of Galilee. Nine cities with a population of 15,000 or more stood on its shores. To the northwest was Capernaum, the home of Simon and Andrew (Mark 1:29). At this location a throng of people had come to hear Jesus teach. There were two fishing boats nearby, empty because of the fruitlessness of the night's work. Jesus entered one of them and asked its owner, Simon, to push out from the shore away from the pressing crowds. From the boat, Jesus taught the people; not from a synagogue, but from a boat—where the people were. The Word tells us to “Go ye into all the world” (Mark 16:15); not wait until the people come to us. We should be ready to share the Good News whenever the opportunity arises.

◆ *When have you shown a willingness to share about God in unexpected places?*

### The Miracle

**Luke 5:4-7:** After teaching the multitudes, Jesus instructed Simon to push out further away from the shore, to the deeper parts of the lake and to let down their nets. Although, Simon was no doubt an experienced, professional fisherman, he did not despise Jesus' instructions. His experience told him that if they hadn't caught anything all night during the prime time for catching fish, when the lake was cooler and the fish more active, they certainly would not catch much in the heat of the day. Nevertheless, he was obedient to the Lord's instructions. What a reward for obedience! They caught so many fish that they beckoned to their partners in the other boat! The two previously empty boats were now so full of fish that they were about to sink. Acting upon Jesus' command brought the unexpected.

◆ *We need “nevertheless” kind of faith in our lives today. “Nevertheless” faith means that, no matter what the obstacles are, we are going to move forward at Jesus' Words. Do you have “nevertheless” faith?*

### The Commitment

**Luke 5:8-11:** Simon (Peter) was so utterly astounded by what he had just experience. He had never seen anything like that before. The miraculous haul of fish and the earlier healing of his mother-in-law (Luke 4:38) helped him to see Jesus in a totally different light. He saw the Divine, the Perfect. The realization of this also made him see himself as unworthy and brought Simon under the conviction of his own sinfulness. This was the experience of Isaiah when he saw the Lord and realized that his lips were unclean and needed to be purified (Isaiah 6:5) Manoah, Samson's father, also encountered the angel of

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the Lord and feared for his life (Judges 13:22). We cannot come to God in our own righteousness for it is not enough. We can only approach God with the cleansing power that only Jesus provides and He is ready to cleanse us and make us whole today.

Not only was Simon amazed at what had just happened but so were his partners James and John, the sons of Zebedee. The fact that Jesus commissioned these men, especially Simon, who has already acknowledged that he is a sinner, illustrates the beginning of Jesus' ministry of forgiveness and the reputation of Jesus as a friend of sinners. He is not looking for perfect people to serve Him. He called these working men from their labor, to a life of labor in serving Him. They were called from a man-centered vocation to a God-centered one. After this encounter, Simon, John and James made the decision to drop what they were doing and to follow Jesus.

◆ *What have you forsaken for the sake of Christ? What do you still cling to?*

**Conclusion**

Jesus calls us to put aside those things that focus on natural or man-centered pursuits. By instructing those who would serve Him to forsake all and follow Him, He gives us a higher calling to focus our labor on those things that have a God-centered purpose. In all that we do, our commitment, as believers should be focused on Him. Reflect on those commitments that you have made to the Lord and ask Him to give you a new excitement this week so you can become “fishers of men.”

**Sources:**

Banks, M. (Ed.). (2020). Love For One Another. *Precepts for Living*, 23(Fall Quarter), 223-232. The Urban Ministries, Inc. Annual Commentary 2020-2021.  
*Holy Bible*, New Living Translation, copyright © 1996, 2004, 2015 by Tyndale House Foundation, Carol Stream, Illinois.

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**Lesson for Next Week – January 17, 2021 – Study Guide 7**

## **CALLED TO SIGNIFICANCE**

Bible Background ♦ MARK 2:1-12

Printed Text ♦ MARK 2:1-12

Devotional Reading ♦ PSALM 103:1-14

### **Daily Bible Readings**

#### **MONDAY**

Peace and Healing Will Come  
(Isaiah 57:14-21)

#### **TUESDAY**

Healed by Christ's Wounds  
(1 Peter 2:18-25)

#### **WEDNESDAY**

Canaanite Daughter Healed by Mother's Faith  
(Matthew 15:2-28)

#### **THURSDAY**

Anoint Sick with Oil and Prayer  
(James 5:13-16)

#### **FRIDAY**

Woman Healed by Her Faith  
(Mark 5:21-34)

#### **SATURDAY**

The Sick Need a Physician  
(Mark 2:13-17)

#### **SUNDAY**

Jesus Heals and Forgives the paralytic  
(Mark 2:1-12)