

# **LifeWay Explore the Bible Series for Oct. 3: Jesus still calls people to drop, kneel & follow\_92**

September 17, 2004

Posted: 9/17/04

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## **Jesus still calls people to drop, kneel & follow**

Luke 5:1-39

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The two following events occurred by a lake called Gennesaret. This lake also was known as the Sea of Galilee and the Sea of Tiberias. It was approximately 680 feet below sea level which created a tropical climate. As a result of this climate, the land west of the lake was very fertile and produced rich agricultural products.

Jesus could preach in any setting. In chapter 4, Luke tells us Jesus was preaching in the synagogues. Then in chapter 5, he was preaching on the lake and using the boat as his pulpit. Jesus shared the Good News anytime and to anyone who crowded around to listen to him.

## A calling to catch men

This chapter begins with a tremendous need. “People were crowding around him and listening to the word of God” (5:1). There may never be an “ideal” place to preach, but Jesus grabbed every opportunity to share the gospel. If we wait for an ideal opportunity and the most favorable time to share the gospel with people, we may never do anything. Christians always should be prepared to share the gospel. If we are prepared, we will be able to see needs around us. People need to listen to God's word. Many people are crowding around us and waiting to hear the gospel. That is why it is important that we are prepared, so we can see their needs and minister to them.

Jesus accepted Simon's boat and asked him to place it near the shore. Many Christians may be willing to give to the gospel ministry. It is very important to give generously to help in the promotion of ministry. This was Simon's contribution to spreading the Word. He provided the boat, which was the pulpit Jesus used to preach the good news to the crowd.



After preaching, Jesus told Simon to let down the nets for a catch (5:4). Why did Jesus want to perform a miracle here at this time? There were many reasons, but one was to assure Simon he would be cared for if he responded to Jesus' call to be a “men catcher.”

It is human nature to worry about how we would support our daily needs if we respond to God's call into ministry, but he reassures us by this example. It was not the right time to go fishing because they had tried all night without catching anything. And as professional fishermen, they knew it was going to be fruitless effort to fish at that time (5:5). But to their surprise, the nets began to break for such a large number of fish (5:6).

Simon was scared of what he saw and realized Jesus was the most powerful Master. Then, Jesus turned to Simon, and said, "Don't be afraid; from now on you will catch men (5:10)." Upon hearing Jesus' calling, Simon made a wise and courageous decision to leave everything and follow this powerful Master.

### **Calling the sick and sinners**

Luke lists two separate callings in this chapter. After calling Simon to follow him, Jesus called Levi, the tax collector, to follow him at the tax booth. In verse 31, it tells the nature of the calling Jesus gave Levi. Jesus answered the accusation coming from the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, saying: "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (5:31). This calling is for repentance and to reconcile with God.

Jesus did not come for the righteous; and in fact, there is not even one righteous person on earth in God's eyes. Paul points out, "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). We all are sinners, and have spiritual sickness in our lives. Jesus is the Savior and the Almighty Doctor. He called Levi, and still is calling people to repent and to be healed by his merciful hand.

Even though Levi was rich with earthly wealth, he was sick and poor in his spiritual life. When he heard of Jesus' calling, he responded immediately by leaving everything and following Jesus (5:28). We may have a lot of money, but we have no sense of security. Money cannot buy us a genuine and happy relationship. That was exactly what Levi had in his life. He knew spiritually, so he grabbed this opportunity when he saw Jesus.

### **Your response**

Simon left everything and followed Jesus when he heard the calling. He

changed his career to become a fisherman of men. Many Christians responded to God's calling by changing their lifestyles or careers. We can no longer keep going our own way and focusing on our own interests if we really want to respond to God's calling.

Levi also left everything and got out of his tax booth to follow Jesus when he heard the calling. If still you indulge in sins, Jesus calls you to get out of it, leave all the sinful bondages behind and follow him. He wants to heal your spiritual sickness and gives the wealth you can never get from the world.

### **Discussion questions**

- If God calls you to be a full- time minister, will you answer him without any reservation?
  
- What worries you about responding to his call to you?
  
- Do you realize that Jesus is calling you to get out of your sins and follow him?

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