

Bible Stories for Adults

Fishers of Men

Luke 5:1-11

Opening

Gathering: How does Jesus expect us to fish for men today?

Today's Focus: Jesus' first disciples responded to His call to become fishers of men by leaving everything to follow Him.

Key Verses: *Simon answered, "Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets."* Luke 5:5

Then Jesus said to Simon, "Don't be afraid; from now on you will catch men." So they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed Him. Luke 5:10-11

Opening Prayer

Lesson

Welcome Home? - Review of Last Week (*Luke 4:14-30*)

After John's stories of Jesus in Judea, where did Jesus go to begin His ministry?

Luke 4:14

What did He do there?

Matthew 4:23-25

Was He welcomed as the Messiah or as a traveling rabbi?

Luke 4:15-16, 20

Did the people in His hometown synagogue understand His message?

Luke 4:22

How did Jesus respond to His past neighbors watching a show and ignoring His message?

Luke 4:24-27

Did the people understand any of Jesus' sermon?

Luke 4:28

How upset were they?

Luke 4:29

How far did they get?

Luke 4:30

Why were they unable to kill Him?

John 2:4b

Home Base (*Luke 4:31-32*)

After such rejection by His hometown, did Jesus go off by Himself to re-assess His ministry?

Luke 4:31-32

How are we to respond to rejection when we bring the good news of Jesus to others?

Luke 10:10-12, 16

Was Capernaum just a stopping point on the way to other places?

Matthew 4:13

What was significant about Jesus living in Capernaum?

Matthew 4:14-16

Did Jesus settle back and spend most of His time in Capernaum?

Luke 4:42-44

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People, People Everywhere (Luke 5:1)

Did this popularity create any other problems for Jesus besides a lack of privacy?

Luke 8:42b

What problem did the crowds present to Jesus in today's story?

Luke 5:1

Sea of Galilee

13 miles long by 8 miles wide, Up to 150-ft deep, 700 ft below sea level

Lowest freshwater lake on earth, Second lowest lake on earth (after Dead Sea)

Prone to sudden storms due to low lying position in rift valley surrounded by hills

Jordan River runs north to south through the lake

Old Testament - Called Sea of Kinnereth (or Chinnereth), from its harp-like shape

New Testament - Also called *Lake of Gennesaret* and *Sea of Tiberias*

Gennesaret was a 3x5 mile fertile plain S of Capernaum & NW of Sea of Galilee

Tiberias was a city named after Roman emperor on SW shore of Sea of Galilee

A Creative Idea (Luke 5:2-3)

What did Jesus see that let Him creatively solve His problem and still minister to the people?

Luke 5:2

Notes: Fish was a common part of Palestinian diet, Sea of Galilee was full of various fish

Galilee fish stayed in the depths during the day

Rose at night to feed on the surface in shallower water

Fishers pulled nets near shore at night and went ashore at daylight

Fish were separated and taken to market early in the morning

Fishers mended their nets and cleaned them by casting them into the shallow water

Fish nets would have various debris and tears after a night of dragging

Nets had to be washed and stretched out to dry or they would rot and break

What was Jesus' creative solution?

Luke 5:3

Hearing Rock (Luke 5:4)

Simon is Greek for *hearing*. Had this boat owner heard of this Jesus before?

John 1:40-42

Peter is Greek for *rock*. Why did Jesus call Simon a rock?

Matthew 16:15-18

What did *Simon Peter* experience soon after meeting Jesus that began to build his faith?

John 2:1-3, 7-11

Did Simon become a full-time follower of Jesus from the moment he met Jesus?

Matthew 4:18

How did Jesus nudge Simon's faith and make sure he was *hearing* the faith-building gospel?

Luke 5:3

After Simon heard this gospel message, how did Jesus further push his growing faith?

Luke 5:4

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An Unlikely Miracle (*Luke 5:5-7*)

How did Simon react to this crazy idea from a rabbi/carpenter who knew nothing about fishing?

Luke 5:5

Was this experienced fisherman foolish to go along with this ignorant suggestion?

Luke 5:6

Were any other prospective disciples able to witness this amazing miracle?

Luke 5:7

Letting Down Our Nets (*Luke 5:5-7*)

Have we been given a crazy-sounding command like Jesus' command to Simon to go out?

Luke 10:2-3

This sounds scary. How can we accept such a difficult calling?

John 14:16, 27

How will the Spirit help us?

Luke 12:12 (Matthew 10:20)

How are we to respond to this call to go out?

Isaiah 6:8

What results can we expect as we accept Jesus' call and go out as fishers for Him?

Acts 2:46-47

Are we to assume our faith is lacking if the people we witness to don't become Christians?

1 Corinthians 3:6-9

What does the help Simon got from his partners tell us about our activities as Jesus' fishers?

Matthew 18:19-20

I'm Unworthy (*Luke 5:8-10a*)

How did Peter respond to this miracle that only a professional fisherman could fully understand?

Luke 5:8

Why did he react so severely?

Luke 5:9

What did his partners who had come with the second boat think about what had happened?

Luke 5:10a

What other leaders of God's people felt unworthy and undeserving to be called by God?

Exodus 3:4-6, 11

Judges 6:14-15

Jeremiah 1:4-6

What other leader expressed unworthiness because of his sinfulness?

Isaiah 6:5

Are we worthy of our calling?

Luke 17:10

Who, then, is worthy?

Revelation 5:2-5

So how can we then be worthy of the callings God has given us?

Romans 5:8, 11

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Simon's Risky Response (*Luke 5:8-10*)

What risky statement did Simon make when he confessed his unworthiness?

Luke 5:8

How was this so risky?

Matthew 10:32-33

How did this play out in Jesus' statement to the Nazarenes that the Gentiles would be saved?

Acts 13:46-48

Simon's Perfect Response (*Luke 5:11*)

How did Jesus show that He understood Simon's confession and was ready to call Him further?

Luke 5:10b (*Matthew 4:19*)

How did Simon, Andrew, James and John respond to this huge call to be full-time disciples?

Luke 5:11

Note: A fishing business with partners and employees would have been very lucrative

This business was a family business headed by fathers Jonas and Zebedee

The decision to leave everything would cost financially and personally

Did they leave everything to follow Him for a little while or for good?

Matthew 19:27

What promise do we have if we likewise commit our lives to following Him?

Matthew 19:28-29

Closing Prayer

Response - Consider and meditate on one each day this week

1. How earnestly do I look for Jesus to hear him speak to me?
(*Luke 4:42; 5:1, 18-19; 8:42b; 10:38-42; Matthew 4:25; 7:7-8*)
2. When have I responded in faith to Jesus' guidance even though it made no sense to me?
(*Luke 5:4-5; Genesis 22:2-3; 2 Kings 5:10-15; Matthew 17:20; Hebrews 11*)
3. How has God blessed me beyond all expectations?
(*Luke 5:6-10; 6:38; 2 Kings 7:1-2; Proverbs 3:9-10; Jeremiah 33:9; Malachi 3:10; 2 Cor. 9:8-11*)
4. When have I felt unworthy of the calling and blessings I have received from God?
(*Luke 5:8; 17:10; Genesis 18:27; 32:10; Exodus 3:1-14; Judges 6:14-18; Job 40:4; Isaiah 6:5; Jeremiah 1:4-6; Romans 5:6-8; Revelation 5:2-5*)
5. What have I left to follow Jesus?
(*Luke 5:11, 27-28; Isaiah 65:17; Mark 10:17-30; John 1:43; 21:18-22; Romans 6:1-14; 2 Cor. 5:17*)