

**【Luke 5: 1-10】**

One day as Jesus was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret, the people were crowding around him and listening to the word of God. <sup>2</sup> He saw at the water's edge two boats, left there by the fishermen, who were washing their nets. <sup>3</sup> He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little from shore. Then he sat down and taught the people from the boat.

**4** When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch."

**5** 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."

**6** When they had done so, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break. **7** So they signalled their partners in the other boat to come and help them, and they came and filled both boats so full that they began to sink.

**8** When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus' knees and said, "Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!" **9** For he and all his companions were astonished at the catch of fish they had taken, **10** and so were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, Simon's partners.

Then Jesus said to Simon, "Don't be afraid; from now on you will fish for people."

In Mark 1:16-20 and Matthew 4:18-22, Jesus walks by the Sea of Galilee and calls to Simon and Andrew and to James and John to follow him to become fishers of people. They do so. In other words, Mark and Matthew (following Mark) present the fishermen as responding obediently simply on the basis of Jesus' authoritative call. There is no indication in the narrative that they have ever heard Jesus teach or have even heard of Jesus before he calls out to them.

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Luke's story of Jesus calling the first disciples is unique among the synoptic Gospels. While Mark and Matthew speak of Jesus walking along the Sea of Galilee and abruptly calling Simon, Andrew, James, and John to follow him (Matt 4:18-22; Mark 1:16-20), only Luke tells the story of a miraculous catch of fish preceding the call.

Luke, on the other hand, seems to present the first disciples as responding to Jesus' call because of what they have seen. They have heard Jesus teach and they have seen him perform a miracle. The decision to accept Jesus' invitation to follow, then, is a sensible one: they have witnessed evidence that Jesus is worthy to be followed, and thus they follow.

Let's look four key things from this passage.

1, Jesus wanted to use his boat to reach the multitudes.

When God in his divine grace saved us, He saved us not only for us but to reach out to others through us/our resources.

2, Jesus met Simon's personal needs/obedience brings breakthrough.

Sometimes it may seem like our answers for prayers are delayed. God may even use us to bless others and yet we are still waiting for our own breakthrough. However, in due time God meets our needs in supernatural way.

3, Grace leads to repentance.

Upon hearing Jesus's teaching and participating in the miraculous catch of fish, Simon does not say something to the effect of, "What wisdom, power, and authority you have! Let me follow you. Send me out to do your will." Completely the opposite. Upon hearing Jesus' wisdom, and especially upon seeing his power and authority even over fish in the lake, Simon tries to send Jesus away.

Such a response may seem odd to our modern ears, but it is a natural and appropriate response to divine presence in the ancient world. In the tradition of the Hebrew Bible describing faith as "fear of the Lord," Simon and his partners are astonished/afraid. So, the

one who will come to be called “Rock” falls to his knees, trembles, and says, “Go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!” (5:8). It is a moment of true humility.

People usually think of confession of sin as being offered to God in order to receive grace. This story offers a counter view. Upon receiving grace from Jesus in the form of a catch of fish he could not accomplish on his own, Simon confesses his sinfulness. Instead of trying to persuade God to address the fact that we are woefully and painfully mired in the human condition, when we realize God has addressed our condition, we are able to confess where we are mired.

It is at this moment — this very moment following Jesus’s teaching and miraculous catch of fish in which Simon names his unworthiness to even be in Jesus’ presence — that Jesus calls him to begin catching people instead of fish.

4, Grace sustains.

**[John 21:1-7]**

**Afterward Jesus appeared again to his disciples, by the Sea of Galilee. It happened this way: Simon Peter, Thomas (also known as Didymus), Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two other disciples were together. “I’m going out to fish,” Simon Peter told them, and they said, “We’ll go with you.” So they went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.**

**Early in the morning, Jesus stood on the shore, but the disciples did not realize that it was Jesus.**

**He called out to them, “Friends, haven’t you any fish?”**

**“No,” they answered.**

**He said, “Throw your net on the right side of the boat and you will find some.” When they did, they were unable to haul the net in because of the large number of fish.**

**Then the disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, “It is the Lord!” As soon as Simon Peter heard him say, “It is the Lord,” he wrapped his outer garment around him (for he had taken it off) and jumped into the water.**

Peter turns back to the life they once knew. He plans a late-night fishing trip, and seven of the eleven show up. This attempt to return to the way things were ignores that the encounter with Jesus gave them a greater mission. And yet the love and grace of Christ reached out to him and brought him back to his God given purpose. No matter how far think you are away from Christ. You are still within the reach of His grace, mercy and love.