



NEW TESTAMENT • LESSON 11

## THE CALLING OF THE FIRST DISCIPLES

*Jesus called the disciples with power; they responded in faith.*



**MONDAY**

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### **THE STORY: LUKE 5:1-8**

We learn from John 1:35-42 that Jesus had already met Simon and renamed him Peter. Jesus got into Peter's boat and asked him to put out from shore so He could teach the crowds. He had already healed many, and the crowds followed Him. Putting away from the shore allowed people to gather along the shoreline, making it easier for them to see and hear Jesus. After Jesus finished speaking, He asked Peter to go out into the deep waters and put down his nets. They caught so many fish that two boats almost sank under the weight. Peter, suddenly aware that Jesus was Lord, fell down to his knees in fear, and in awareness of his sinfulness.

### **TALK ABOUT IT:**

Why did Peter fall to his knees? (Peter realized he was in the presence of God and he was afraid because of his sin. The holiness of God exposes our sinfulness.)

Why did Jesus tell Peter not to be afraid? (Though Peter should have been afraid because of his sin, Jesus was Peter's Savior. Jesus would die to take Peter's penalty. It was Jesus' substitutionary death on the cross that enabled Him to forgive rather than to judge Peter. So Peter did not need to fear.)

**PRAY:**

Thank God for the cross, which makes it possible for us to confess our sin and be forgiven.



**TUESDAY**

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**THE STORY: LUKE 5:9,10**

Jesus called Peter into His service. Between Peter's call and Jesus' death, resurrection and ascension into heaven, He would train Peter. It would be Peter, on the day of Pentecost, who would preach to the multitude and see 3,000 people repent and believe in Jesus. That catch of people would match this catch of fish and validate Jesus' words (see Acts 2:41)

**TALK ABOUT IT:**

What did Jesus mean by "catch men"? (Jesus meant that Peter and the other disciples would spread the gospel message to those who had not heard it and that those people would be added to the church.)

Are we called to be "fishers of men"? (Yes, we are called to proclaim Jesus and help gather people into the church. Think of the gospel as the net we use to haul people into the boat - the church.)

**PRAY:**

Pray for help and courage to not be afraid to preach the gospel to neighbors. Pray that God would give you an opportunity to share the gospel with your unbelieving neighbors and family members.



## WEDNESDAY WHERE IS THE GOSPEL?

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### THE STORY: JOHN 1:40-51

Luke 19:10 says that Jesus came to seek and to save the lost. In this story we see the calling of the first disciples. They were to be more than Jesus' companions; they were to join Him in the mission to "catch men" (see Luke 5:10). This catching of men would only be possible through the grace of God available through the Cross and the Resurrection.

Right from the beginning Jesus demonstrated His power to the disciples, and they responded with statements of faith and truth. When Jesus told Nathanael that He knew him before they actually met, and went on to describe the setting, Nathanael was amazed. He instantly believed and praised Jesus, saying, "You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!" (see John 1:49). In Luke 5:8, after the miraculous catch of fish, Peter responded, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man."

### TALK ABOUT IT:

What are the two responses Jesus evoked from the first disciples? (Jesus evoked both awe and guilt. Awe as illustrated in Nathanael's declaration of faith, and guilt as illustrated by Peter's response.)

What do the disciples' responses teach us? (The disciples' responses demonstrate that God is holy, unlike any other. They also teach us that man is sinful in relationship to God. It is only through the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross, which takes our sins away, that we can stand before a holy God without shame and fear.)

### PRAY

Praise God for His holiness and thank Him for sending Jesus to take our guilt away so that one day we will be able to stand in the presence of God free of condemnation, fear and shame.



## THURSDAY

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### THE STORY: LUKE 5:11

The disciples left everything. After Jesus and the disciples brought their boats to shore, Peter, James and John left everything to follow Jesus. Imagine leaving the biggest catch you have ever seen in your life to follow a wandering teacher? Of course, Jesus was more than a wandering teacher; He was King! They would see Jesus multiply fishes and loaves, heal the sick, and walk on water. They made the right choice.

### TALK ABOUT IT:

Do you think it was easy for the disciples to leave everything they had? (No, it was not easy. Sometimes we can read stories like this too romantically, thinking the disciples made a quick decision without effort and went merrily along with Jesus. The truth is that they had to count the cost. Later, in Luke 18:28, Peter would say, “We have left our homes and followed you.” Jesus in turn assured Peter that anyone who has “given up” for Jesus will be rewarded.)

What are we called to give up for Jesus? (There is no list of things a person must give up to follow Jesus. The important thing is not what we give up, but our willingness to give up all. Led by the Spirit of God, we will all be called upon to make real sacrifices for the advance of the gospel. We may be called to sacrifice time, money, friends, jobs, homes or other things we love, in obedience to God’s will.)

### PRAY:

Ask God for a willing heart to give up whatever God requires for the sake of the Kingdom and the advance of the gospel.



**FRIDAY**  
**ON THE ROAD TO EMMAUS**

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**THE STORY: ISAIAH 35:8**

Isaiah described a highway called the “Way of Holiness” that the unclean will not journey on. In John 14:6 Jesus said “I am the way...” Early Christians and Paul were even called followers of the Way (see Acts 24:14).

**TALK ABOUT IT:**

Why is it appropriate to think of Jesus as our highway to holiness? (Apart from trusting Jesus, we can not be holy by ourselves.)

Are there additional ways to travel other than Jesus? (No - according to Acts 4:12, Jesus is the only way.)

**PRAY:**

Thank Jesus for being our Way to heaven and making what would have been an impossible journey into a well-paved highway of salvation.