

Jesus Calls His First Disciples

Good morning everyone. How are we all feeling today. Are we ready and excited to get into the word of God? As we continue through our journey in Luke, today I will be speaking from the gospel of Luke 5:1-11.

We will share about the miracle that takes place on the Sea of Galilee. A miracle that reveals the power of Christ, peoples hunger for God's word and the obedience shown by Simon.

According to the dictionary a miracle is an extraordinary and astonishing happening that is attributed to the presence of an ultimate or divine.

Miracles in scripture, I believe happen to produce faith in unbelievers and also to strengthen the faith of believers.

Luke teaches us about the importance of being obedient to Christ.

Who here has been fishing before? How big of a fish have you caught? Well this morning we are going to go fishing with a man named Simon.

If you have your bibles please open them to Luke chapter 5:1-11. Let's pray before we get into our reading.

Prayer

Dearest Father we thank you that we can come before you today. We pray Lord that you bless us as we delve into your word. Lord give us understanding of what Luke talks about and let us take what we learn into our everyday life. Make us willing and obedient to hear your calling. In Jesus name, Amen.

Luke chapter 5:1-11

Bible Reading

5 One day as Jesus was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret,^[a] the people were crowding around him and listening to the word of God. ² He saw at the water's edge two boats, left there by the fishermen, who were washing their nets. ³ 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." ¹¹ So they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed him.

Luke begins by telling us that **Jesus was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret,^[a] the people were crowding around him and listening to the word of God.**

Lake Gennesaret, also known as the Sea of Galilee is Israel's largest freshwater lake. This lake isn't very big, it measures just more than 21 kilometres (13 miles) north-south, and it is only 43 meters (141 feet) deep. As a comparison I've pulled the information of Lake Gennesaret compared to Lake Taupo. Even though it is called the Sea of Galilee it is a fresh water lake. It would have been a common fishing place for many of the fisherman in this area.

Last week Pastor Ross talked about Capernaum, on the north western shore of the Sea of Galilee, being a strategic location because of the number of people that would travel through to other cities, like Jerusalem and Damascus. So this was where Jesus set up his base for ministry. Of the 37-40 miracles performed by Jesus mentioned in the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John 23 or so miracles were performed in this area.

Jesus was healing the sick and taking out demons and word was spreading about Him and here we read today the people were crowding around him as they were hungry for the word of God. Hebrews 4:12 says - For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. This word comes from the very bible you're holding. It is the word of God and it has the power to change lives.

Why are you here today? What are your expectations? My hope and my prayer is you are here this morning because you expect to encounter God. You are here because you are hungry for his word. We must come to church ready to hear God and what he wants to tell us.

Jesus Partners with us

In verses 2 and 3 Luke goes on to say: ² **He saw at the water's edge two boats, left there by the fishermen, who were washing their nets.** ³ **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.**

So why did Jesus get into the boat? It says the people were crowding around and pressing into Jesus. There may have been a lot of commotion because not everyone could see or hear Jesus. I believe it has something to do with the sound being amplified. According to Google, sound seems to be amplified when it travels over water, because the water cools the air above its surface. Cool air slows down the sound waves near the surface, causing refraction or bending of the sound wave. ... Sound waves skimming the surface of the water can add to the amplification effect, if the water is calm. Another very strategic move from our Master.

Jesus could walk on water – why doesn't he do that here?

He could have done this but he didn't. He got into the boat and asked Simon to push it out into the water. Jesus gets into a boat belonging to Simon. Jesus could have got into any one of the boats but he got into Simon's boat. That's how God works. He chooses us, he chose Simon that day for a very specific purpose even though Simon had no idea. This is the same man to whom in Matthew 16-18 Jesus says And I tell you that you are Peter, [a] and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades[b] will not overcome it. From a humble fisherman to Jesus' first disciple all through obedience.

Jesus partnered with Simon so he could get onto the water and the crowd could see him and hear God's word. Jesus doesn't need our help but he wants to partner with us.

What have you got that Jesus wants to use to spread his word?
Is it your talent, is it your time, is it your home, is it your finances?

You Say, I Will

Going into verses 4 and 5 ⁴When 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."

Notice, Jesus took the time to teach the word first then he performs the miracle. The word of God has power and authority over everything.

The fisherman fished at night because at that time the fish are near the surface of the water. Jesus asked Simon to go into the deep as it was day time now and the fish are deep below the surface. Jesus wasn't a fisherman but he knew where the fish were. Of-course he did. He is God's son. He is Jesus.

Jesus chose Simon but Simon still had to make the choice. Pack up and go home or do what Jesus asked him to do. Simon was a pro fisherman, an expert. He knew what he was doing because he had been doing it his whole life and when Jesus said to cast your nets he was reluctant. Simon came from a generation of fishermen and Jesus was a carpenter's son, a carpenter himself and a preacher. Simon wasn't sure that Jesus knew what he was talking about.

Yet he calls him Master, a term that designated respect. He had seen and heard about what Jesus had been doing and knew he deserved respect.

BECAUSE YOU SAY, I WILL – an ultimate act of obedience!

Simon would have been tired and frustrated after working hard all night and not catching any fish. They were washing their nets which means they were getting ready to go home, yet he listened to Jesus and lets down the nets and they caught a huge amount of fish.

As humans we think we know better because we are here on earth living in this very moment. We have to think back and realise that Jesus walked the earth too. He felt everything that we do, the pain, the heartbreak, being deceived, everything. Jesus will always know better than what we do. In this case even though Simon wasn't sure on what Jesus was doing, he was still obedient to Him and they caught so many fish. When we let go of our egos and our own thoughts and place Jesus in the centre then we can start to see Him do miracles for us. Jesus wants us to give our whole heart to Him and trust Him in everything we do. When we trust God that's what builds our faith in Him. When we realise and understand how good God is we deny ourselves. God has blessed us all with a gift. We all have a place in His house. The gift He's given and blessed us with is how we can share His gospel.

In my own personal walk with God if I hadn't been obedient to God I believe I wouldn't be standing here in front of you all sharing His word. I would be stuck in a place of hurt, loneliness, discomfort and depression. This is why when God calls we must listen. Because You say, I will.

Jesus radical call to follow Him often goes against the grain of culture, custom, and common wisdom. But we must trust and obey him. Because he is God and he knows best.

We partner with others

In verses 6 and 7 Luke says **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.**

Simon signalled his partners to come and help with filling up the boats. Yes, this shows literally filling up the boats with the catch of fish to the point where both the boats are sinking. Jesus is able to do in seconds what Simon was not able to accomplish all night! The miraculous catch of fish produces in Simon a contrite spirit as he marvels at the power of Jesus. The catch is so amazing that the nets are breaking and the boats are sinking. In other words, the point is: this is an utterly unprecedented catch of fish in a location that seemed hopelessly unproductive the night before. And it was caught at the powerful and authoritative word of Jesus.

When we let God take the wheel of our lives, He will exceed the expectations we have for ourselves. Simon listened to Jesus and they had an abundant amount of fish so much that they couldn't believe it. This had never happened before. A miracle! Up until the moment in the boat Simon had only seen Jesus do miracles for others around him. His obedience to Jesus changed his life forever and he went to change so many other lives.

As I was preparing this message by reading verse 7 I was strongly reminded that as Christians we also need to have partners in faith, people that support us. These are the people that encourage us and keep us accountable in our walk with Christ. Fishermen used to go in groups hence 2 boats, Jesus sent out his disciples in twos Mark 6:7 ⁷ Calling the Twelve to him, he began to send them out two by two and gave them authority over impure spirits.

When I moved up to Auckland last year I didn't have mum and dad around me, my strongest supporters in my walk with Jesus. I had what I would have then called freedom so I went where the world wanted me to go not where Jesus wanted me to go.

Our brokenness, Jesus greatness

Verses 8 to 10 **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**

Simon knew Jesus was special by hearing from others and by seeing the miracles round him. By being obedient to Jesus Simon went from knowing Jesus needed respect 'Master' to falling on his knees and calling him Lord and declaring he isn't worthy of Jesus.

Simon said to Jesus "go away from me Lord, I am a sinful man" He didn't feel worthy enough to be in Jesus presence.

Simon is overwhelmed with a deeper understanding of who Jesus really is. He knew that Jesus had authority and power over the demons and to heal the sick, he is a great teacher and right there he realised Jesus has authority and power over his life as well and everything in it.

Simon's cry is a lot like Isaiah's in Isaiah 6-5 where Isaiah says "Woe to me!" I cried. "I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the Lord Almighty."

Simon and Isaiah both see the vast distance between themselves and God.

As I was writing this message there were times I felt not worthy of doing this, not being up here and speaking about God's word. But it reminded me that Jesus calls us all for a reason.

We can hear in life what Jesus has done and who he is through other people and get an idea of how special he is. It is only when we hear his calling and obey him and give him authority over our lives that we truly experience his power and his miracles in our life. This is when we fall on our knees and acknowledge him Lord.

What is your response to Jesus?

What is your response when Jesus blesses you?

What's your boat

Luke concludes in verse 11 by saying **Then Jesus said to Simon, "Don't be afraid; from now on you will fish for people."** ¹¹ **So they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed him.**

Jesus calls Simon to catch people. Jesus cares about our souls and wants us to care about the souls of others around us. In the world today, the people around us are fighting so many battles every day. It is our job to share the good news of salvation with others.

Simon willingly left everything to follow Him. How amazing is the power of our God that just like that Simon, James and John left everything and went with him. We must be willing to abandon everything to follow Jesus. He may not be calling you or me to abandon everything literally right here right now. But he is calling us to follow him and use our lives and everything in it for him and for catching people for him. Maybe he is calling us to use more of our influence and power which he has given us for his glory and to catch people for him. To use our leadership ability, to use our skills, our knowledge our wisdom for his Glory and for catching people for him.

In Mathew 28:18-19 Jesus says to his disciples 'All authority in Heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

I have some takeaways for you today...

1. God has a calling on your life
2. When we step into our calling they lend courage to other believers
3. Our calling points people to Jesus

Maybe you are here this morning because you have made the decision to follow Jesus, is Jesus calling you to share this good news with others.

Maybe you're here this morning and you still haven't made that decision to follow Jesus. You are yet to put your trust in Jesus as your saviour. Simon lets go of boat, leaves everything and follows him.

What's your boat, what do you need to let go? what's keeping you from making that most important decision of your life, to follow Jesus.

Let's pray