

KEY SCRIPTURE Luke 5:1-11

“Every fisherman knows when Jesus told Simon to throw out his net again, it was a dumb idea.” The reality is that we can trust an all-knowing, all-powerful God even when things don’t seem to make sense. a. Why do we struggle to believe that God is always good? b. Why do we struggle to believe that God is always right? c. How can we increase our faith?

(vv. 4-10a) It was the wrong time of day and the wrong depth of water for fishing... at least, that’s what Simon thought! Jesus proved that He is active; He just wants to give us the blessing of being involved in what He’s doing.

(vv.10b-11) Simon, James, and John had their skills reassigned. Rather than running away or making excuses, they left everything to follow Jesus. They decided that living for Him was more important than living for them. We would do well to follow their example.

The Gospel of Luke provides detailed descriptions not found in the other gospels. The Books of Luke and Acts actually are a single work presented in two volumes. In addition to being a writer, Luke was a physician. Therefore, his attention to detail distinguishes his writings from those of other biblical authors.

We pick up the story in Luke 5. Prior to this point, Luke records the details of the events leading up to the birth of Christ. Chapter 3 gives us the highlights of the ministry of John the Baptist and a listing of the genealogy of Jesus. Chapter 4 describes the temptation of Jesus and His ministry prior to the calling of the first disciples.

This is where the Scripture for this lesson picks up. Fishing was a big deal in first century Galilee. The Sea of Galilee (which Luke referred to as the Lake of Gennesaret and John twice called the Sea of Tiberias), was rich with tilapia, sardines, and carp. Part of each day’s catch was dried and sold. Some was used to produce fish sauce that was used all over the Mediterranean region. The economy of the Roman Empire was dependent upon the fishing industry.

Likewise, the fishermen of the day depended on their catch for their livelihood. Fishermen worked at night when the fish were more likely to be close to the shore in the shallow water. As

the day progressed, fish would migrate to the deeper, cooler waters. At the conclusion of the day's work, the fishermen would dry and mend their nets in preparation for the next night's work. This is the context in which this story takes place.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS It's been said that discipleship is a process that is more caught than taught. Do you agree or disagree with that statement?

When Jesus said "from now on you will fish for people" He was calling his apprentices to greater things.

In Luke 5:10 Jesus tells Simon to not be afraid. Why do you think Simon was afraid?

What things about discipleship could cause you to be afraid?

Talk about a fear you have that prevents you from going all-in for God.

Talk about a fear you have that is preventing you from taking the next step God is leading you to take.

Discipleship is about values. This could not be clearer in the Gospels. Jesus' call is for a double action: leave and follow. "From now on you will fish for people. So they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed him." Whether nets or family, the call to follow Jesus is the call to walk away from something else. It is the call to this, not that. Here, not there.

What is God calling you to leave and follow?

Should every Christian have the purpose of reaching the lost or is this only the job of some?

What is the scariest aspect of being involved in evangelism for you?

If our mission is clear, to see people come to know Christ and help people to be transformed by him, we will keep our mission but change our methods to continue to fulfill this mission. What do people in today's culture respond to? What does this culture need to be drawn to Jesus and drawn to Good Hope?