

CALLED TO SIGNIFICANCE

Lesson Scripture: Luke 5:1-11

Focus Scripture: Luke 5:1-11

Key Verse: Then Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching people." Luke 5:10b (NRSV)

LUKE 5:1-11(NRSV)

1 Once while Jesus was standing beside the lake of Gennesaret, and the crowd was pressing in on him to hear the word of God,

2 he saw two boats there at the shore of the lake; the fishermen had gone out of them and 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 way from the shore. Then he sat down and taught the crowds from the boat.

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

5 Simon answered, "Master, we have worked all night long but have caught nothing. Yet if you say so, I will let down the nets."

6 When they had done this, they caught so many fish that their nets were beginning to break.

7 So they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both boats, so that they began to sink.

8 But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!"

9 For he and all who were with him were amazed at the catch of fish that they had taken;

10 and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. Then Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching people."

11 When they had brought their boats to shore, they left everything and followed him.

LUKE 5:1-11 (KJV)

1 And it came to pass, that, as the people pressed upon him to hear the word of God, he stood by the lake of Gennesaret,

2 And saw two ships standing by the lake: but the fishermen were gone out of them, and were washing their nets.

3 And he entered into one of the ships, which was Simon's, and prayed him that he would thrust out a little from the land. And he sat down, and taught the people out of the ship.

4 Now when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught.

5 And Simon answering said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net.

6 And when they had this done, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes: and their net brake.

7 And they beckoned unto their partners, which were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came, and filled both the ships, so that they began to sink.

8 When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord.

9 For he was astonished, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken:

10 And so was also James, and John, the sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men.

11 And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and followed him.

KEY TERM

- **Gennesaret** – Also known as the Sea of Galilee; was a place for the fishing industry, where there could be violent storms without warning, which endangered boats.
- **Dag** – Hebrew word for a fish (pronounced *dawg*); had its origin in the Hebrew word *dagah* which means to multiply or increase.
- **Disciples** – Students who follow a teacher.
- **Apostle** – Messenger sent to do a particular job.
- **St. Peter's Fish** – Probably a type of tilapia named after Simon Peter, the disciple who caught a fish and took a shekel out its mouth to pay the temple tax.
- **Carp** – A species of freshwater fish.

They knew that Jesus called them to a greater work; they were to fish for souls.

change jobs because their passion and job do not match. Sometimes people change jobs because the company closes. Sometimes people leave jobs to make more money. Sometimes people leave jobs because of family needs. How many people leave a job because God called them to do something else? We do not know this number, but we do know that God calls people to work

in God's kingdom. In today's lesson, Jesus calls some fisherman to follow him. These men immediately left their fishing jobs to go with Jesus. They knew that Jesus called them to a greater work; they were to fish for souls.

TELLING THE BIBLE STORY**Luke 5:1-3**

John the Baptist's disciples saw great crowds go to hear John preach. While John had a great ministry, Jesus' ministry was far greater. The word spread about Jesus' ministry. Jesus cast out evil spirits and healed diseases. Jesus' preaching attracted extremely large crowds. Jesus needed a space where he could preach

INTRODUCTION

People need money, so they go to work. Jobs chosen depend on what people can do, their skills and experience, and what employers need. Sometimes people

without being crushed by the crowd! So, Jesus joins Simon (Peter) in his boat and teaches from the sea.


What do you think would make a large crowd gather to hear the gospel of Jesus Christ?

Luke 5:4-7

After Jesus finished teaching, Jesus turned his attention to the fishermen. Jesus told them to cast their nets on the right side of the boat. Peter told Jesus they had worked all night without success. To better understand what Jesus' directive meant, consider all that 1st century fishermen did night and day.

Israel started as an agricultural nation. The people raised livestock and planted fields. The fishing industry, seldom mentioned in the Old Testament (Numbers 11:5-6), became a thriving business. By the time of Jesus' ministry, Lake Gennesaret was surrounded by fishing communities. Magdala, one of these communities,

had a sardine-pickling center. Herod and Philip, rulers of Israel, invested in the fishing industry. Only one Hebrew word for fish, *dag*, was used during this era. *Dag* referred to every size and kind of fish. Jewish fishermen would catch clean and unclean fish (Leviticus 14:9-10). Clean fish, St. Peter's fish and carp, they could eat and sell to Jews. Any catfish they caught they would sell to Gentiles.



After Jesus finished teaching, Jesus turned his attention to the fishermen.

When they caught fish, fishermen had to pay taxes before marketing their catch. Josephus, a Jewish historian, reports over 230 fishing boats worked on Lake Gennesaret during Jesus' time.

New Testament fishermen had a difficult job. They worked throughout every season. These fishermen would work though heat and cold. Their job required long hours. At night they would cast their linen nets to catch fish. Cleaning the fish and mending their nets were tasks fishermen did during the day. Nets required daily cleaning and drying so they would not rot. Small stone pieces used as net weights fastened to

the bottom of the nets needed cleaning also. Cleaning the nets and stones took a long time.

Luke 5:8-11

The disciples could only do what Jesus asked, if they forgot their weariness and stopped cleaning their nets. Without clean nets, the disciples would not have equipment needed for their next

night's work. Usually, the disciples fished at night when their nets were not easily seen by the fish. Peter says, "Only because you say so," will we let down our nets. Peter knows it's the wrong time and that they will have to stop cleaning the nets needed for that night's work. But, Peter calls the other fishermen to

do what Jesus instructed. Jesus shows that he rules over the waters, as their catch is so large the nets almost break. All of the fishermen were shocked at the size of their catch. What happened made Peter worship Jesus! Peter admits he sins and asks Jesus to leave him. Jesus has a different point of view; Jesus sees

beyond Peter's sins to Peter's spiritual potential. The call to discipleship was not based upon Peter's works but on the grace of God.

Peter, James, and John had a good business. They owned their own boats and houses. They left everything they owned to follow Jesus. The words "do not be afraid" covered more than just their emotions and thoughts. To follow Jesus

they had to believe that God would supply everything they needed materially. These men gave up their means of supporting themselves and their families to take an uncharted journey.

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SANKOFA

The Universal Negro Improvement Association (U.N.I.A.)

founded by Marcus Mosiah Garvey, Jr. encouraged black people to resettle in Africa. This movement, known as Garveyism, wanted to reunite African diaspora peoples to form their own country. Garvey founded several businesses to help him reach the goal of establishing a separate black nation.

Garvey's businesses included a shipping company, *Black Star Line*, a newspaper, *The Negro World*, and several factories. He hoped to establish trade between black people in America, the Caribbean, South and Central America, Canada, and Africa. Although unsuccessful in achieving his goal, Garvey's dedication to freedom and self-determination for black people inspired many. Garvey called people to follow him to a better life and many were willing to do so.

CASE STUDY

#MeToo, a well-known movement, has a less well-known founder. Tarana Burke, an activist for the unheard, works for social justice. Burke founded the *MeToo* movement in 2006

as a way to help women victimized by sexual violence. Her primary focus was black women and girls, especially those from lower income communities. As a survivor of sexual abuse, Burke saw the need for resources that would help those who had experienced abuse to heal. She has written curriculum discussing sexual violence, which was designed

specifically for the black community. Burke's efforts led to an international movement. Conversations about sexual violence and its impact occur throughout the world. Her small beginnings have caught the attention of millions, and has helped change the way sexual violence is viewed around the world.

LIFE APPLICATION

Her (Tarana Burke) small beginnings have caught the attention of millions, and has helped change the way sexual violence is viewed around the world.

A successful fisherman would need strength, good health, patience, determination, and skill. Jesus may have called fishermen as disciples because these traits would help when they became apostles. Your God-given personality, skills, and talents prepare you to answer God's call, and do the

work assigned to your hands. God uses ordinary people to do extraordinary works! The ministry call depends on faith in Jesus. Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection should take away fear and like Peter cause you to say, "Yes, although I have worked hard already, I'll do as you say."

SUMMARY

You have experiences that prepared you for kingdom work. The only thing that can stop you from doing all God asks you do, is saying “no!” When you tell God, “yes” new possibilities open!

QUESTIONS

1. How would you respond if Jesus asked you to leave everything you own to follow him?
2. When you really think about who Jesus is, what do you learn about yourself?
3. How would you use your job skills to invite people into the body of Christ?

CLOSING DEVOTIONS

Think about the words to this song. Ask each student to reflect on whether they have said “yes.”

I'll say yes, Lord, yes

To your will and to your way
I'll say yes, Lord, yes
I will trust you and obey
When your Spirit speaks to me
With my whole heart I'll agree
And my answer will be yes, Lord, yes.

https://www.allthelyrics.com/lyrics/shirley_ceasar/yes_lord_yes-lyrics-1117942.html

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=InsPzsJRmLE>

Prayer: Dear Jesus, teach us how to be fishers of people. Teach us how to follow your example. Let us learn how to love as you do. Help us so that we do not see people as sinners but individuals created by our Father. Give us a heart that loves you more than we love material things. Thank you, Lord, for calling us to work for you. Amen.

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS

January 4-January 10

Monday	Exodus 3:1-12	(Called to Lead Israelites from Egypt)
Tuesday	Judges 6:11-16	(Called to Deliver Israelites from Midianites)
Wednesday	Isaiah 6:1-8	(Called and Cleansed for Ministry)
Thursday	Luke 9:57-62	(Single Mindedness Required to Follow Jesus)
Friday	Romans 2:1-11	(Repentance, Goal of God's Kindness)
Saturday	John 21:15-19	(Jesus Calls Peter to Ministry)
Sunday	Luke 5:1-11	(Don't Be Afraid to Catch People)