

#20 - Jesus Calls His Disciples - Luke 5:1-10; 27-32

Engage:

- The ministry of Jesus has begun. The purpose of His ministry was to call people to follow Him as His disciples. A disciple is a learner who accepts the teachings of Christ, not only in belief but also in LIFESTYLE. It involves a deliberate and intentional response to follow Jesus in obedience – a definite denial of yourself.

Discipleship is influencing and molding others to become more like Christ through example, time spent together and life to life teaching.

Discipleship is spiritual warfare! When discipleship is ignored, spiritual disasters occur.

Discipleship is not just a program or a ministry. It is a lifelong commitment to following Jesus which will result in increasing your faith to prepare you for whatever you will face in life, whether it be good or difficult times.

Note: The word “disciple” when used as a noun occurs 269x in the New Testament. The noun “Christian” occurs only 3x and the noun “believer” occurs only 12x. Therefore, the most used word to describe the task of the church is disciple. **Remember: One is a disciple when they are helping others become followers of Christ.**

This is a taste of what Jesus meant when He said: “Therefore go and **make disciples** of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” (Matthew 28:19-20)

Jesus called twelve men to follow after Him and carry the message of the good news to the next generation of disciples. The process is designed to continue until Jesus returns. The question that you must answer is: How have you answered the call? Is there anything or anyone that is keeping you from giving Jesus first place in your life? If so, what should you do about it?

Note: “Though he (Jesus) did what he could to help multitudes, he had to devote himself primarily to a few men, rather than the masses, so that the masses could at last be saved. This was the genius of his strategy.” (Robert Coleman, The Master Plan of Evangelism, p. 36).

Note: “There were no school rooms and bells, just association with Jesus. His disciples became infected with the disease of Jesus.” (Charles Swindoll, One-On-One Discipleship, #4 audio session of a 12 part series). In other words, Jesus was the curriculum!

Note: “Making disciples is essential to carrying out the Great Commission, and being a disciple is essential to making disciples.

It is interesting to note that Jesus Christ did not begin his program of reaching the world with perfect people. He began with ordinary people whom he could use, people who had problems, people who were not perfect. In fact, some of them had doubted him.

People who really count today are dedicated, whether it be to Communism or Christianity or another cause. They are disciples. God wants us to be, and to produce men and women who count because they are dedicated to the cause of Jesus Christ.” (Francis Cosgrove, Jr., Essentials of Discipleship, Preface)

Thoughts about the story:

The calling of the first disciples

5:1-7 – Jesus called Simon Peter to take his boat and go back out to fish after he and his partners had cleaned their nets. He showed his trust in Jesus by being willing to go out during the daytime and into the deeper water. He knew that the best fishing was in shallow water and at night. But he obeyed anyway. The result was that they caught so many fish that their nets were almost broken and another boat was called to help bring in the catch (both boats almost sank from the weight). These men demonstrated what it means to be a disciple of Christ.

Point: If they had not obeyed the command of Jesus, which would not seem logical to them, they would never have experienced the miracle of the great catch of fish.

Note: Peter and Andrew called their partners to share in the miraculous catch of fish. We are not to be reservoirs to hoard God's blessings, but we are to be channels of blessings to share with others what God has given us!

- "However uncomfortable the commands of Christ may sound, let those who claim to follow him be swift to obey his voice." (Opening Up Luke)

Note: It had been about a year since Jesus first called Peter, Andrew, James and John (John 1:35-42). But they had returned back to their fishing business. One of the reasons they had been successful fishermen was that they were not quitters who knew what it meant to work as a team. Jesus knows that these same character traits are necessary for every disciple.

5:8-11 – "By faith, the men left all and followed Christ. They had been catching living fish and, when they caught them, the fish died. Now they would catch dead fish—sinners—and the fish would live!" Warren Wiersbe

Note: Consider Simon Peter's response after experiencing the miraculous catch of fish. He fell at the feet of Jesus in a repentant attitude. He said, "I am a sinful man." When a person truly comes to Jesus there is just something overwhelming about that moment.

The calling of Levi:

5:27-28 – Luke introduces us to two tax collectors, Levi (also known as Matthew - Matthew 9:9) and Zaccheus (Luke 19:1-10). The name Matthew means "the gift of God" (Luke 6:15; Matthew 9:9).

5:29-32 – Look what Levi did! He was so excited about his calling to become a follower of Jesus that he had a banquet (party) for tax collectors and others to come and meet Jesus! He invited his friends to meet his new Friend - Jesus! This was Levi's way of demonstrating repentance!

Extra:

- Statistically, American Christians are failing to live up to their purpose. "Our nation has a strong economy but weak morality. People are more interested in faith and religion than in Jesus. Believers are largely indistinguishable from nonbelievers in how they think and live. The church has lost its place at the table of cultural influence. Can we restore the impact of the

church through more events and buildings? No. It will take zealous for Christ—individuals who are intractably devoted to knowing, loving, and serving Him with all their heart, mind, strength, and soul—if we are to transform our world” (George Barna, Growing True Disciples, p. 11).

- Rick Warren said: “A Great Commitment to the Great Commandment and the Great Commission will grow a Great Church!” (The Purpose Driven Church, p. 102)

- The Great Commission is not a special calling or a gift of the Spirit; it is a command - an obligation incumbent upon the whole community of faith.” (Robert Coleman, The Master Plan of Discipleship, p.10)

- How do you respond to the following statement? “For the past 1900 years, ministry to the individual has been largely neglected, and this was Jesus’ method.” (Charles Swindoll, One-On-One Discipleship (#3 session of a 12 part series) Agree or disagree? Why?

- What do you need to leave behind so that you can be a more faithful follower of Jesus?

- Who can you reach out to that you would otherwise neglect or ignore (like a Levi)?