

OBEDIENCE TO THE MESSIAH

+ SESSION OUTLINE

1. Disciples are called to act in faith (Luke 5:1-4).
2. Disciples are stirred to confess in faith (Luke 5:5-8).
3. Disciples are invited to follow in faith (Luke 5:9-11).

Background Passage: Luke 5

+ WHAT WILL MY GROUP LEARN?

Jesus called His followers to exercise faith in Him in such a way that they would draw others to place their faith in Christ as well.

+ HOW WILL MY GROUP SEE CHRIST?

When Peter experienced the power and majesty of Jesus, he recognized his own sinfulness and unworthiness. Because of our sin, no one is worthy to stand before holy God. All who trust in Jesus receive forgiveness and His righteousness and enjoy a relationship with God forevermore.

+ HOW SHOULD MY GROUP RESPOND?

Because we have been made holy through the work of Christ, we yield to the ongoing work of the Spirit in changing us to live according to our new identity so that others might see God's power at work in and through us.

GROUP TIME



SCRIPTURE HANDOUT

Scan this QR code for a reproducible handout of this session's Scripture passages.

INTRODUCTION

SETTING: Jesus is on the move. On the heels of Jesus's Capernaum declaration that He must go to other towns, the backdrop of His ministry has turned to the seaside. People are still pursuing Him, but the winds of the crowds seem to have changed from an affinity toward sensationalism to an eager desire to learn more about God and the purpose of Jesus. From the banks of the sea, He will perform another miracle, but this one will be in the context of everyday life. Jesus not only has power over demons and disease, He can also direct creatures of the sea and the eternal trajectory of souls.

DISCUSS: **Have you or someone you know experienced something that has changed the trajectory of life forever? If so, share it with us.** (many events can lead to significant changes in our life: a health scare, car accidents, losing a loved one; it can also be small, seemingly insignificant decisions that end up being a big deal: whom we date in high school, a class we decide to take, an errand we go on where we meet a life-long friend, etc.)

TRANSITION: Though we don't always see it, God is always and faithfully working to lead us to the abundant life He promised us in Scripture. Yet we can often be so caught up in our daily duties and "common sense" that we fail to recognize what God is up to. Thankfully, God works in and through us frequently despite our foolish decisions.

POINT 1

DISCIPLES ARE CALLED TO ACT IN FAITH (LUKE 5:1-4).

1 On one occasion, while the crowd was pressing in on him to hear the word of God, he was standing by the lake of Gennesaret, **2** and he saw two boats by the lake, but the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. **3** Getting into one of the boats, which was Simon's, he asked him to put out a little from the land. And he sat down and taught the people from the boat. **4** And when he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch."

READ: Ask a volunteer to read aloud **Luke 5:1-4** from his or her own Bible.

EXPLAIN: Show Gennesaret on **PACK ITEM 2: JESUS'S EARLY YEARS MAP**; then use the **VERSES 1-3** commentary to highlight the following point (*the bold words fill in blanks in the DDG*):

Jesus asked a **small** request of Simon, perhaps to gauge his obedience in light of a larger request to come. Those who are **faithful** with little will be **entrusted** with much.

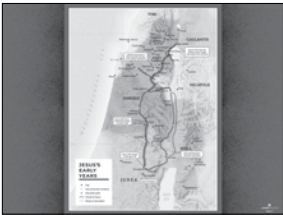
DISCUSS: When we obey God, what is that saying about our understanding of Him? (He has authority; He is all-knowing, so we know He knows what's best; He is good and wants our good; He is worthy to be obeyed)

EXPLAIN: Use the **VERSE 4** commentary to emphasize the following idea (*the bold words fill in blanks in the DDG*):

Jesus's commands, indeed the commands of Scripture as a whole, may seem unwise or **counterintuitive** to us, but they are worthy of our **obedience** nonetheless.

TRANSITION: With this odd request, Jesus set the stage for Peter to follow the commands of God, even when they are costly and illogical from our vantage point.

NOTES



COMMENTARY

VERSES 1-3 / While in Capernaum, Jesus declared His mission to preach to other towns the good news of God's kingdom (Luke 4:43). Thus, He traveled southwest from Capernaum to Gennesaret, which is along the Sea of Galilee at a section of the sea called Lake Gennesaret.

The crowds continued to gather around Jesus, probably having heard of His fame. Some likely arrived with good motives, others more likely out of curiosity. Though the text says, **“to hear the word of God,”** this probably was not their primary motive. In Greek, the word is a participle, literally meaning “hearing or listening.” The crowds were pressing upon Jesus, while listening to His word. It was so crowded and chaotic that Jesus sought a solution to put some distance between Himself and the crowd so all the people could hear Him. He **“saw”** two boats, got into one, Simon's boat, and **“asked him to put out a little from the land.”** Earlier in Luke, we saw Jesus heal Simon's mother-in-law (Luke 4:38-39), so He was familiar with who Simon was. We can assume Simon did exactly what he was told. Jesus asked, Simon obeyed. This was the first of two requests of Jesus in this passage. As a first request, it was a simple one. Perhaps Jesus wanted to see if Simon would act in obedience on a small task first to set the stage for the larger request Jesus would ask of him.

Because Simon acted in obedience, Jesus was able to continue teaching the people. Being on the boat gave Jesus a make-shift stage since being in the boat at a distance carried the sound of Jesus's voice to the people.¹ So Jesus sat down to teach. This was the normal practice of teachers at the time. Instead of standing to signify the beginning of a talk, as we do today, the act of sitting was the cue.

VERSE 4 / After His teaching, with the crowd still watching, Jesus put forth a strange request. Jesus charged Simon Peter to take his boat back out to sea to start fishing again. The first command to **“put**

out” is singular, noting Jesus's command was directed toward Simon. The second command, **“let down,”** is plural, implying an involvement of the whole crew.² But clearly, Jesus was putting out His second request to Simon to see if he would respond and act.

This directive of Christ put Simon Peter back into the deeps, not just a short skim of the shoreline. These instructions Jesus gave made no sense at all. First of all, after a night of fishing, the fishermen had already beached their boats and the crew had already begun cleaning their nets. They were done fishing for the day and were closing up shop. There was a particular type of fishing practiced in ancient times that utilized three layers of nets of varying mesh width. Known as trammel nets, these multi-layered nets would be used at night for maximum effectiveness. Unlike the nearly invisible nylon nets of today, the fibrous nets of ancient times could be more easily avoided by schools of fish. Nocturnal fishing provided the greatest yield, as the fish were unable to see the layers of nets.³ Now it was daytime, the worst time for fishing with these nets.

Also, Simon was a professional fisherman, and Jesus was not. Would he listen to this non-fishermen about fishing? It would take a lot of faith to do so.

Next, it would take time, effort, and labor to put out into deep water and let their nets down again at this time of day, especially when the fish likely would see the nets and not be caught. It was the worst opportunity to go fishing at this time at Jesus's command. From an earthly perspective, this was a fool's errand.

Sometimes God's commands don't make sense to us, and we simply need to obey. He may start with little requests, and as our faith grows, He will give us bigger responsibilities to test and grow our faith. So how did Simon Peter respond to Jesus's request?

POINT 2

DISCIPLES ARE STIRRED TO CONFESS IN FAITH (LUKE 5:5-8).

NOTES

5 And Simon answered, “Master, we toiled all night and took nothing! But at your word I will let down the nets.” **6** And when they had done this, they enclosed a large number of fish, and their nets were breaking. **7** They signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. **8** But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus’ knees, saying, “Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.”

READ: Ask a volunteer to read aloud **Luke 5:5-8** from his or her own Bible.

EXPLAIN: Use the **VERSES 5-7** commentary to highlight the following point (the **bold** words fill in blanks in the DDG):

The commands of God may be beyond our understanding, but they carry the **authority** and **wisdom** of Christ, our Creator and Sustainer.

DISCUSS: What are some reasons we have to trust the wisdom of God and obey His commands? (He is God and we are not; as the Creator, God’s ways for living in this world are good and best; God is omniscient, so we can know that He knows what is best for us; God has given us Jesus, so we know He loves us)

EXPLAIN: Use the **VERSE 8** commentary to emphasize the following idea (the **bold** words fill in blanks in the DDG):

When encountering the holiness of Jesus, the Son of God, true faith leads us to **submission** and acknowledgment and **repentance** of sin.

DISCUSS: Why would encountering holiness cause us to see our sin more clearly? (any time something is better than us, we see our faults clearer; when we see perfection or close to it, imperfections are more pronounced; holiness and sin are opposites, so their contrast will be clearly seen)

TRANSITION: This miraculous act of God stopped Simon Peter in his tracks. He rightly responded to the glory of Jesus with repentance and humility. But this first act of worship was just the starting point for following Jesus.

VOICES from CHURCH HISTORY

“Man never attains to a true self-knowledge until he have previously contemplated the face of God, and come down after such contemplation to look into himself. For (such is our innate pride) we always seem to ourselves just, and upright, and wise, and holy, until we are convinced, by clear evidence, of our injustice, vileness, folly, and impurity. Convinced, however, we are not, if we look to ourselves only, and not to the Lord also—He being the only standard by the application of which this conviction can be produced.”⁴

—John Calvin (1509-1564)

COMMENTARY

VERSES 5-7 / In response to Jesus's command to put down their nets in deeper waters in verse 4, Simon Peter first referred to Jesus as "**Master**," denoting submission to Jesus's authority, even amidst his doubt about this ridiculous request.

Simon Peter, however, then explained the situation with a recap of their evening of fishing: they had been hard at work chasing fish, to no avail. But even knowing the oddity of the request and telling Jesus so, Simon declared that he would do what Jesus wanted. That's faith. Simon Peter responded in trust that Jesus must have known something that he didn't. Faithful obedience places the authority and sovereignty of Christ over the proficiency and experience of the expert, even if what meets the eye is beyond our understanding.

Any average fisherman would be able to recognize that this was a miracle, not mere beginner's luck. Peter and the crew knew the best time and place to catch fish: the quiet evening waters. Their livelihood and families depended on it. Though the situation made no sense, Simon followed the instructions of Christ and they "**enclosed a large number of fish**," so much so that their fishing tools were overwhelmed. The provision of Christ was staggering. Even after they called in reinforcements, both boats began to sink, denoting how overwhelming was their catch of fish.

Jesus has dominion over all. Though Peter was the expert in the fishing department, Jesus is the ultimate provider of fish, being their Creator and Sustainer. His work may seem illogical to finite minds, but His infinite, omniscient wisdom can be trusted.

In this passage (specifically Luke 5:3-11), Luke employed a literary device known as a chiasmic structure to highlight the climax of the story, namely, verses 6-7, where Jesus performed the miracle and the plethora of fish were caught.⁵ In this climax, we see Jesus's authority and power displayed for those who trust in Him.

VERSE 8 / As Simon Peter witnessed this physical miracle of nature, it opened his spiritual eyes. He understood the worthiness of the Lord and his own unworthiness in His presence. In response, Simon demonstrated his submission through throwing his entire being at the knees of Jesus, whom he now declared as "**Lord**."

Throughout the Old Testament, there are records of theophanies—an experience in which the presence of God is revealed in a special way to a person or persons. In all theophanies, the people rightly respond to God in physical ways, most often in prostration and a declaration of God's amazing character. Simon's response was similar to Isaiah's response to God's presence as recorded in Isaiah 6:5, "I am a man of unclean lips." Simon wasn't literally asking Jesus to go away here; rather, he was realizing how unworthy he was to be in Jesus's presence. When presented with holiness and purity, one can only sense one's own unholiness and impurities. Simon thus acknowledged, "**I am a sinful man**."

For true repentance to occur, admission of sins is crucial. In response to seeing Jesus the Christ more clearly, Simon Peter was completely humbled, contrite, and overwhelmed by his unworthiness to witness such a powerful display of God's goodness and grace.

In the same way today, when someone new encounters the grace and mercy of Jesus Christ, acknowledgment and repentance of sin should be one of his or her immediate responses. True faith leads to repentance and obedience and, as we will see, a total submission to Christ in our lives as we continue to follow Him and share with others about the good news of Jesus Christ for salvation and hope.

POINT 3

DISCIPLES ARE INVITED TO FOLLOW IN FAITH (LUKE 5:9-11).

NOTES

9 For he and all who were with him were astonished 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. And Jesus said to Simon, “Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching men.” **11** And when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed him.

READ: Ask a volunteer to read aloud **Luke 5:9-11** from his or her own Bible.

EXPLAIN: Use the **VERSES 9-10A** commentary to highlight this key doctrine (the **bold** words fill in blanks in the DDG):

KEY DOCTRINE #73: Imputation: When God pardoned sinners at the cross, our sins were imputed or **transferred** to Christ, who became sin on our behalf. Our sin was imputed to Christ, and Christ’s **righteousness** was imputed to us (Rom. 5:17; 1 Cor. 1:30). When God the Father looks at those who have trusted in Christ, He does not see their sins but the righteousness of **Christ** as belonging to them (Rom. 4:6).

EXPLAIN: Use the **VERSES 10B-11** commentary to emphasize the following idea (the **bold** words fill in blanks in the DDG):

The call to follow Jesus comes with a **commission** to join in His work of sharing the **gospel** of salvation by faith in Jesus.

DISCUSS: Call attention to the Scripture on **PACK ITEM 13: CATCHING PEOPLE**; then ask: **What are some ways believers participate in the mission of catching people with the gospel?** (praying for the Lord to bring in the harvest; giving of time and money to support Great Commission causes; going to share the gospel on the mission field but also with our families and in our neighborhoods and workplaces)

TRANSITION: The reality of who Jesus is demands a response. He has clearly come to save souls and has victoriously paid for our sins and conquered the power of sin and death along the way. Those whom Jesus has saved now get to follow Him in worship and service for the rest of our lives as we partner together to fulfill the Great Commission.



JAMES AND JOHN

Zebedee’s sons, they were part of Jesus’s inner circle, along with Peter, being able to witness Jesus’s transfiguration, the raising of Jairus’s daughter, and be with Jesus in His sorrow in the garden of Gethsemane on the night of His arrest. They were close to Jesus, but they were also strong-tempered, so much so that Jesus called them “Sons of Thunder” (Mark 3:17).

COMMENTARY

VERSES 9-10A / After documenting Simon's response of fear and repentance in verse 8, Luke explained why Simon reacted that way: **"For he and all who were with him were astonished."** Just as Jesus's teaching amazed the people in the synagogue and His works of healing and power over demons astonished those in Capernaum, so does this miracle in nature produce astonishment. All present would have understood that the abundant catch was a supernatural one. Never had they seen such a watery harvest. Amazement, however, doesn't lead everyone to repentance. Only those with faith will continue to follow Jesus.

Interestingly, while other individuals were present for this miracle, Luke's telling doesn't name them until now. Throughout this story, Luke provided a special focus on soon-to-be disciple Simon Peter. But here Luke mentioned two other members of this group of fishermen, two other early disciples, James and John, sons of Zebedee. Luke referred to them as partners of Simon Peter. The nature of this partnership was likely that of a co-op of sorts. Through partnering together then splitting the profits, they could benefit from one another's crew and equipment. These synergistic efforts would have boosted both businesses.⁶ Thus, they were all friends and co-laborers and were amazed at Jesus's power.

Although there was a pause in the storyline for Luke to mention the response of others who were there, we are reminded that Simon had just said, "Go away from me, because I am a sinful man, Lord!" Simon in encountering Jesus's acts of power, realized his own sin and insufficiencies. Jesus, however, calmed the storm within Simon Peter's soul with these powerful words: **"Do not be afraid."** The One who brought forth an impossible yield of fish released Simon Peter from his guilt. And though Jesus had yet to die for the sins of the world, He gave Simon a glimpse of what was to come and why there would be nothing to be afraid of. This response of Jesus follows the pattern

of theophanies seen in the Old Testament, in which God provided words of comfort—a guarantee of sins forgiven. Jesus knew His mission, what He would have to do to save the world from sin and eternal death and separation from God. His mission was eventually to sacrifice Himself and not only die but take on and transfer our sins onto Himself that we might take on His righteousness to live with Him. As the reader understands this with the full storyline in mind, Jesus's words "Do not be afraid" hold even more weight.

VERSES 10B-11 / As in other recordings of theophanies, like the one for Isaiah (see Isa. 6:8), God did not simply console and bring peace through His presence and work, He also commissioned. Thus, Jesus said, **"From now on you will be catching men."** This was a new assignment, a new career, a new lifestyle—a call to partner with the work of Jesus to save souls. This catcher of fish would become a fisher of men. Interestingly, the Greek word for catching connotes a capture for the purpose of life. Whereas men catch fish to kill and consume them, Jesus catches people to rescue them from their sin-stained doom to give them new spiritual life. In the same way Jesus powerfully and sovereignly brought forth an abundant ingathering of fish, Jesus will bring in a catch of souls. Those who follow Him as His disciples will be a part of bringing in this yield.

Luke then recorded the response to this call: **"they"** brought the boats, left all, and followed Jesus. Simon Peter was not the only one changed by Christ. Others also took up the call to follow Jesus and become fishers of men. In following Jesus, they parted with everything. They left behind their boats filled with the largest catch they'd ever experienced. Transformed by Jesus, they let go of their livelihood and renounced it all to be Jesus's disciples (see Luke 14:33). In this snapshot, Jesus completed His first fishing quest with this inaugural catch of souls.

MY RESPONSE

Because we have been made holy through the work of Christ, we yield to the ongoing work of the Spirit in changing us to live according to our new identity so that others might see God's power at work in and through us.

HEAD:

Jesus is sovereign over all and worthy of our worship. Following Jesus involves a deep trust in who He is and also in His ways. Often, to go where He leads can seem illogical or foolish—to both us and the watching world. A faithful disciple of Jesus holds fast to the trustworthiness, omniscience, and infinite wisdom of His character, even when the path ahead looks weird or uncertain.

What steps will you take so you can be confident about how God is leading you and then be faithful in obedience?

HEART:

Having experienced the miracle of Jesus, Simon Peter rightly reacted with humble submission, contrite confession, and utter surrender. God is still in the business of miracles, but all too often we explain them away with science and logic. We have lost our awe of who God is and the great and wondrous deeds He accomplishes every day. Therefore, we often miss out on opportunities to praise God for all He has done for us.

What are some wonders you've seen God accomplish lately for which you will praise Him?

HANDS:

If we are Christians, then we, like Simon Peter, have seen the glory of God, repented of our sin, and received grace upon grace. Therefore, we get to follow God with all we are and all we have. This is the right response to God's grace. Obedience is the life of the believer. We get to follow the calling of Christ: to go and make disciples, be fishers of people, and carry the good news to as many who will listen to it that they too may be saved.

What will you change in your life this week in order to be a better fisher of people with the gospel of Jesus?

NOTES

VOICES from THE CHURCH

"Here is a holiness that comes to sinners. Rather than going away, Jesus says, 'Join me.' Here is a holiness that uses a confessing sinner in its mission. Here is holiness that not only calls the sinner but commissions the sinner to become a fisher of men. Here is holiness so stunningly beautiful it causes a man to leave everything for its sake. It gives the former sinner a new purpose, direction, and call."⁷

—Thabiti Anyabwile

POINT 1: DISCIPLES ARE CALLED TO ACT IN FAITH (LUKE 5:1-4).

+ COMMENTARY

“5:2 Two boats. This prepares us for the miracle in 5:6–7. By the fishermen. Luke did not mention Andrew (cf. Mark 1:16), but the plural leaves room for him. He may have omitted mentioning Andrew in order to focus the readers’ attention on the central figure—Simon Peter.

5:3 And asked him to put out a little from shore. Even though more disciples than Simon Peter would be involved in this (for the command to ‘let down [5:4]’ is plural as is ‘the nets’—literally your [plural] nets), Jesus’ conversation was directed to Simon, who was the leader. One should not see in the expression ‘put out [into the deep]’ any allegorical nuances.”⁸

+ ILLUSTRATION

There are moments in life that are difficult to capture in words. These could be overwhelmingly happy moments, such as the surprise of a proposal, the joy at the birth of a child, or the thrill of accomplishing a long-awaited lifetime achievement. The pain-filled moments in life are often hard to describe as well. The moment the news arrived of a loved one’s death—especially if it is a sudden, unexpected death—is typically etched upon our souls in a way unspeakable. There are natural wonders—from the early morning rays of sun across the mist-filled Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone to a summer evening field full of fireflies in Kentucky—which are simply too amazing to convey in a conversation. There are certain events in our lives that are full of intangible qualities we need to see and experience for ourselves to fully appreciate.

Jesus understood this about our humanity. We are limited beings, and sensory ones at that. There are some things we need to encounter personally before reality can sink in. In these cases, there are no words that could make us understand. Jesus went beyond simply teaching about His power and purpose; He demonstrated it. Every wonder He produced was another grace-filled opportunity to understand and respond to the gospel. Each miracle performed was a display of His divine power and merciful love. Jesus provided ways beyond words to proclaim and illustrate His message of grace.

POINT 2: DISCIPLES ARE STIRRED TO CONFESS IN FAITH (LUKE 5:5-8).

+ COMMENTARY

“Perhaps surprisingly Peter did not welcome the great catch. He recognized the miracle and reacted as one in the presence of God . . . Peter’s next words, Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord, remind us of the experience of great saints in the immediate presence of God, such as Abraham (Gen. 18:27), Job (Job 42:6), or Isaiah (Isa. 6:5). Cf. also Israel’s ‘let not God speak to us, lest we die’ (Exod. 20:19). Peter had experienced ‘the unimaginable grace of God’ (Schweizer) and that drove him to realize his own sinfulness. The address, Lord, replaces ‘Master’ of verse 5 and this is probably connected with this heightened apprehension. While it can be used as no more than a form of polite address (like our ‘Sir’), the word is also used consistently of God in the LXX and is common in many religions in referring to deity. On the change Plummer comments, ‘It is the “Master” whose orders must be obeyed, the “Lord” whose holiness caused moral agony to the sinner (Dan. 10:16).’ This reaction, when nothing is recorded as taking place after earlier miracles, is probably not due to Luke’s recording of the miracle out of order, as some suggest. Rather it will be because this was a miracle in Peter’s own area of expertise. He knew fishing; and therefore he knew what this haul implied.”⁹

+ ILLUSTRATION

A group of middle-aged women signed up for a half-marathon and started their training. The busyness of life got in the way, and when it came time to run the race, they were not prepared. Instead, they sent their adventurous (and more fit) teenage sons to run in their place. When the day of the half-marathon arrived, the boys grabbed their mother’s running bibs and enjoyed a morning of competition. Several weeks later, one of the women started getting invitations to some of the premier marathons in the country. Apparently her time in the half-marathon qualified her for these invite-only events. Yet the time was not actually hers; it was her son’s. She was awarded for a race she didn’t run. She qualified for one of the most sought after marathons based on work she didn’t do.

This is the picture of Christ’s work on our behalf. He has run (and won) the race we couldn’t even successfully prepare for. His perfection has been recorded as ours. The righteous recognition and heavenly access He earned has been given to us. The sin-defeating work He accomplished on the cross has been credited to our accounts. Our only part is faith that He is our only hope for salvation—the only One who can rescue us from a life separated from God. Hallelujah for the imputation of Christ’s pardon and perfection!

POINT 3: DISCIPLES ARE INVITED TO FOLLOW IN FAITH (LUKE 5:9-11).

+ COMMENTARY

“Vv. 9–10a seem slightly intrusive in the storyline, due perhaps to Luke’s weaving threads of additional source narratives into the account. The verses are important, however, for they guard against an overly individualistic view of discipleship. Peter is not simply a solitary disciple, but also representative of the other fishermen, including James and John. Capitalizing on the miracle, Jesus bestows on Peter a new commission: ‘From now on you will fish for people’ (v. 10). The word for ‘fish’ . . . means to ‘capture alive’; what Peter will do in service for Jesus will cause life to flourish. The metaphor of ‘fishing for people’ does not appear in Jewish literature, perhaps because of connotations of scheming and conniving. It is nevertheless an appropriate (if inelegant) incarnational metaphor, for it describes the life of discipleship in everyday human terms. The call of Peter demonstrates what ‘fishing for people’ means: Jesus has ‘caught’ Peter by a miracle of grace, and he commissions Peter to ‘catch’ people likewise. Although Luke does not specifically say that Jesus ‘called’ Peter, the call is implied and inescapable, for when the boats reached land, Peter and partners left ‘everything’ and followed Jesus. The other Synoptics record that the disciples left ‘their boat and father’ (Matt 4:22; Mark 1:20), but Luke’s account specifies the ultimate claim of Christ on believers: they left everything and followed Jesus.”¹⁰

+ ILLUSTRATION

Teenage boys can become easily consumed with a pursuit, even though their fascinations don’t typically last long. For a time, they eat, sleep, and breathe their mania of the moment. It could be learning how to solve a Rubik’s Cube in under thirty seconds, eating ramen noodles with chopsticks, or playing their favorite song on the piano. It could be a passion for cars or clothes or the latest pop artist. If they do have a pursuit, you would be able to tell from their passion.

When it comes to Christian discipleship, from our pursuit of Jesus, others should be able to see our passion as well. Yet some Christians go through their day without this passion. No one can tell that Jesus is their all, unlike the passions of the aforementioned teenager. Discipleship demands all of ourselves and ought to be carried out with the same fervor as a youthful obsession yet with the steadfastness of the wisest sage. Our faith in Christ merely initiates our journey with Christ. It is the starting point, not the finish line. From the moment of our salvation, we then have our lifetime to passionately pursue Jesus as a person. Christian discipleship involves centering our lives around Christ, becoming more and more like Him and inviting others into the joy of the pursuit.

References

1. Craig S. Keener, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), Luke 5:3 [Logos].
2. James R. Edwards, *The Gospel According to Luke*, ed. D. A. Carson, *The Pillar New Testament Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.; Nottingham, England: Eerdmans; Apollos, 2015), 154.
3. James R. Edwards, *The Gospel According to Luke*, ed. D. A. Carson, *The Pillar New Testament Commentary*, 153; J. Carl Laney, “Fishing the Sea of Galilee,” in *Lexham Geographic Commentary on the Gospels*, eds. Barry J. Beitzel and Kristopher A. Lyle, *Lexham Geographic Commentary* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016), 170.
4. John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, trans. John Allen, 6th ed., vol. 1 (Philadelphia, PA: Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1813), 1.ii., 47.
5. James R. Edwards, *The Gospel According to Luke*, ed. D. A. Carson, *The Pillar New Testament Commentary*, 151.
6. Craig S. Keener, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament*, Luke 5:7 [Logos].
7. Thabiti Anyabwile, *Exalting Jesus in Luke: Christ-Centered Exposition Commentary* (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2018), Luke 5:1-11 [Logos].
8. Robert H. Stein, *Luke*, vol. 24, *The New American Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 168-69.
9. Leon Morris, *Luke: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 3, *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988), 133-34.
10. James R. Edwards, *The Gospel According to Luke*, ed. D. A. Carson, *The Pillar New Testament Commentary*, 156-57.