

Luke 5:1-11

Introduction: This section reveals the **third** stage of Jesus' process in changing what will eventually become His inner core of disciples from fishermen into fishers of men. This group consisted of two pairs of brothers: Peter & Andrew, as well as James & John. They are also successful business partners. The **first** stage of the process (their initial gathering) is found in John 1:35-51. The **second** stage (their official call) is in Matthew 4:18-22 (Mark 1:16-20). This takes place sometime between January and October 31 AD. These disciples have known Jesus for nearly one year by this time.

Jesus teaches the word of God to people—5:1-3

- 1) The curious crowd and the empty boats on the shore of the Sea of Galilee—5:1-2
 - a) ¹ *Now it happened ... He* (emphatic) *was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret,*
 - i) *that while the crowd was pressing Him to listen to the word of God,*
 - (1) This would include the good news of the kingdom (cf. 4:43)
 - ii) Called the Sea of Tiberias in John 6:1 & 21:1. Known as Chinnereth/Chinneroth in OT (cf.; Joshua 11:2; 12:3; 13:27; 19:35)
 - iii) This lake is approximately 8 miles wide x 14 miles long.
 - ii) Called the Sea of Tiberias in John 6:1 & 21:1. Known as Chinnereth/Chinneroth in OT (cf.; Joshua 11:2; 12:3; 13:27; 19:35)
 - iii) This lake is approximately 8 miles wide x 14 miles long.
 - b) ² *and He saw two boats standing by the lake;*
 - i) *but the fishermen ... were washing the nets* [δίκτυον].
 - (1) *having disembarked from them* (the boats),
 - (2) These boats are @ 25 feet long, 7 ½ feet wide, and 4 ½ feet deep.
 - ii) The nets [δίκτυον] are round nets used for night fishing in deeper water. This distinguishes this event from a similar event in Matthew 4:18 where the fishermen were using a different type of net [ἀμφίβληστρον] for fishing in shallow water during the daytime.
- 2) Jesus uses the natural acoustics of the water and the shoreline—5:3
 - a) ³ *Now having gotten into one of the boats, which was Simon's, He asked him to push off a little from the land.*
 - b) *And having sat down, He began* (authoritatively) *teaching the crowds from the boat.*

Jesus does a parable-miracle to teach fishermen how to fish—5:4-11

- 1) Jesus' perfect knowledge leads to His commands—5:4 ⁴ *And when He had finished speaking, He said to Simon,*
 - a) To Peter specifically—*“Put out into the deep water,*
 - i) Night time fishing was closer to shore in the shallows.
 - b) To Peter's crew—*and let down your^{pl} nets* [δίκτυον] *for a catch.”*
- 2) Peter's inability and submission—5:5 ⁵ *And Simon, having responded, said to Him, “Master* [ἐπιστάτης], (the one with the legitimate right to give orders)
 - a) He highlights his failure—*we caught nothing;*
 - i) *having labored hard* [κοπιᾶω] *through the whole night,*
 - (1) Evidenced by their scrubbing the nets clean.

- b) *but upon* (the basis of) *Your word I will let down the net* [δίκτυον].”
- i) But the nets will have to be washed again.
- 3) Submission brings abundant blessing—5:6-7 ⁶ *And when they had done this, they caught a great quantity of fish, and their net started to be torn apart.* ⁷ *So they gestured to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, with the result that they (the boats) began to sink.*
- a) What a great day at the lake! These boats could hold @ 1 ton of cargo.
- 4) Jesus’ perfect holiness leads to Peter’s awareness of his own sin—5:8-10a ⁸ *But when Simon Peter* (only use of his full name in Luke) *saw it, he fell down at the Jesus’ knees, saying, “Go away from me, because I am a sinful* [ἄμαρτωλός] *man, Lord* [κύριος].”
- a) Why? ⁹ *For awe* [θάμβος] (cf. 4:36) *had seized him and all who were with him because of the catch of fish that they had taken;* ¹⁰ *and so were James/Jacob and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon.*
- b) This is not recognition of specific sinful acts but rather Peter’s recognition of his character before God’s holy Representative. This is not Peter’s salvation experience, but it is one step in that direction.
- c) This takes place not too long after the demonized man is healed in the synagogue and Peter’s mother-in-law is healed (cf. 4:31-44)
- 5) Jesus’ perfect knowledge leads to His revealing of truth to Peter—5:10b *And Jesus said to Simon,*
- Jesus does not turn His back on this sinner, nor does He correct Peter’s self-evaluation. What grace! Aren’t you glad God doesn’t always listen to us?
- a) *“Do not be afraid.* (Don’t be apprehensive!)
- b) *From now on you will be catching* [ζωγρέω] *people (alive).”*
- i) This is not a command but a statement. It is a guarantee of a future successful evangelistic ministry.
- ii) This word [ζωγρέω] is used in the LXX for spare people from imminent danger (cf. Joshua 2:13; 6:25; 9:20)
- iii) To be a fisher of people is to be a fish that is able to relate to what it means to be pulled out of dangerous waters by God’s grace. (Bock, 1:448)
- 6) The process is complete—5:11 *they followed Him.*
- This event explains the call to discipleship found in Matthew 4:18-22 and Mark 1:16-20.
- a) ¹¹ *And after they brought their boats to land,*
- b) *having left everything,*
- i) Even on the day of the greatest catch their business every experienced.
- c) Jesus is worth leaving everything behind and following Him as His disciple. There is always a change of priorities when one becomes a genuine follower of Christ. Jesus is now the center of their lives.

Take-home truth: Jesus gathers disciples, not because He needs them, but because they need Him. God transforms enemy sinners into His servants.