

Daily Discipleship

Fifth Sunday after Epiphany (C) – Luke 5:1-11

Imperatives of Discipleship – *Follow Jesus!*

Focus Question: What is Jesus calling us to leave behind to follow him?

word of life

“Then Jesus said to Simon, ‘Do not be afraid; from now you will be catching people.’ When they had brought their boats to shore, they left everything and followed him.” Luke 5: 10-11 (NRSV)

Read Luke 5:1-11

The ministry of Jesus took him to the Galilee area where he healed and preached. His message of good news spread to such an extent that crowds gathered and pressed upon him. Imagine such an immense crowd forcing Jesus to get on a boat in order to teach. Imagine people being so eager to hear the word of God.

1. *Describe that scene by the lakeshore.*

Jesus chose the boat of Simon for his pulpit on that day and requested Simon take him away from the shore but near enough to be heard. From the boat, Jesus taught the crowd.

2. *What would it have been like to be standing on the shore and to hear the teachings of Jesus?*
3. *What would it have been like to be in the boat with Jesus, watching both Jesus as well as the crowd?*

When Jesus finished teaching the crowd, he gave a fishing tip to Simon. It was not a new fishing technique, but rather Jesus gave some advice about the location to place the net. But Simon was tired from last evening’s fishing trip and the lack of fish caught in that very spot. Nevertheless, Simon agreed to drop his nets. What a surprise! The nets overflowed to a breaking point. Other fishermen were called to help with the bounty. Both boats became so full they began to sink. Where hours before, there were no fish, now there were plenty. This was plenty upon plenty, grace upon grace.

4. *How do you explain so many fish where the night before there was none?*
5. *What must have the crowd felt when they watched these events?*

When Simon Peter witnessed this miracle, he dropped to his knees. He knew he was in the company of a holy man. He confessed, “Go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!” (Luke 5:8 NRSV) At this point, the names of the fisherman who witnessed the miracle were revealed. Peter had been fishing with James and John, sons of Zebedee, but Jesus focuses his attention and his words to Simon. Jesus said, “Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching people.”

6. *Is fear a reasonable response to this miracle?*
7. *What else might Peter have been thinking or feeling?*
8. *What does it mean to “catch people”?*

When these three fishermen finally got on shore with their bounty of fish, they left everything and followed Jesus. Their trust and commitment ran deep, perhaps as deep as the waters of the Sea of Galilee.

9. *So what happened to all that fish?*
10. *What is more important than the bounty of fish?*
11. *What would it mean to follow Jesus in the first century?*

word among us

EVERYTHING!

The fisherman left everything to follow Jesus.

EVERYTHING!

1. *What would it mean for you to leave everything to follow Jesus today?*
2. *List some of the things you would gladly leave.*
3. *What do you hope to take with you as you follow Jesus?*

There is no doubt our modern society is much different from the first century. The quantity of things left behind by the fisherman pales in comparison to all that we have in this life. Perhaps we can rationalize that they had the benefit of being an eyewitness to the bounty of fish. Certainly, the fisherman had the advantage of actually hearing the voice of Jesus calling them to follow him. Nevertheless, they left everything!

4. *Have you ever considered leaving everything to follow Jesus?*
5. *What prevents us from leaving everything to follow?*

This passage of the call of the fisherman can be humbling for us to hear. It is easy to forget about the transformation of those early followers. Their lives were turned upside down as they sacrificed to follow Jesus as their master.

6. *How do you relate to this passage and the call of the disciples?*
7. *Does Jesus mean for us to do likewise?*
8. *In what ways is your life changing because you follow Jesus?*

The disciples did not just leave their possessions. They also left their jobs. Fishing was not just a hobby or leisure activity, but it was their livelihood.

9. *Does Jesus expect us to leave it all behind and follow him?*
10. *How do you understand the call to follow Jesus?*

Jesus calls the fishermen to a new kind of fishing where their nets and buckets are no longer needed. Instead, the fishermen will be partners with Jesus to share God's good news. They will be asked to go to new areas to fish and seek out deep waters. Their ability to catch people will not be based on their skills or their creativity but on the grace of God.

11. *Where is Jesus calling you to fish for people?*
12. *What new deep waters will your congregation fish?*
13. *How does it feel to walk with someone new in the faith?*

Prayer

Christ, you call us to follow you. Help us leave those things which distract us from you. Open our eyes to deep waters where you call us to fish and proclaim your good news. Amen

Dig Deeper

Isaiah 6:1-13

last word

Write down your priorities for the week.
Be sure to include "following Jesus".



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