

# Week 08

## Bible Passage

Luke 5:1–11



# *All In for Jesus*

## Desired Outcomes

1. To learn about Jesus calling Simon Peter, James, and John as his first disciples.
2. To see how Peter, James, and John interacted with and responded to Jesus.
3. To consider the implications of Jesus' invitation to "catch people."

## Session Key Verse

When they had brought their boats to shore, they left everything and followed him. —Luke 5:11

## Optional Materials

- Computer with Internet access
- *For free digital resources to enhance this lesson, go to <https://www.warnerpress.org/life-mosaic-resources>*

## Sneak Peek

When Jesus met his first disciples, they followed his instructions for fishing—and then left all behind to follow him.

## 1 Get Acquainted



Take time to introduce everyone in the group if anyone new is joining you this week. Update one another on any prayer requests or life situations that were shared last week. Those who were present at your last meeting can share about how they have sensed God's presence and work in their own lives and in the lives of others.

Imagine you receive a phone call from your dream employer offering you *that* job, the one you have always wanted and would drop everything to have. Consider your responses to the following questions about this phone call:

- **Who is calling, from what company?**
- **What is the job being offered to you?**
- **Would you have to relocate for it? If so, to where?**
- **Do you need to negotiate salary to first determine if this would work for you? Why or why not?**
- **What other factors would you need to consider before accepting the offer?**

Share with the group your responses and how it would feel to receive this dream offer. **Is everyone in the group ready and willing to accept their dream job, or are there hesitations?**

## 2 Discover



Read and discuss Luke 5:1–11. The commentary section can be used to generate dialogue, or for study prior to your meeting.

### Commentary

This story opens with Jesus beside Lake Gennesaret, which is another name for the Sea of Galilee. Jesus borrowed a boat that belonged to a fisherman named Simon, and from there he taught the crowds. Jesus asked Simon to go out to the deep water and to put down the nets for a catch. When Simon

did this, there was a great catch of fish. The story ends with Jesus recruiting Simon and the others as disciples.

The names of those on the scene are provided: Simon (Peter), and also “James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon” (v 10). Clearly the main figure here, apart from Jesus himself, was Simon. It was Simon’s boat that Jesus used, and it was Simon to whom Jesus spoke first. Conversely, Simon was the only person who spoke to Jesus, addressing him first as “Master” (v 5—in the Greek, a term used for tutors and teachers) and later as “Lord” (v 8). Likewise, Simon was the only one whom Jesus

addressed directly. Interestingly, at the end of the story when Jesus said, “Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching people” (v 10), in Greek the verbs are second-person singular. The status of Simon is obviously important in Luke’s account, and that is not surprising. Not only was Simon prominent in the traditions Luke received concerning Jesus and his companions, but Luke knew that Simon was an important leader in the early church, as he would narrate in Acts 1—11.

There are features to this story that resonate with other significant biblical motifs. One is that, when Simon was called, he resisted, as did Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and others. Simon objected to Jesus’ command to go out to the deep water, but then he did as he was told to do (v 5). Another is the exclamation of Simon, saying that Jesus should depart from him because of Simon being a sinful man (v 8). It is a common biblical motif for a person to feel unworthy in the presence of the divine (Ex 3:6; 33:20; Judg 6:22; 13:22; Isa 6:5; Luke 18:13). Finally, the miracle of the great catch is, like others in



the Gospels, more than one should expect. The exceeding of expectations appears in other miracle stories too, as in the healing of a man who was paralyzed (Luke 5:17–26), the feeding of the five thousand (Luke 9:12–17), and the wedding at Cana (John 2:1–11).

God often becomes manifest in the ordinary, even seemingly unnecessary events of a person’s life—events that nevertheless are in accord with some purpose that is or is not known. Throughout history the church has continued to exist and carry on its ministry in spite of the tenuous responses of its members. The ancient image of the church as a fisherman’s boat tossed about on the sea, but sustained by the presence of the living Lord, is appropriate in every age.<sup>1</sup>

### Questions

- **How big of a crowd do you think was gathered on the shore to necessitate the use of a boat as a floating pulpit?**
- **What do you think was the tone or attitude of Simon’s response in verse 5 to Jesus’ instructions to let down the nets again? Why?**
- Simon’s reaction to Jesus was a bit different in verse 8. The Bible has other examples of people’s responses when they recognized the power of God. In Genesis 18, when Abraham interceded for the city of Sodom, he acknowledged his own humanity. In Job 42:5–6, Job became aware of God’s presence and assumed a humble posture of repentance. Read these accounts and compare the responses of Abraham and Job to that of Simon. **What does Simon’s response tell us about his changing perception of Jesus?**
- **Why do you think Jesus would call fishermen as his first disciples?**
- In the Gospels of Mark and Matthew, Jesus called Simon, Andrew, James, and John as he was walking along the Sea of Galilee. Only Luke tells us about the nets full of fish preceding Jesus’ call. **How do you think this miraculous catch might have impacted the decision of these fishermen to follow Jesus?**

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1. Adapted from “Commentary on Luke 5:1-11,” accessed May 17, 2016, [https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary\\_id=506](https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=506).

# 3 Experience



## Option 1

Write a poem to describe this passage where Jesus called the first disciples. You might wish to focus on a few of the verses and elaborate on things that might have been seen or felt but aren't specifically described. There are some examples at <https://www.warnerpress.org/life-mosaic-resources>.

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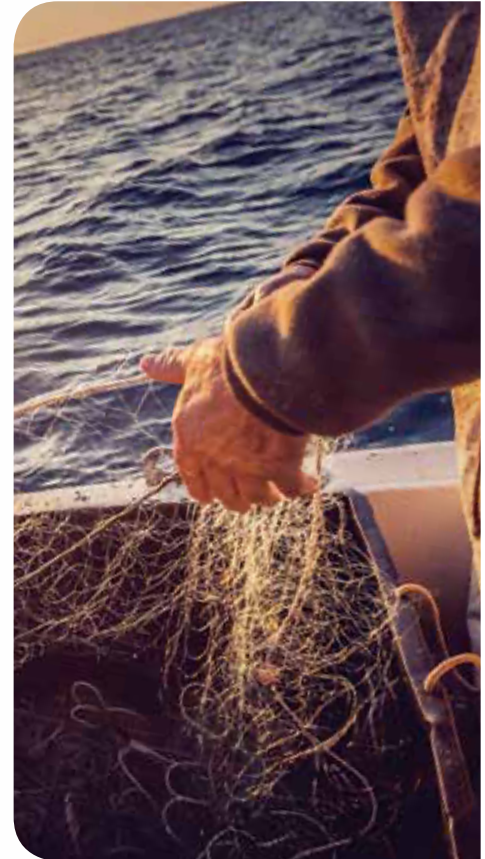
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As you feel comfortable, share your poem with the group. **How does expressing or hearing the story in this way change your perspective?**

## Option 2

Designate one group member to role-play a salesperson and another to role-play a tough but loyal customer. Imagine that a company needs to hire an additional employee. The salesperson should attempt to recruit this customer to come work for the company. Feel free to add context and details to suit your group.

*For the salesperson:* **Was this person easy to recruit? How might it be helpful to begin with a loyal customer who already supports your company?**

*For the customer:* **What did you need to hear in order to accept the offer?**

*For all:* **What observations did you make about this activity? What else could be done to convince this customer to leave what he or she is currently doing to accept a new role?**

## 4 Apply



The events and elements in the stories of the Bible may be literal, but they can also be viewed through a metaphorical lens, serving as symbols to be interpreted and applied in various contexts. Read Luke 5:1–11 again and think about what the different items in the story might represent for application to your own life:

Fishers \_\_\_\_\_

Fish \_\_\_\_\_

A lake or other sizeable body of water \_\_\_\_\_

A net \_\_\_\_\_

The shore \_\_\_\_\_

Today's passage challenges us to see that the same God is at work in our own lives, calling us daily to follow.

**How does using a metaphorical lens to view the story of Jesus calling his disciples expand your understanding of the passage?**

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If you were reading this story when you were a child, how might the symbols be different for you? How about if you were reading it twenty years from now?

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In Jesus' day, it was common for people to make a living by fishing. Jesus did not go into the temple or synagogues to choose his disciples. **What are the places and professions Jesus might look to in seeking disciples today?**

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## 5 Conclude



God may no longer be present with us in the bodily form of Jesus Christ, but the Holy Spirit is at work—continuing to call people to follow the Lord and to “fish for people.” Responding to that call may not require a career shift for you as it did for the disciples—but perhaps it will.

If possible, listen to the song “Oceans” (Where Feet May Fail) by Hillsong United and read the lyrics. There is a link to the song, with lyrics, at <https://www.warnerpress.org/life-mosaic-resources>. Whether or not you listen to the song, reflect on the following questions:

- **What is the “deep” that God is calling me to now? What barriers—perceived or real—prevent me from responding to that call?**
- **What internal or external resources do I need in order to embrace God’s leading?**
- **When have I stepped out before to follow God in faith? What was the result?**

As you feel led, share your responses with the group. Wrap up your time together by sharing joys and needs. Pray that the Spirit will empower you to accept his leading to a place where you wholly trust in God.

<b>Daily Bible Readings</b> Week 8	<i>Sunday</i> Luke 5:1–11 <i>All In for Jesus</i>	<i>Monday</i> Luke 5:12–16 <i>Jesus Cleanses a Leper</i>	<i>Tuesday</i> Luke 5:17–26 <i>Jesus Heals a Paralytic</i>
	<i>Wednesday</i> Luke 5:27–32 <i>Jesus Calls Levi (Matthew)</i>	<i>Thursday</i> Luke 5:33–39 <i>A Question about Fasting</i>	<i>Friday</i> Isaiah 43:14–21 <i>God Does a New Thing</i>