

ENGAGE

Like Jesus

GROWTH GROUPS
WEEK 7
WEEK OF OCTOBER 28TH

GROWTH GROUP FALL 2018

WEEK 7 – OCTOBER 28, 2018 - LUKE 5:1-11 AND 5:27-32

GETTING TO KNOW ONE ANOTHER

1) Share about a great party/reception you have attended. What made it so great?

SETTING THE CONTEXT FOR MATTHEW 6:1-4

This fall we are talking about the theme of engagement. We are considering the way in which Jesus engaged the culture around him and what we can learn from him. Today we take up the theme of invitation. Gennesaret was located at the northwestern corner of the Sea of Galilee. Jesus had been tested in the wilderness and in the fifth chapter of Luke he began calling and inviting people to follow him. The people he chose give us some insight into the nature of God and the type of people who will be invited to be a part of God's kingdom.

Jesus sees two boats that had been left by the fishermen. Though others would have been needed to help with the nets the focus is clearly on Simon Peter. Simon uses the term "master" rather than "teacher." This would imply that there is something different about the authority of Jesus. He is not just "any" teacher.

After teaching for a while Jesus asked Simon to put out into deeper waters and try again. Simon was obedient and believed that Jesus had a reason for asking him to do this. Remember that in Luke 4:38-39 Jesus had already healed Simon's mother-in-law. The catch of fish was so large they needed the second boat to come out and help. It is likely that the "great multitude" of fish is symbolic of the "great multitude" who would follow Jesus because of the preaching of Simon and other apostles.

In verse 8 Luke makes sure that the readers know that the Simon he is referring to is Simon Peter. Simon Peter responds similarly to Isaiah (see Isaiah 6:5) when he recognizes his own sinfulness in light of the splendor and glory of God. Peter's understanding of his own sinfulness is not as much related to disobedience, as it is with his unworthiness.

Jesus tells Simon that from now on he will fish for people. He gives the disciples yet another "object lesson" about the work they will be called to do. Simon and his friends pull up their boats and leave everything behind.



In Luke 5:27-32 we find another person, Levi, who leaves everything behind to follow Jesus. In addition to following Jesus, he also had a party and invited tax collectors and sinners to join him. This caused a lot of consternation amongst the religious leaders. They wonder why the one who proclaims himself to be the savior of the world would eat with people who are unfit for the kingdom of God.

It is interesting that Luke, who was a physician, noticed Jesus using terms like healthy and sick people. He reminds us that Jesus came to save sinners and bring them into repentance. Both the calling of the fishermen and of Levi remind us that the invitation of Jesus is one that calls us from where we are to something new.

EXPLORING THE TEXT

Read Luke 5:1-11

¹ One day as Jesus was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret,[a] the people were crowding around him and listening to the word of God. ² He saw at the water's edge two boats, left there by the fishermen, who were washing their nets. ³ He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little from shore. Then he sat down and taught the people from the boat. ⁴ When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch." ⁵ Simon answered, "Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets." ⁶ When they had done so, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break. ⁷ So they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them, and they came and filled both boats so full that they began to sink. ⁸ When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus' knees and said, "Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!" ⁹ For he and all his companions were astonished at the catch of fish they had taken, ¹⁰ and so were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, Simon's partners. Then Jesus said to Simon, "Don't be afraid; from now on you will fish for people." ¹¹ So they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed him.

Read Luke 5:27-32

²⁷ After this, Jesus went out and saw a tax collector by the name of Levi sitting at his tax booth. "Follow me," Jesus said to him, ²⁸ and Levi got up, left everything and followed him. ²⁹ Then Levi held a great banquet for Jesus at his house, and a large crowd of tax collectors and others were eating with them. ³⁰ But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law who belonged to their sect complained to his disciples, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?" ³¹ Jesus answered them, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. ³² I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

- 2) Who do you identify with the most in these two stories? Simon? The other fishermen? The crowd listening? Levi? A friend of Levi's? The religious rulers?
- 3) Do you think there is any significance to Jesus having Peter put out into "deep water" to let down the nets? Why does Luke want us to know that the water was deep?
- 4) Peter was a professional fisherman, as were his friends. They had caught nothing that night. It would have been one thing for Jesus to talk about the kingdom of God, but now he was giving them advice about fishing. What do you think they would have thought when this "teacher" started talking to them about fishing? How would you have responded?

- 5) Why would Jesus invite Levi to follow him? To be a tax collector was to be despised by the religious leaders of Israel, as well as the people of Israel. Why do you think Levi followed him? Do you see any similarities or differences between this story and the story of Zacchaeus in Luke 19:1-10?
- 6) In the story of Levi, the religious leaders ask the disciples a question, and Jesus answers the question for them. How does Jesus' response in verses 31-32 connect with his mission? How do we interpret those verses in today's context?
- 7) Jesus invited people to follow him. Think about our society where people follow each other on Twitter and other social media. Think about your own life. Is there anyone who follows you and if so, where are you leading them?

BRINGING IT HOME

- 8) What are some ways that you can invite others to engage in the life of LJPC, besides inviting them to attend a worship service. Notice that Jesus did not invite anyone to attend synagogue. How can you go about "inviting" this week?