

"the whole truth, and nothing but the truth about Jesus"

THE DAILY JESUS NEWS

An ATJ Ministries Publication by John Wright

The DAILY JESUS NEWS #053 Jesus' Great Galilean Ministry

Jesus Begins His Ministry in Galilee
Jesus Calls Four Key Disciples to Follow Him on a Full-time Basis
LK 5.1-11 (Parallel Texts: MT 4.18-22; MK 1.16-20)

1 ^LOne day as Jesus was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret—^{MT}the sea of Galilee—^Lthe people were crowding around him and listening to the word of God. 2 He saw two boats at the shore, left there by the fishermen, ^{MT}two brothers—Simon, who was called Peter, and his brother Andrew—^Lwho 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 way from the shore. Then, he sat down and taught the people from the boat.

4. When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "*I command you to go out again into the deep water, and let down the nets for a catch.*"

5 Simon answered, "Master, we've labored hard all night long and have not 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 were tearing. 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 were beginning to sink!

8 When Simon Peter saw all of this, he fell down at Jesus' knees and said, "Get away from me, Lord; I am a thoroughly sinful man!"

9 For he and all his companions were shocked at the catch of fish they had taken, 10 as were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, Simon's partners. Then Jesus said to Simon, "*I command you to stop being afraid; ^{MT}you must come and follow after me. ^LFrom now on ^{MT}I will make both of you ^Lfishers of people.*"

11 So, when they pulled their boats up on shore, they left everything behind and followed him.

^MAnd going on a little farther, he saw ^{MT}two other brothers—^MJames the son of Zebedee and John his brother—sitting in the boat ^{MT}with Zebedee, their father, ^Mmending their nets. Immediately he called them. ^{MT}Right away ^Mthey left ^{MT}the boat ^Mand their father Zebedee in it with the hired workers, and they followed him.

NOTE: We use superscript identification of the source gospel in "blended texts" as follows: Matthew = ^{MT}, Mark = ^M, Luke = ^L, John = ^J, Acts = ^A. This "superscript ID" is inserted at the beginning of the quoted text, identifying that Bible book until a different superscript appears. In addition, *red italics identify the words of Jesus.*

CONTEXT DIGEST	
Location	Lake Galilee, near Capernaum
Time	August, when Jesus was 31 (Month 8)
Stage of Jesus' Life	Stage IV: His Great Galilean Ministry
Chapter 10	Jesus Begins His Ministry in Galilee
Section #053	Jesus Calls Four Key Disciples to Follow Him on a Full-time Basis

Today's reading describes the fifth major development in the "beginning" days of Jesus' Great Galilean Ministry. Each of the six events that made up the "beginning" period had a major impact on everything that followed over the next 20 months in Galilee. The significance of today's event, for example, is obvious.

Jesus began his ministry in Capernaum by calling four key disciples to follow him on a full-time basis. Three of these men (Peter, Andrew and John) were among the first five people to believe in Jesus during "the first glorious week" of disciple-making in Judea. No doubt James was already a believer, too.

All four of them were believers, but they had also continued to support their families through their partnership in a commercial fishing business on the lake. Jesus had been in public ministry for about eight months at this point. Here he called his first full-time disciples to leave everything, including their families, and follow him around on a 24/7 basis.

All four of these men were later appointed among the twelve apostles. Three of them (Peter, James and John) became Jesus' closest associates, and were given especially crucial roles in the development of the early church. James became the first apostle to be martyred. Peter and John had huge parts to play in the formation of the New Testament. The calling of these men was one of the most important developments of Jesus' entire ministry.

There is a powerful note of grace ringing through this calling scene. After borrowing Peter's boat to speak to the crowd standing on the shore, Jesus instructed him to take it out into the deeper water and prepare to catch some fish. For Peter, an expert commercial fisherman, this was a ludicrous command. They had already fished all night in that very place, and caught nothing. No one fished by day, when the sunlight scared the fish away from the surface of the water.

Peter's pride was really troubling him because he thought he was about to look like the town idiot by going out again and letting down his nets in the full view of everybody. But Jesus commanded him to do it. So Peter made sure that Jesus, and everybody else within hearing of him, knew that it was Jesus' crazy idea—not his: ***"because YOU say so..."***

Peter, and everyone else was shocked beyond belief when their nets were suddenly inundated with fish—enough to begin to drag the boat under the water. No one had ever seen a fishing boat sunk by fish still in the nets! When Peter realized that Jesus controlled even the fish in the water—he was LORD over it all—his sinfulness in doubting Jesus' wisdom and questioning his authority washed over him like a bursting dam.

Peter realized a sinful person like himself had NO right to fellowship with holy, righteous Jesus. He therefore implored Jesus to do the only reasonable thing, and abandon him. He was not in Jesus' league--nowhere close.

At that point Jesus revealed his grace to Peter, and the other three men he had called. **"NOW I will make you into fishers of people."** It is when we realize our sinfulness and total dependence upon Jesus, that he is most able to work in and through us. The secret is humility. Jesus' revelation of his power over the fish in the lake sparked Peter's humility in recognizing his sinfulness and utter unworthiness to have anything to do with him. That was all it took for Jesus' grace to accomplish the rest.

The result? The first four full-time disciples left everything behind to follow Jesus. Businesses, family, friends, every dream for the future they had held dear to that moment...everything was left on that beach, and they began the priceless journey of discovering the fulness of God in Jesus, the Christ...the LORD who would save them.

APPLICATION:

Have you left everything to follow Jesus as your full-time calling and life-purpose? That is the point of this story. We must all leave everything behind in order to become like Jesus as we follow him.

This is a positive choice, not a negative one. That is, anything we refuse to give up is actually something vastly inferior, compared to what Jesus has in store for us. He has all the infinite love, joy, peace, purpose, power, and fulness of GOD to share with each of us. Following Jesus means gaining everything good in the end. It is an invitation to infinite fulness.

A martyred missionary said it well: *"He is no fool who gives us what he cannot keep, to gain what he cannot lose."*

Can you identify anything you are holding on to that is keeping you from following Jesus anywhere he wants to take you?

What are you going to do about it? When?