

**Message: Come! Fish on My Team**  
**Sermon Series: Helping Others Follow Jesus**  
**By Senior Pastor Tom Harrison**  
**Luke 5:1-11**  
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Jesus recruited, trained and deployed a team of followers. Interestingly, Judas Iscariot was the only disciple with an impressive resume. Jesus was committed to His disciples. He spent time with them. He traveled, prayed, listened, taught and ate with them. He had a mission to accomplish, but it would become their mission to fulfill. Jesus asked them to make life-changing commitments. Following Jesus was meaningful and significant. They saw healings and miracles over nature. They heard messages of depth and power. They felt the excitement of being part of something bigger than themselves. Following Jesus was also hard. Martyrdom resulted. Yet, they thought following Jesus was worth their lives. Jesus introduced the kingdom of heaven to them. Heaven trumps anything materialism can offer. Asbury's staff core behaviors are *confident humility, committed team player and genuine kindness*. To truly follow Jesus means we are committed to be on His team first (Matthew 6:33). This disrupts our routine. Following Jesus reorganizes our priorities. It affects our friendships and how we spend our time and money. Following Jesus means we must love God, our neighbor and our enemies.

APPLICATION: How does thinking of Jesus as committed to His team of disciples help you better understand His character? Who do you know who is truly a committed team player? What does being on Jesus' team look like for you? What other team or teams do you play on (family, work, church) and HOW do you play? Goal of message: Invite people to commit to follow Jesus and to be an active part of Jesus' team

**Background:** Jesus began preaching (Luke 4) in the Nazareth synagogue. Not only did they reject His teaching; they tried to kill Him. He left Nazareth & went down to Capernaum where He healed Simon's mother-in-law. When the synagogues closed to him, He went outdoors.

When the Church of England didn't like John Wesley's message, they closed their doors to him, too. Wesley's friend, George Whitefield, told him to come preach the gospel outdoors. Wesley resisted. When he finally agreed to preach to coal miners early in the morning he was amazed at the results: "*At four in the afternoon, I submitted to be more vile, and proclaimed in the highways the glad tidings of salvation to about 3,000 people.*" Field preaching provided 2 things: mobility + magnitude (he could preach to large crowds' outdoors who could never

have fit into a church building (or have been accepted, either). Wesley said, “I love a commodious room, a soft cushion and a handsome pulpit, but field preaching saves souls.”

Matthew/Mark have Jesus walking by the Sea and saw Simon/Andrew fishing. He called to them and they left their nets and followed Him as did two other brothers, James/John. Luke 5 expands on Matthew/Mark’s story (John doesn’t mention it – why should he – it’s already been told 3x). Luke tells Jesus had a previous interaction with Simon – Jesus healed his mother-in-law. This is the 2<sup>nd</sup> miracle Simon will have seen Jesus perform.

#### **Luke 5:1-11**

*On one occasion, while the **crowd** was pressing in on him to hear the word of God, he was standing by the lake of **Gennesaret**,<sup>2</sup> and he saw two boats by the lake, but the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets.<sup>3</sup> Getting into one of the boats, which was Simon's, he asked him to put out a little from the land. And he sat down and taught the people from the boat.<sup>4</sup> And when he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, “Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch.”<sup>5</sup> And Simon answered, “Master, we toiled all night and took nothing! **But** at your word I will let down the nets.”<sup>6</sup> And when they had done this, they enclosed a large number of fish, and their nets were breaking.<sup>7</sup> They signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink.<sup>8</sup> But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, “Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.”<sup>9</sup> For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish that they had taken,<sup>10</sup> and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, “Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching men.”<sup>[a]</sup><sup>11</sup> And when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed him.*

A **crowd** Jesus was healing & preaching to the crowds BEFORE He called His team of disciples. His reputation was spreading, and He would have been known to the fisherman before He called them.

*by the **lake** of Gennesaret* This beautiful lake is only 13 miles long + 8 miles wide. **fishermen** washing their nets = “the day is done.” A wasted day. Being a fisherman is hard work with no guarantee you’ll catch anything. When we think of fishing, we think of being in a bass boat with a rod and reel. But this type of fishing is about “nets.” This is not a one-person operation – you need **teammates** to help you.

*Getting into one of the boats, which was Simon's, – a floating pulpit*  
**(Improvisation)** Those on the shore could hear him clearly and distinctly when he was on the water. This was an ingenious way to reach the crowds. He gave Simon a **directive** – **“put out into the deep & let down your nets for a catch.”** Simon is a pro fisherman. Jesus is a carpenter turned rabbi. Simon **resisted** (probably had an eye roll). But his willingness to act in faith and do as He directed changed his life. Just think if he'd said, **“Well, I don't know about that!”** The “Alexa For Seniors” commercial. Seniors & technology don't always connect. This SNL commercial shows seniors who, instead of calling “Alexa” by the right name call her all kinds of names (“Alissa, Amanda, Odessa,”). When she answers they say, **“Well, I don't know about that.”**  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YvT\\_ggs5ETk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YvT_ggs5ETk)

Simon **followed** a crazy command. **But...** He TRUSTED. He put out into the deep & let down his nets. The catch almost **broke the nets** & sank the ship. He realized this was a miracle. Only God's agent could have produced such a catch in the middle of the day. This demonstrates Jesus' nature - He has divine power. Authority. He can provide abundantly. An enormous amount of fish in the boat surrounded Simon as he fell at Jesus' knees. **“Depart from me...I'm a sinful man.”** This was his Simon's first of 2 great confessions. His most famous was: “You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God.” He recognized who he was in relationship with Jesus: contrast, not comparison.

His confession that he is a sinner doesn't disqualify him from following Jesus –it's just the opposite. His confession became his resume for service. Humility is the elevator to spiritual significance. God can't use the proud. Like Isaiah recognizing his sinfulness in comparison with the glory of God, Simon sees who he is, not in comparison with James and John, with Jesus. Jesus is an far different person and He creates an entirely different response. Simon needed a Savior. He falls to his knees as an act of worship. Something about Jesus spoke to Simon's heart.

<sup>10</sup> *and so also were James & John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon.* Simon/Andrew were business partners (“koinonia”). We seldom hear about the nearly always overlooked brother, Andrew. with James, John and their dad, Zebedee. Their team of 4 became part of a team of 12.

v 10 **“Do not be afraid;** Once Simon made his confession, Jesus told him not to be afraid. It's one thing to be a sinner and deny it. It's another to know who you are before God and humbly bow before him.

v 10 **from now on you will be catching men.”** Jesus gave them their mission – **Helping Others Follow Jesus.** This isn't always easy. It would be far more

convenient to wait for the fish to jump into the boat. Simon Peter's first sermon on Pentecost and the 3,000 that were saved and baptized that day.

v 11 <sup>11</sup> ***And when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed him.***

Not only did they leave their business and equipment, it appears they left their huge catch of fish. Imagine Peter telling his wife & mother-in-law? Imagine James & John explaining this to their dad? Imagine the Capernaum gossip about these crazy 4 men leaving everything to follow this rabbi...what happened to them? Something had changed – these men had met Jesus. When you meet Jesus everything changes. We want to respond to His call.

2 things contribute to the success of a team:

1.) **Confident Humility.** This is what we see with Simon. When every team member is willing to do whatever it takes to get the job done. No ego. Put their own agendas aside.

2.) **Being a Committed Team Player.** Simon needed to get on the boat (bus) and find the right seat. He was part of a team of fishermen. That team of disciples would turn into the church after Pentecost.

Being part of a team isn't always easy or fun. It doesn't always go our way. We don't always get to call the plays. We don't always agree with the plays. Simon didn't like what Jesus told him to do, but he did it anyway, but he switched his priorities from being committed to Simon and his TEAM to a larger perspective. When on a team, we follow the direction of the coach. We must put aside our personal agenda. If it was easy, it wouldn't take commitment. Teams hold us accountable.

2 Questions:

1.) **Is Jesus worth following?** (If not...who/what?) Why is Jesus worth following? Ultimately, there's one reason – the Resurrection. That validates all His promises for all time.

2.) **What does He expect of His followers? Confident Humility – Committed Team Player.** We make/keep membership vows: Prayers (have a good attitude, not passive/aggressive); Presence (show up), Gifts/service (contribute our time, talent, treasure). Witness (talk about it – maybe ask Q's).

Just as Simon needed a Savior, so Jesus needed a team. His physical body was a limitation. But if He could invest in disciples they could take the message worldwide. This is the church – we need each other and we help each other to

fulfill the mission Jesus gives us. It's more fun to win when you're on a team than when it's an individual sport.

Are you following Jesus? Are you committed to His Team, the church? Are you helping others follow?