

Spring 2019!

Life Group Quarter

Week 1

Message Date 4/7/19

MY STORY

- 1) Is there something you have dreamed of doing but haven't yet?
- 2) What are you hoping to get out of this study?

QUICK REVIEW

- 3) Upon reviewing your notes from Sunday's teaching, what caught your attention?

The Goal

Welcome to the Spring Quarter. This week we will be unpacking some thoughts around the mission of the church. Our mission is to create opportunities for people to become fully devoted followers of Christ. We will unpack some concepts that Jesus shared with His first disciples and discover how they learned to follow Him. Our goal this week is to help us all gain perspective on how God wants to use us as a church and use you individually to make this happen.

DIGGING DEEPER

Our mission here as a church is to create opportunities for people to become fully devoted followers of Jesus. In this week's study we will be unpacking this thought and looking at how Jesus was irresistible to the people around Him. Some of these questions may seem obvious, but many people have different ideas as to the meanings of each of these concepts. Therefore, we will be breaking down each piece to get on the same page together.

- 4) What is an opportunity?

Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary defines it this way; 1.) a favorable juncture of circumstances. 2.) a good chance for advancement or progress¹

- 5) If an opportunity is defined as a favorable juncture of circumstance, why would it be something we as a church would want to create?

- 6) What does it mean to be "fully devoted" to something? I.e. if I am a fully devoted football fan, what does that mean?

I am all in. I pay attention to whatever is the object of my devotion. I think about it often and look forward to whatever it is.

- 7) Based on our answers from the previous questions, what kind of an impact can we have as a church if we create opportunities for people to become fully devoted followers of Christ?

The following passages tell the same story from different perspectives from when Jesus called His disciples.

Luke 5:1-11 (ESV)

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, ² and he saw two boats by the lake, but the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. ³ 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. ⁴ And when he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch." ⁵ And Simon answered, "Master, we toiled all night and took nothing! But at your word I will let down the nets." ⁶ And when they had done this, they enclosed a large number of fish, and their nets were breaking. ⁷ 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. ⁸ But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." ⁹ For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish that they had taken, ¹⁰ 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." ¹¹ And when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed him.ⁱⁱ

Matthew 4:18-22 (ESV)

¹⁸ While walking by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon (who is called Peter) and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. ¹⁹ And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." ²⁰ Immediately they left their nets and followed him. ²¹ And going on from there he saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets, and he called them. ²² Immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.ⁱⁱⁱ

8) From the passage in Luke, why do you think Peter responded to Jesus the way he did? He was amazed by Jesus knowing about the fish. Or after listening to Jesus teach, and then witnessing the miraculous catch of fish, he was moved to repent and worship. The *Bible Knowledge Commentary* says this about it: The miracle of the fish brought two responses in Peter and the others. They **were astonished** (lit., "amazement [*thambos*] seized him and all those with him," v. 9; cf. 4:36) **at the large catch of fish**, and Peter realized his sinfulness before Jesus (5:8). The result was that Jesus made them fishermen fishers of **men**. Jesus' teaching, combined with His miraculous acts, showed that He had the authority to call the men and have them respond by leaving **everything**.^{iv}

- 9) From the Matthew passage, what does Jesus ask Simon and Andrew to do?

“Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.”

10) Thinking back to the questions we talked about earlier in this study, what does it mean to follow?

11) What does Jesus say He will do for them?

I will make you fishers of men.

12) What does it mean to be fishers of men?

For us to “catch” people for God by loving them and sharing our stories with them.

13) If Jesus is inviting us to follow and He is the One who “will make us fishers of men”, what is our role in His invitation?

To follow Him.

14) What can we do to help others step into this invitation as well?

We can create opportunities for people to become fully devoted followers of Jesus.

TAKING IT HOME

Luke 5:27-32 (ESV) The passage below is referring to Jesus.

²⁷ After this he went out and saw a tax collector named Levi, sitting at the tax booth. And he said to him, “Follow me.” ²⁸ And leaving everything, he rose and followed him.

²⁹ And Levi made him a great feast in his house, and there was a large company of tax collectors and others reclining at table with them. ³⁰ And the Pharisees and their scribes grumbled at his disciples, saying, “Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?” ³¹ And Jesus answered them, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. ³² I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.” ^v

15) What was Levi’s response to Jesus?

“And leaving everything, he rose and followed him.

²⁹ And Levi made him a great feast in his house, and there was a large company of tax collectors and others reclining at table with them.”

16) Why did the Pharisees grumble about Jesus?

From *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*

Luke’s point would have been clear even if he had stopped with the account of Levi’s decision to follow Jesus. But in order to drive the point home Luke related events which occurred at a reception which Levi, Jesus’ new follower, gave for Jesus. Levi must have been a wealthy man, for **a great banquet** was prepared at his house and many guests were invited, including **a large crowd of tax collectors**. The same group of religious leaders who had previously questioned Jesus’ authority (v. 21) questioned the propriety of Jesus’ association **with tax collectors and “sinners.”** Not only was Jesus associating with people to whom the Pharisees objected, but He also was eating and drinking with them. Eating and drinking with others denotes a fellowship or camaraderie with them. Though the religious leaders **complained to Jesus’ disciples ... Jesus answered** their objections (vv. 31–32). He noted that it was not His purpose **to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance**. Here Jesus was not concerned about discussing who were “the righteous.” His point was simply that His mission

was to those in need of “repentance”—a change of heart and a change of life (cf. 3:7–14). **The Pharisees** sensed no need for such a change. Because He had shown authority in the two healings which preceded this account, the implication is that He was also able to fulfill His mission to sinners.^{vi}

- 17) In reflecting on what Pastor Craig has been sharing about with the Impact campaign, how does it help us create opportunities for others to become fully devoted followers of Christ?
- 18) According to the passage above, what did Jesus come to do? How was Jesus taking the opportunity for people to become fully devoted followers of Him?
- 19) How would starting an online presence help us to reach more of the community and do what Jesus did?

CHAIR TIME TOOL

Pastor Craig has been talking about the Impact campaign and how we want to be a church who loves God and loves others well. Think and pray about the following questions and how you can be a part:

- 20) How can we be a part of creating opportunities for people to become fully devoted followers of Jesus?
- 21) Is there anything in your heart that Jesus needs to shift about following Him?
- 22) How can you partner with the work that Jesus wants to do here through the church?

ⁱ Inc Merriam-Webster, *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*. (Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, Inc., 2003).

ⁱⁱ *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Lk 5:1–11.

ⁱⁱⁱ *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Mt 4:18–22.

^{iv} John A. Martin, “Luke,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 216.

^v *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Lk 5:27–32.

^{vi} John A. Martin, “Luke,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 218.