

Learning More with
Stories of the Master

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~ *A New Kind of Fisherman* ~

You can learn much more about this story by doing these three things:

1. Read Luke 5:1-11.
2. Discover key cultural and historical insights.
3. Answer the reflective questions.

1. Read the text of the story from the New American Standard Bible and from the Easy Read Version

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 New Living Translation (NLT) **Holy Bible, New Living Translation, copyright © 1996, 2004, 2015 by Tyndale House Foundation.**

Luke 5:1-11 - NASB	Luke 5:1-11 – New Living Translation
<p>¹ Now it happened that while the crowd was pressing around Him and listening to the word of God, He was standing by the lake of Gennesaret; ² and He saw two boats lying at the edge of the lake; but the fishermen had gotten out of them and were washing their nets. ³ And He got into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little way from the land. And He sat down and <i>began</i> teaching the people from the boat. ⁴ When He had finished speaking, He said to Simon, "Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch." ⁵ Simon answered and said, "Master, we worked hard all night and caught nothing, but I will do as You say <i>and</i> let down the nets." ⁶ When they had done this, they enclosed a great quantity of fish, and their nets <i>began</i> to break; ⁷ so they signaled to their partners in the other boat for them to come and help them. And they came and filled both of the boats, so that they began to sink. ⁸ But when Simon Peter saw <i>that</i>, he fell down at Jesus' feet, saying, "Go away from me Lord, for I am a sinful man!" ⁹ For amazement had seized him and all his companions because of the catch of fish which they had taken; ¹⁰ and so also <i>were</i> James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not fear, from now on you will be catching men." ¹¹ When they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed Him.</p>	<p>⁵ One day as Jesus was preaching on the shore of the Sea of Galilee, great crowds pressed in on him to listen to the word of God. ² He noticed two empty boats at the water's edge, for the fishermen had left them and were washing their nets. ³ Stepping into one of the boats, Jesus asked Simon, its owner, to push it out into the water. So he sat in the boat and taught the crowds from there. ⁴ When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Now go out where it is deeper, and let down your nets to catch some fish." ⁵ "Master," Simon replied, "we worked hard all last night and didn't catch a thing. But if you say so, I'll let the nets down again." ⁶ And this time their nets were so full of fish they began to tear! ⁷ A shout for help brought their partners in the other boat, and soon both boats were filled with fish and on the verge of sinking. ⁸ When Simon Peter realized what had happened, he fell to his knees before Jesus and said, "Oh, Lord, please leave me—I'm such a sinful man." ⁹ For he was awestruck by the number of fish they had caught, as were the others with him. ¹⁰ His partners, James and John, the sons of Zebedee, were also amazed. Jesus replied to Simon, "Don't be afraid! From now on you'll be fishing for people!" ¹¹ And as soon as they landed, they left everything and followed Jesus.</p>

2. Discover key cultural and historical insights.

- Fishing was done at night. During the hot days fish would go deeper into the lake. After a night of fishing, fishermen would wash and mend their nets.
- Being away from home at night gave them low honor in their culture.
- Fish was in high demand in the first century. Rulers or large landholders would contract for a specified amount of fish to be delivered at a certain time. The fishermen would be paid in

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coinage or in processed fish, but the system was set up to favor royalty or landowners and the fishermen would get little in return for their hard labor.

- Sometimes fishermen would lease their rights to toll collectors and they would sometimes require 40% of the fish. The other 60% would be sold to middlemen and again the fishermen would be left with little profit.
- Sometimes fishermen would go in with others and would become partners as in Luke 5:7.
- “Following” someone was a phrase used in philosophical writings to describe student-teacher relationships. But in the ancient world it often meant a break with one’s family and not just with material possessions. One was giving up his social network of security and place in society to follow a master.

These insights from A Social Science Commentary on the Synoptic Gospels by Malina and Rohrbaugh.

3. Answer these reflective questions.

The disciples had been with Jesus for at least several weeks and were now fishing in their home town of Capernaum. Do you think this means they were going back on their commitment or that they were just taking a break? Is it OK to take a break from ministry?

When Peter told Jesus he had worked hard all night and caught nothing, do you think he had a bad attitude in telling this to Jesus? Was he just frustrated and tired?

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Peter saw the miracle of the catch of fish and yet it made him aware of his sin, not his powerlessness. Why do you think Peter talked about his sinfulness?

Jesus told Peter not to fear. Are there fears in your life that you need to bring to the Lord?

Jesus told Peter and the others to follow him and he would make them fishers of men. Are you following Jesus and are you fishing for men?
