



Sermon Series: Owning a Faith that Matters.

To be used with Session 1: Life-Changing Faith

Sermon Title Possibilities: Leap of Faith

Scripture: Luke 5:1-11

Connection with Unit Theme: To complement the Bible study “Life-Changing Faith” this sermon will explore how Jesus commissions his first disciples from a group of fishermen. After an extensive time of healing, Jesus has gotten the attention of the masses and now begins teaching about the kingdom of God. He models to the crowds that faith is derived from an encounter with the divine nature of God. He displays an authority over nature that is unmistakable. The people around Jesus have become intrigued at the miracles He performs, but now the Lord calls ordinary men without distinction to carry out His plan to display His power to the nations. This faith that He establishes can be accessed by anybody that takes the leap to believe in the good news of the gospel.

Introduction: A wedding it seems is just an event, but the marriage covenant requires a lifelong commitment. Many statistics we read tell us the Christian divorce rate is equal to that of the culture. However, trained Harvard social researcher and author Shaunti Feldhahn, in her book *The Good News About Marriage* says that the data reveals a quite different story about the committed Christian divorce rate. “Weekly church attendance alone lowers the divorce rate significantly—roughly 25 to 50 percent, depending on the study.”¹ Like a wedding, entering a relationship with Christ is the most amazing event of our lives, but we must strive to build a strong foundation through lifelong commitment. Christ covenants with mankind to never leave us or forsake us by taking the first leap establishing our faith. His move alone is worth our leaping into a life of faith that transforms selfish ambitions into Christ inspired faith.

1. Faith Leaps from self-reliance to surrender (Luke 5:1-3).

The scene in Luke 5 reveals the crowd pressing their way towards Jesus as he taught them the word of God. Approaching Lake Gennesaret He sees two boats, He climbs into the one belonging to Simon Peter and asks him to push it away from land. This was not the first time

¹ Feldhahn, Shaunti. *The Good News About Marriage: Debunking Discouraging Myths about Marriage and Divorce*.

Jesus appeared to Simon Peter. Previously, Jesus healed Simon's mother-in-law of a high fever. Simon was aware of Jesus's power to heal, now he will witness his authority over nature. Simon and others had been fishing all day with nothing to show for their efforts. They were professionals, and very knowledgeable of their occupation but this day had proven unsuccessful. The trade of being a fisherman had become their livelihood and their means of income to take care of themselves. Many of us before an encounter with Christ have acquired a unique set of skills in our lives that we believe will serve for our self-preservation. God has created humanity for himself. Our sin distorts the original design towards the worship of God. Once we encounter the Savior, we are faced with either continuing a life of self-reliance or one of surrender. In Matthew 16:25 Jesus states, "For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life because of me will find it."² The life of faith requires surrendering our lives to Christ. This is the only way to achieve our true purpose.

2. Faith Leaps from compliance to obedience (Luke 5:4-7).

Jesus often modeled teaching God's Word alongside a physical manifestation of His power through the Word. Luke shows that as Jesus finished His teaching moment, He precedes to instruct professional fishermen to let down their nets into the deep. Simon quickly responds to Jesus, "Master, we toiled all night and took nothing! But at your word."³ Simon Peter had been a witness to Jesus's power to heal, but he still seemed skeptical about his divinity. Simon was compliant to the commands of Jesus, but like many of us he wavered in belief. Faith is a journey towards obedience to God and not just compliance. I'm reminded of a story told by a very skilled preacher Adrian Rogers, "A father tells his little four-year-old to sit down, but the son didn't sit down. So, the father said a second time, 'Son, I said sit down.' The boy still didn't sit down. Finally, the father took him by the shoulders and forcefully placed him in the chair. He said, 'Now, Son, sit there!' The little boy answered, 'I may be sitting down on the outside, but—' he added defiantly, 'I'm standing on the inside!'" Jesus offers a faith that leaps from mere compliance to obedience. When we practice obedience to our master, He offers a life overflowing with blessings much like the catch that Simon Peter could not contain in just one boat.

3. Faith Leaps from selfish pride to humility (Luke 5:8-11).

Simon experiences a deep conviction after he recognizes the power of God. His response came because of his unbelief towards Jesus's authority, and he found himself unworthy to be in His presence. Like Adam in the garden of Eden, the result of sin caused Simon to distance himself from Jesus. Our pride, and selfishness leads us away from the faith. Jesus addresses the root cause of that separation, fear. Once we fully trust in our God, it leads us to humble service. Prior to faith in Jesus, our lives are ruled with a never-ending desire towards sin. The more we

² [*Christian Standard Bible*](#) (Mt 16:25). (2020). Holman Bible Publishers.

³ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#) (Lk 5:5). (2016). Crossway Bibles.

sin the greater the chasm. Jesus destroys the power of sin over our lives, and He offers an alternative to our misery. Our faith leaps from selfish pride to humble service. Jesus redirects the passion that Simon and the others had in their profession and reveals his new purpose for their lives. God is faithful and just to establish the same relationship with his disciples today so we must commit to the study of His Word.

Conclusion: Jesus offers us a faith that leaps towards surrender, obedience, and humility. When we offer up our expert opinion, Jesus is gracious and transforms our desires, our heart, and our mind to that which is pleasing to him. According to C.S. Lewis in his book, *The Weight of Glory* he states, “We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in the slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased.” Faith that leaps into a relationship with Jesus returns the rebellious wondering sinner into a disciple that yearns for the things of God.

Author Bio

Jason Thomas serves with International Mission Board (IMB) as African American Church Mobilization Strategist in Virginia. Previously, he served as the Ministry Director for college students with Louisiana Baptists. Jason has been married to his wife, Gaynel for 13 years and holds a Master of Divinity from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

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