

Peter: Fisherman to Follower
DISCIPLESHIP 101
Wednesday, October 14
Reading: Luke 5:1-31

Luke 5:8 When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus' knees and said, "Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!" **9** For he and all his companions were astonished at the catch of fish they had taken, **10** and so were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, Simon's partners. Then Jesus said to Simon, "Don't be afraid; from now on you will fish for people." **11** So they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed Him.

Jesus' call to become "fishers of men" was not the first time Peter had met Jesus. He had already believed in Jesus after Andrew brought him to the Lord (see John 1:40-42). Now Jesus was calling him to a lifetime of service.

Peter had spent all night fishing and caught nothing. Now as he washed his nets, Peter listened to Jesus teach from the bow of his fishing boat. Afterward, Jesus told him to go back out for a catch. By all fishing practices, this would be a worthless effort. Fish went deeper in the lake during the day and besides: "What would a carpenter rabbi know about fishing?" But from his brief encounter with Jesus, Peter had realized that obeying Jesus was important.

Putting in their nets, the fishermen experienced a miraculous catch of fish that almost broke their nets and sank their boats. Peter now realized his sinfulness before Christ. He fell on his knees and declared his unworthiness. Jesus responded by telling him, "Don't be afraid; from now on you will fish for people." Answering Jesus' call, Peter and the others left their boats, their nets, and the enormous number of fish they had just caught and followed Jesus.

LESSON ONE: Peter and the others probably had no idea exactly what being a "fisher of men" was all about! But they had faith to follow Jesus and learn what He wanted them to do. Being a fisher of men is a process that Jesus builds in our lives if we trust Him and obey His call to follow. Are you learning to be a fisher of men? Are there things you may need to leave behind in order to serve Him better? Old habits? Old sins? Activities that hurt your testimony? Worthless things that take up time and energy that could be used to serve Him?

LESSON TWO: A disciple is someone who is learning to be like the one he or she is following. Peter was constantly learning what it meant to be a disciple of Jesus. He learned that it involved reaching out to the most "unclean" people in society with the compassion of Christ (5:12-15). He saw that prayer was an important part of being like Jesus (5:16). Being a disciple would mean facing the opposition of the self-righteous people who believed Jesus' actions were wrong (5:17-26: by the way, this healing of the paralyzed man probably happened in Peter's home in Capernaum). He learned that even the worst of sinners (tax collectors, etc.) could be changed by Jesus' power and become disciples (5:27-31). What lessons has God taught you about what it means to be His disciple? Are you actively striving to become more like Jesus? In your actions? In your attitudes? In your thought life?