

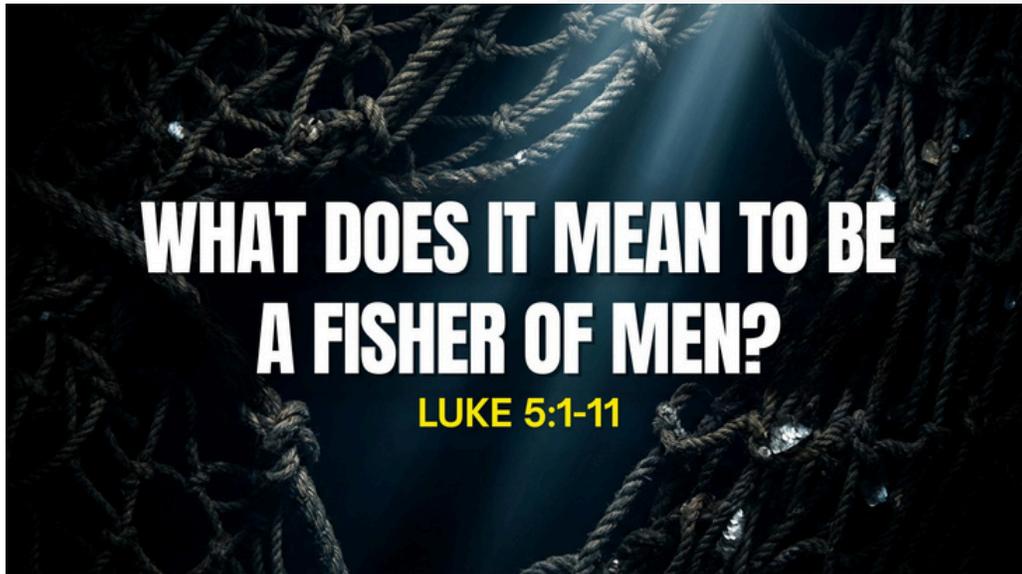
# CCLEB SERMON

## NOTES

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 22, 2026  
LUKE 5:1-11

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### WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A FISHER OF MEN?



How many of you enjoy fishing? I have to confess; I'm a very bad fisherman. Not because I don't like fishing, but because I don't have much patience. The last time I went fishing, the only thing I caught... was frustration.

But today we're going to look at a group of men who were professional fishermen men who knew the sea, the nets, and the long nights of work and yet Jesus called them to something far greater.

They went from fishing for fish... to fishing for people.

To understand this moment, we need to step back briefly into **Luke chapter 4**. Jesus was in Capernaum. He wasn't just teaching; He was teaching with authority. He was healing the sick. He was casting out demons. And the people were absolutely amazed.

#### **Luke 4:31-32**

Jesus' teaching and His authority had a real impact on people, and this caused a great crowd to follow Him. This was definitely part of God's master plan.

After this, Jesus went to the house of Simon, many of us know him as Peter.

This is very interesting, because Jesus was not just moving randomly from place to place. There was a purpose behind His steps. He goes from the synagogue... to the home of a fisherman.

#### **Luke 4:38**

Jesus healed her Simon's mother-in-law. And the next morning, He prepared to continue His journey. But something very interesting happens, the crowds were already looking for Him.

People did not want Him to leave.

They wanted Him to stay. But in that moment, the Lord Jesus reveals something very important about His mission in **verses 42 and 43**.

So, Jesus clearly tells the crowds that He was sent to preach the Good News of God's kingdom.

Fame was not going to stop Him. Nothing was going to distract Him. There was a great mission to accomplish.

And this is a powerful reminder for us today, because we live surrounded by distractions. Sometimes a distraction is not even something bad it can be something good, but it slowly takes up our time, our attention, and our energy, and keeps us from moving forward in the mission God has given us.

Jesus remained completely focused on His purpose.

So now, in today's passage, we are going to see how Jesus calls His first disciples a very important step in the fulfillment of that mission.

### **Luke 5:1-3**

The Lord Jesus was by the Lake of Gennesaret, also known as the Sea of Galilee or the Sea of Tiberias. And while He was preaching, the crowds gathered to hear God's Word.

This is truly remarkable. Remember, in the previous chapter they had already seen miracles. They had witnessed His power. Yet here they are again, drawn not just by what He could do, but by what He would say.

And Luke highlights something very important: the Word was vital to Jesus' ministry.

Power attracts attention, but the Word transforms hearts.

So, Jesus looked for a place that would serve as a platform. He took a boat a simple work tool and turned it into a pulpit to preach the Word. There was a purpose in this.

Now, this boat was not a ship like we imagine today. These were small fishing boats, like the one discovered in 1986 in the Sea of Galilee.



But this boat was not there by accident. It had a purpose. And it had an owner named Simon.

The same Simon whose mother-in-law had been healed by Jesus in the previous chapter. Simon had already seen the power of God at work in his own home.

This man was there with a purpose.

What seemed like an ordinary morning was actually part of God's plan. Simon did not realize it yet, but God was already working in his life.

God had a plan for him, a plan much bigger than he could ever imagine.

This becomes clear in **verses 4 and 5**.

After teaching, Jesus now turns to Simon: "Now go to the deeper waters and cast your nets to fish."

From a human perspective, this command didn't make sense.

The best time to fish was at night. Peter was a professional fisherman. Jesus was a carpenter. And after working all night, they had caught nothing.

Yet despite all of this, Simon responded by saying, 'Master.'



Luke uses the Greek word epistates, which means commander, leader, or chief. In other words, Simon was acknowledging Jesus' authority.

Think about this. Simon is exhausted. He is the expert. He knows this is not the ideal moment.

And still, he recognizes Jesus' leadership.

So, this brings us to an important question: Do you recognize Jesus only as a teacher who speaks truth, or as the Lord who directs your life?

Simon obeyed, even when it did not naturally make sense.

And this is the principle: if God commands you to do it, do it.

Because where human effort fails, obedience to His Word opens the door for God's power.

But at Your word, I will cast the nets.

And here is the result. **Verses 6 through 9** show us what happened next. The nets were filled.

Where human experience failed, where human effort accomplished nothing, God showed His power. When God directs, the results are different.

The catch was so overwhelming that Simon could not ignore what had just happened. Jesus had done what no amount of skill or effort could produce.

But Simon Peter's response is something we cannot overlook.

Many in his position would have focused on the blessing. They would have celebrated the profit, calculated the value of the fish, or thought about how their business had just changed.

But Peter does none of that.

He does not celebrate the abundance. He does not speak about success.

Instead, he falls to his knees and says, 'Lord, please go away from me. I am a sinful man.'

Simon's mind was no longer on the fish. He was now seeing who Jesus really was. And when he saw Jesus clearly, he saw himself clearly.

He did not compare himself to other fishermen. He stood before the Lord and recognized his true condition.

'I am a sinful man.'

His request for Jesus to leave is not rejection – it is awareness. It is the natural response of someone who suddenly understands they are standing before holiness.

But here is the beautiful part.

Even when Simon feels unworthy, Jesus does not leave. He does not rebuke him. He does not humiliate him.

Instead, He says, 'Do not be afraid.'

Peter thought his sin disqualified him. Jesus shows him that the recognition of his sin was actually the beginning of transformation.

And the same is true for us.

Transformation begins when we stop defending ourselves and humbly recognize our need for the Lord.

This reminds me of **Psalm 51** where David said: **Psalm 51:17**

But this was not just Simon's experience. James and John were there too. **Luke 5:10-11**

The text tells us that James and John were also amazed.

This was not a private moment. Everyone there witnessed the miracle. They all understood they were not standing before an ordinary teacher.

When Jesus says, 'From now on, you will fish for people,' He uses language Peter understood perfectly – but with an entirely new meaning.

In normal fishing, fish are caught to die. In God's Kingdom, it is the opposite. Evangelism is not about taking life, but about rescuing life. People are brought from spiritual death into true life.

This completely changes the perspective.

Peter would go from working with nets connected to death to participating in a work that produces eternal life.

And notice something beautiful here Jesus did not cancel Peter's experience as a fisherman. He redeemed it. He took what Peter already knew and gave it eternal purpose.



The patience, the perseverance, the discipline, the teamwork all of it now served a greater mission.

Then we read something truly challenging: 'They left everything and followed Jesus.'

This was not a small decision. They had just experienced the greatest catch of their lives. From a human perspective, this was the moment to grow the business, not walk away from it.

Yet the text says, 'They left everything.'

Just minutes earlier, Peter had said, 'Go away from me.' He felt unworthy.

Now he is following Jesus.

This is what conversion looks like. The one who once wanted distance now desires closeness.

Conversion means we stop running from God.

Since **Genesis 3**, humanity has been running, hiding, avoiding His presence. But when the heart is transformed, fear turns into surrender.

And that is exactly what happened to Simon.

He stopped running. He became a follower of Jesus.

Application: From Spectators to Followers. Jesus has many fans, but few real followers.



I'm not here to judge, but there is definitely a difference.

Spectators see the miracles and think, "Wow, that's incredible. Look at His power." They are impressed. They feel something in the moment. But nothing truly changes. They love to listen. They love to watch. Yet they are not willing to surrender anything.

Followers are different.

When followers encounter Jesus, they do not just admire His power – they respond to His authority. Like Peter, they see who Jesus truly is. And when that happens, they cannot remain the same.

Peter did not say, "What a blessing."  
He said, "I am a sinful man."

And that recognition led to surrender. He left everything and followed Jesus.

We still see this same pattern today. Many people love the message. They love God's Word. They love testimonies. They love hearing about what God can do.

But liking Jesus is not the same as following Jesus.

So here is the real question:

What is standing between you and Jesus right now? What are you holding onto that only He should have in your life?

Not everyone is called to leave a profession – and that is okay.

But everyone is called to leave something behind: pride, comfort, sin, distractions anything that competes with Christ.

Following Jesus means letting Him lead. It means saying yes to His direction, even when it costs you something.

Here is the simple difference:  
Spectators watch. Followers obey.

So today, the invitation is clear:

Will you remain on the shore, watching from a distance? Or are you ready to bring your boat to land, let go of what holds you back, and follow Him?

Because Jesus did not call us merely to admire Him.

He called us to join His mission. Will you remain part of the crowd, or will you become part of the mission? Because Jesus never called us to stay in the crowd.

He didn't call us just to listen, just to watch, or just to be amazed.  
He called us to follow Him and to help others follow Him too.

That is why, before ascending to heaven, Jesus gave this command to His followers:  
**Matthew 28:19-20**

This is the mission.  
From fishermen... to fishers of people.  
From spectators... to followers.  
From the crowd... to disciples who make disciples.

The question is no longer what Jesus is calling us to do, the question is how we will respond.