

THE CALL TO FOLLOW JESUS
(Mat 4:18-22) 7/22/18
Grace Bible Church, Gillette, Wyoming
Pastor Daryl Hilbert

I. THREE CALLS TO THE DISCIPLES

A. A Call to Faith - Joh 1:35-51 cf. Joh 2:11

1. *By comparing the gospel accounts we discover that there were at least five different phases of Jesus' calling of the twelve. Each gospel writer emphasized those phases which best suited his particular purpose.*
2. *As would be expected, the first call was to salvation, to faith in the Messiah (see John 1:35–51; 2:11). (MacArthur)*

B. A Call to Witness - Mat 4:18-22

1. *The calling that Matthew mentions here was the second calling, the calling to witness. It was a general calling to be a witness to men concerning the Messiah.*
2. *After neither the first nor the second call did the disciples permanently leave their occupations (ibid.).*

C. A Call to Ministry - Luk 5:4-11

1. *At the time of the third call (Luke 5:1–11), Peter, James, and John were again back fishing.*
2. *Jesus repeated the call to be fishers of men, and the disciples then realized the call was permanent and "they left everything and followed Him" (ibid.)*

II. A CALL TO WITNESS - Mat 4:18-22

A. Jesus' Travels

1. Jesus was Baptized in the Jordan River (Mat 3:13)
 - a. Mat 3:13 tells us that Jesus came from the Galilee region.
 - b. He most likely was coming from Nazareth, His hometown.
2. Jesus was Led into the Wilderness (Mat 4:1)
 - a. After being baptized, Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness (Judean) to be tempted by the Devil.
 - b. The traditional location for the Lord's temptation is the Monastery of Temptation, visible from Jericho looking north. It is more likely that it was a more secluded spot in the Judean wilderness.
3. Jesus traveled to Nazareth, then Capernaum (Mat 4:13)
 - a. After Jesus' baptism, He was inaugurated into His ministry. But when He came to His hometown of Nazareth, they rejected His claims as Messiah (Luk 4:28-30).
 - b. Leaving Nazareth, Jesus settled in Capernaum, which essentially became His ministry headquarters.
 - c. It is located on the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee. Jesus had walked well over 85 miles from the Jordan River to Capernaum.

B. Sea of Galilee

1. The Sea of Galilee was also called "the sea of Tiberias" (Joh 6:1), "the lake of Gennesaret" (Lk 5:1); "the sea" (Joh 6:16.), and "the lake" (Luk 5:1). Luke, a traveler, called it a "Lake."
2. The Sea of Galilee is fed by the Jordan River springs from Mt. Hermon and is approximately 700 feet below sea level, making it the lowest fresh water lake on earth.
3. It is approximately 13 miles long, 8 miles wide, and approximately 141 feet deep (deepest part).
4. The surrounding landscape is both fertile and beautiful. The sea is full of vegetation (algae).
5. There are eighteen natural species of fish in the Sea of Galilee, St. Peter's fish (Talapia) perhaps being the most famous.
6. The Sea of Galilee is mentioned in Num 34:11 (Sea of Chinnereth [Gennesaret]); Jesus called His disciples there (Mat 4:18); He calmed the sea (Mat 8:26); Jesus cast out demons who went into swine and drowned (Mar 5:13); He walked on water (Joh 6:19); Jesus gave His disciples two large catches of fish there (Luk 5:4-6; Joh 21:6); He appeared to His disciples there after His resurrection (Joh 21:1).

C. Peter and Andrew

1. Amidst many blunders, it was Peter who made the great statement that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God (Mat 16:16-18).

2. Jesus had chosen Peter warts and all, but Peter (*petros - large rock, i.e. leader in the church, but not the first Pope*) would become a leading apostle and pillar in the church (Gal 2:9). In addition, he wrote two epistles and most likely advised Mark in the writing of his gospel.
3. There is very little written about Andrew in Scripture other than he was Peter's brother. He does have the distinction of being called the Protoklêtos, that is the "first called" (Joh 1:40). Church fathers and historians claim that he preached in Scythia, Thrace, and possibly Russia. He died a martyr's death on a cross. More recent tradition suggests that he died on an "X-shaped cross," hence the description "Saint Andrew's cross."

D. Casting Nets

1. There were three methods of fishing. *In that day, three methods of fishing were used. One was by hook and line, the second was by a throw net cast from the shallow water along the shore, and the third was by a large dragnet strung between two or more boats in the deep water.* (MacArthur).
2. Peter and Andrew were **casting** (*ballō - to throw*) a net that was about nine feet in diameter. The Greek word for "**net**" is *amphiblêstron* and is a technical fishing term for casting a net. The technique is as technical as the Greek word for casting a net.
3. Peter and Andrew could cast with the proper technique because the Scripture called them **fishermen**, those who fished for a living and were dependent on their skill to catch fish.

E. Follow Me

1. This could be called Jesus' second call to the disciples to, "follow Him." Literally Jesus said, "Come" (*adv. deute*) "after" (*opisō - a verb of motion, one that is behind and follows*) "Me." Or "your place is following after Me!"
2. He was inviting the disciples to come after Him
 - a. to learn from Him as their Teacher.
 - b. to emulate Him as their Model.
 - c. and to obey Him as their Lord.

F. Fishers of Men

1. They would learn a new trade, namely, the trade of fishing for men.
2. First, Jesus was the Master of the highest form of thought-provoking wordplay.
 - a. It was wordplay that would make the solemnest of disciples crack a smile.
 - b. It was wordplay that would make the most intelligent of disciples appreciate Jesus' intellect.
 - c. It was wordplay that would make the most literary of disciples observe His brilliant use of language. Fishermen... would indeed become fishers of men.
3. Secondly, it was the perfect metaphor.
 - a. It took the skill of the disciples and applied it to the kingdom of heaven.
 - b. It took the occupation of the disciples and applied it to the ministry.
 - c. It took the passion of the disciples and applied it to sinful man.
 - d. It took the temporal goal of the disciples and applied it to the Savior's eternal goal.
4. Perhaps Jesus was also making a play on Jeremiah's words in Jer 16:16. In that context, The Lord was sending the Babylonians, like fishermen and hunters, to hunt down and catch Judah and take them into exile. Here our Lord was sending fishermen to go after men and bring them into the kingdom.

G. Response of the Disciples (Mat 4:20-22)

1. The response of Peter and Andrew was immediate. They immediately left their nets and followed Jesus. They left their occupation temporarily to pursue Christ further in their faith.
2. The same was true for two other brothers, James and John when Jesus called them. They immediately left their boat and their father.

III. OBSERVATIONS AND APLICATIONS

A. Methods of a Fisherman

1. Know where the fish are located (i.e. beyond the church walls)
2. Know the right kind of lure (i.e. segue).
3. Know the right presentation (i.e. the true biblical gospel).
4. Know how to bring them in (i.e. implore them to come to Christ).
5. Keep on fishing and trust the Lord to make them hungry for the gospel.

B. Which of these three is He calling to you

1. To follow Hm and come to faith in Him?
2. To follow Him and catch men through evangelism?
3. To follow Him in ministry? (Will you respond to Him?)