

January 31, 2021

SUBJECT: REACHING THE WORLD FOR JESUS

TEXT: LUKE 5:1-11

Introduction:

1. This passage in Luke is a descriptive picture of how Jesus goes about calling men to help Him in the enormous task of reaching the world.
2. The scene of this experience took place on Lake Gennesaret, which was the same as the Sea of Galilee.
3. This is the third time Jesus is calling His disciples to reach the world with the good news of salvation and new life in Christ.
4. The promises of God are of no value to us until, through obedience, we come to understand the nature of God.
5. We may read some things in the Bible every day for a year and they may mean nothing to us. Then, because we have been obedient to God in some small detail, we suddenly see what God means and His nature is instantly opened up to us.
6. So it was with the disciples. They needed to reach the world and Jesus would show them, and us, how to accomplish that great task.

I. THE FIRST STEP IN REACHING THE WORLD FOR JESUS IS THAT ONE MUST HAVE A VISION OF PEOPLE WHO NEED THE WORD OF GOD. **v. 1**

- A. According to the Wycliffe Bible Society, of the 189 countries of the world, only 41 have a Bible translated into their own language. That's just 21%.
- B. The people were actually "pressing" in upon Jesus. They gathered and crowded around Him so they could hear the Word of God.
- C. They had a craving, a hunger and thirst after righteousness. Note two things:
 1. Jesus met the hunger and thirst of people. **Matthew 5:6** *Blessed are those do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.*
 2. Jesus saw that He could never meet the needs of all the people, not by Himself. He needed help. **Luke 10:2** *Then He said to them, "The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few; therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.*

II. THE SECOND STEP IN REACHING THE WORLD FOR JESUS IS THAT ONE MUST SEIZE THE AVAILABLE RESOURCES. **vv. 2-3**

- A. Jesus had to find some way to handle the throng of people both then and later. The crowds were so large and their needs so many that He just could not handle their disorder.
- B. Standing there and being confronted with the present problem, He scanned the horizon for some way to handle the matter.
- C. As He looked around, He saw an opportunity and laid His plans. He saw a boat and a fisherman in the boat, and He needed both. The boat could be used as a pulpit, and the man could become a disciple. He asked the man to let Him use the boat as a pulpit and to steer the boat out from land a short distance.
- D. Jesus seized and used the resources available. He had the vision of people needing the Word of God, but He needed a pulpit and others to help, so He scanned the

horizon and found both. **John 4:35** *Do you not say, 'There are still four months and then comes the harvest'? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest!*

III. THE THIRD STEP IN REACHING THE WORLD FOR JESUS IS FOR EXCUSES TO BE REMOVED. **vv. 4-5**

- A. As soon as Jesus finished His preaching, He decided to win Peter's loyalty and discipleship.
- B. First, He had to humble Peter. He had to show Peter that He, the Messiah, could look after and take care of him. He told Peter to put out to sea and fish. Peter objected because he had fished all night and had caught nothing. However, he stopped right in the middle of his objection and obeyed Jesus.
- C. Peter was reluctant to obey Jesus. He objected to what Jesus asked. He was thoroughly exhausted, for he had "fished all night." He was disappointed, for he had caught nothing, and he had worked enough hours already. Despite needing to be home in bed, he had stayed and helped the Lord in His preaching by loaning his boat to Him.
- D. Peter caught himself in the middle of his objection and obeyed. What caused the switch, the change from reluctance to willing obedience? Probably two things.
 1. Peter was pretty well convinced that Jesus was who He claimed to be, the Messiah.
 2. Peter was drawn somewhat to follow Jesus. Therefore, when he began to object to Jesus' will, there was a prick of conscience, and he obeyed. He followed his heart...
 - a). not his mind, thinking there were no fish.
 - b). not his experience, having already tried and failed to catch fish.
 - c). not his body, being too tired and exhausted, just incapable of going on.
- E. Reluctance should always give in to obedience. We need the spirit that will try for God, no matter what the obstacles or how hopeless a situation may seem.

IV. THE FOURTH STEP IN REACHING THE WORLD FOR JESUS IS THAT THERE MUST BE A DEMONSTRATION OF GOD'S POWER. **vv. 6-7**

- A. Peter's obedience produced results; his obedience caught fish, and the catch was no ordinary catch.
- B. It was much more, so much more that there could be no question about Jesus.
- C. Jesus was behind the miracle; Jesus was demonstrating the power of God. What happened is a little humorous when we remember what Jesus was doing with Peter, and Peter's reluctance and objection, weariness and exhaustion. There was a sense in which the Lord was really laying it on Peter, really letting him have it. Peter thought he was tired, but he didn't know what exhaustion was yet. The Lord must have stood there smiling to Himself.
- D. Jesus was after Peter's loyalty, and He was going to get it even if He had to make Peter drop in his tracks. Imagine Peter's exhaustion and weariness, reluctance and objection, moaning and groaning; and then all of a sudden a catch is made, a catch so great that he was going to have to work for hours cleaning them.
- E. Jesus had His man! What else was Peter to do other than what followed? In all

the humor of the situation, our Lord's heart was bound to be full of rejoicing because this big hunk of a fisherman, man though he was, was like a little child before the Lord. He was broken in humility before the Lord, and the experience was but the first of many experiences of brokenness yet to come in Peter's life.

V. THE FIFTH STEP IN REACHING THE WORLD FOR JESUS IS THE STIRRING OF A DEEP CONFESSION. vv. 8-9

- A. Peter knew exactly what had happened. He had been reluctant and objected to the Lord's request, and he had not been too happy that the great catch had caused so much trouble.
- B. But he was a skilled fisherman, and he knew that the great catch was no ordinary catch; it was a miracle of the Lord, a miracle which the Lord was using to teach him that he was to obey without reluctance and objection.
- C. When Peter saw the boat beginning to sink, he raced over to Jesus, fell upon his knees, and in a sense said, "Lord, I've had enough. Let me alone. I'll do anything."
- D. His confession was threefold.
 1. He confessed his sin of disobedience and unbelief: of being reluctant to obey the Lord, of questioning the Lord's will and knowledge and power.
 2. He confessed Jesus to be the Lord. Note that Peter had previously called Jesus "Master," which is a word used to address anyone in authority. But Peter had learned better. He now called Jesus "Lord." Jesus is the Lord who is holy and convicting, who must be obeyed and followed.
 3. He confessed a fear, a reverence, an awe for the Lord. Cf. John 20:28 *And Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!"*

VI. THE SIXTH STEP IN REACHING THE WORLD FOR JESUS IS CHALLENGING MEN TO BE DISCIPLES. v. 10

- A. The words "fear not" indicate that Peter was actually scared and frightened.
- B. Jesus was calming him, telling him to trust and stop fearing. He, the Lord, was in charge and looking after everything.
- C. The call to Peter was to "catch men." The word "catch" means to catch alive or to catch for life. The idea is that Peter was no longer to catch fish for death, but to catch men for life. Matthew 4:19 *Then He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men".*

VII. THE FINAL STEP IN REACHING THE WORLD FOR JESUS IS MAKING THE DECISION TO FORSAKE ALL. v. 11

- A. Notice first that the men responded immediately.
- B. Secondly, they left all - their businesses, their professions - for the sake of Jesus.
- C. Third, they followed Jesus. He was the Lord who had spoken, and they were to be His disciples who obeyed and followed. Luke 14:26 *If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple.; 33 So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple.; John 12:26 If anyone serves Me, let him*

follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor.

Conclusion:

1. These are the steps for reaching the world for Jesus. It can be accomplished by men, women, boys and girls, deciding once for all to make Jesus Lord and Master of their lives.
2. You hold in your power the opportunity to be used of Jesus for the greatest work there is. There's not much glory in it. It is difficult work. But the truth of the matter is that you can make a difference in someone's life for all eternity! **Psalm 126:5-6** ***Those who sow in tears shall reap in joy. He who continually goes forth weeping, bearing seed for sowing, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.***