

“Respect, Reverence, and Response Toward Christ”

Luke 5:1-11

Read Luke 5:1-3... The phrase at the beginning of **verse 1**, “Now it happened,” is a means of indicating that a period of time has passed since the events occurring in Capernaum, as recorded in the previous chapter, i.e., preaching, teaching, healing, and casting out demons.

Jesus “was standing by the lake of Gennesaret” [meaning, *garden of the prince*, named for the fertile plain on the NW side of the lake]. It was more commonly known as the Sea of Galilee, although it had several names; in fact, John the apostle (**John 6:1; 21:1**) calls it Sea of Galilee and Sea of Tiberias, being named for the city of Tiberias (on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee) that was founded by Herod Antipas and named after Emperor Tiberias (cf. **Luke 3:1**). Note: The Sea of Galilee is actually a freshwater lake that is formed by the Jordan River from the north, the headwaters of which begin near Mount Hermon [9200’], and eventually run south into the Dead Sea, after passing through the Sea of Galilee [13 miles wide, 7.5 miles long, and at 700’ below sea level, it is the world’s lowest freshwater lake]. It was an excellent source for fishing, and still is, with over 30 species of fish.

It is no wonder that the crowds continue to follow Jesus throughout Galilee, for the kingdom of God has come down to earth in the person of Jesus Christ. There were around three million people living in the region of Galilee at the time of Christ, according to the Jewish historian Josephus.

And so, the crowd in today’s passage is pressing in to get closer to Jesus, to hear His marvelous words, “the word of God.” When Jesus spoke, it was as if God was speaking, and in fact, God was speaking in and through His Son.

Jesus, in fulfillment of **Isaiah 61:1-2** [cf **Luke 4:18-19**], had brought the kingdom of God to earth and was proclaiming the good news of the gospel, i.e., those spiritually captive to sin were released, those spiritually blind were given sight, those spiritually poor were made rich, and those spiritually oppressed were comforted and elevated.

John 5:24, “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.”

John 7:16, “My teaching is not Mine, but His who sent Me.”

John 8:31-32, “If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.”

“Respect, Reverence, and Response Toward Christ”

Luke 5:1-11

Notice again in **Luke 5:2**, as the people are pressing in around Jesus, He sees two fishing boats near the waters edge. There are other similar occurrences where, because of a growing crowd, Jesus uses a boat to separate Himself from them.

Mark 3:9-10, “ And He told His disciples that a boat should stand ready for Him because of the crowd, so that they would not crowd Him; for He had healed many, with the result that all those who had afflictions pressed around Him in order to touch Him,” (**Mark 4:1**), “He began to teach again by the sea. And such a very large crowd gathered to Him that He got into a boat in the sea and sat down; and the whole crowd was by the sea on the land.”

In **Luke 5:3**, we are told that the boat belonged to Simon, used in his fishing business. These fishing boats common to the Sea of Galilee were large enough to hold Jesus and the Twelve, as we are told in several passages (cf. **Matthew 8:23-124; 14:22-33; Mark 6:31-32; 8:10**).

So, Jesus get’s into Simon’s boat and asks him to put off shore a bit to get away from the crowd. This would also allow the people to see Him better, and it is believed that the acoustics would have been much better for the crowd to hear Him, as His voice would bounce off the flat surface of the water.

Jesus now sits down and begins to teach the people the meaning of the things He has been preaching. As I mentioned, when we studied **Luke 4:20**, rabbis normally stood to read the Scripture, then they would sit down to teach or explain its meaning.

Read Luke 5:4-7... Jesus finishes teaching, then tells Simon to take the boat into deeper water and let down the nets.

There were several methods of fishing used on the lake.

1. Line, hook, and bait were used to catch one fish at a time.
2. A circular one-man net carried over the shoulder, thrown over a school of fish or a large fish, weights helped the net sink around the fish; a cord attached to the center of the net was pulled causing the net to close around the fish, like a sack.
3. A large net (dragnet) was used to cover a large area of water from bottom to surface, with floats on the top and weights on the bottom allowing the net to be slowly pulled toward the boat and then into the boat or dragged back to the shore, where the catch could be sorted.

Notice Simon’s response to the Lord in **verse 5**, “*Master [Lit. commander or chief; this is a title of respect for one in authority, not a recognition of Christ’s deity], we worked hard all night and caught nothing, but I will do as You say and let down the nets.*”

“Respect, Reverence, and Response Toward Christ”

Luke 5:1-11

It would appear that, as soon as they got the nets set in the water, they began to fill with fish, “a great quantity of fish,” and this was happening in the middle of the day, the worst time to try and catch fish.

This was a most amazing catch, and so Simon calls to John and James to bring their boat over alongside his so that the fish can be off loaded into two boats, notice it says (**verse 7**), “they filled both of the boats, so that they began to sink.” This is no doubt, the largest catch ever to happen on the lake, and the nets were starting to come apart under the great quantity of fish.

This is interesting, at the very beginning of the relationship between Jesus and His first four disciples (Andrew, Simon, James, John), all of whom were fisherman, Jesus gives a display of His omnipotence and omniscience; He is the Creator of all things, including fish, and He knows exactly where the fish are in the lake.

In one of the post-resurrection appearances of Jesus, at the Sea of Galilees, Jesus again allows Peter and six other fisherman disciples to experience a display of His omnipotence and omniscience (see **John 21:3-11**).

Read Luke 5:8-10a... Simon falls down at Jesus’ feet, saying, “Go away from me Lord, for I am a sinful man!” Peter realizes that nothing like this miraculous catch of fish could happen by itself; this was not a coincidence; only God could do such a thing, which meant that Peter was in the presence of God, Immanuel [God with us].

This was overwhelming to Peter, and no doubt to James and John as well (cf. **verse 10**) all that had happened in the last two days: the marvelous teaching of Jesus at the synagogue on the Sabbath, along with casting a demon out of the man; then there were all the people being healed by Jesus, one of whom was Simon’s mother-in-law; and now Jesus gives Simon, Andrew, James and John, the largest catch of fish anyone had ever seen, and this takes place in broad daylight, when the common practice on the Sea of Galilee was to fish at night.

Simon is feeling unworthy to be in the presence of God the Son, for he is very aware of his own sinfulness, like the repentant tax collector in **Luke 18:10-13**, “Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The pharisee stood and was praying this to himself: ‘God, I thank you the I am not like other people: swindlers, unjust, adulterers, for even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I pay tithes of all I get. But the tax collector, standing some distance away, was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven, but was beating his breast saying, “God be merciful to me, the sinner!”

“Respect, Reverence, and Response Toward Christ”

Luke 5:1-11

Read Luke 5:10b-11... God in Christ is both holy and righteous, and therefore He must judge sin, and we are all sinners (**Romans 3:23**), “for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”

None of us are good, let alone righteous (**Romans 3:10-12**), “There is none righteous, not even one; there is none who understands, there is none who seeks for God; all have turned aside, together they have become useless; there is none who does good, there is not even one.”

God loves us so much, even though we deserve death (**Romans 6:23a**), “For the wages of sin is death.” But God grants us forgiveness for sin and eternal life (**Romans 6:23b**), “For the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Only Jesus can set us free from sin’s penalty, because He alone was able to take upon Himself our punishment for sin (**Romans 5:8**), “God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”

God’s Son offered Himself as full payment for all sins, for all people, for all time (**Hebrews 10:12, 14, 16-18**), “He [Jesus], having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God,” “For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.” “This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the Lord: ‘I will put My laws upon their heart, and on their mind I will write them,’ He then says, ‘And their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.’ Now where there is forgiveness of these things, there is no longer *any* offering for sin,” (**Romans 8:1**), “Therefore there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.”

Jesus came to proclaim the good news of salvation, i.e., the forgiveness for sins committed on this earth and the hope of eternal life in heaven with God. Jesus came to set us free from sin’s curse and condemnation, to provide all we need for this life and the life to come (**2Peter 1:2-4**), “Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of *the* divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.”

When Simon realized that he, a sinful man, was in the very presence of the Holy and Righteous God of Creation (**Revelation 1:8**), “The Alpha and the Omega [the First and the Last] who is, and who was, and who will be, the Almighty,”

“Respect, Reverence, and Response Toward Christ”

Luke 5:1-11

Simon was afraid. But Jesus said to him, “Do not fear, from now on you will be catching men.” Simon Peter, James, and John spent their lives catching fish that would ultimately die; but since meeting Christ, and believing in Him, they would spend the rest of their lives fishing for the souls of men, women and children of age, so that they might live forever with God.”

Look again at **Luke 5:11**, it says they gave up everything to follow Christ. Gave up everything? Really? Like the consequences of sin’s curse? Eternal condemnation in the Lake of Fire and Brimstone, where there will be darkness and loneliness, pain and weeping, torment, and the gnashing of teeth forever and ever.

So, to follow Christ, you have to give all of that up in order to receive forgiveness for all your sins and eternal life, in order to live with God in a new and perfect universe, where there will be new heavens and a new earth.

Revelation 21:1-5, “Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer *any* sea. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, ‘Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them, and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be *any* death; there will no longer be *any* mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.’ And He who sits on the throne said, ‘Behold, I am making all things new.’ And He said, ‘Write, for these words are faithful and true.’”

Pastor Mike