

# THE GC AND ME

## STUDY SERIES

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[LEADER'S GUIDE]

## Never the Same

Lesson Two, Study Text: **Luke 5:1-11**

**Leader's notes:** Words or phrases in **bold underlined red** in this guide are blank in participant handouts; the **thin blue text** assists the leader in guiding participants through the study. If group members are unfamiliar with the Bible, you may want to put together a document that includes the full text of the Scripture passages used in this study. Distribute this along with the handout. Be sure to also read the verses before doing the study; think through the stories to be covered, and make mental notes about ideas or themes that pop out at you and might encourage further group discussion.



### ACCOMPLISHING CHRIST'S GREAT COMMISSION IS LIFE ALTERING.

Your goal is for all group members to walk away from this study with this sentence, this study's theme, firmly implanted in their minds.

#### Opening

Have someone in the group read this portion of the study aloud, as well as other sections. The more you can get your group to participate, the better! Remember to ask for volunteers, since some in the group may be uncomfortable reading aloud.

Have you ever been the victim of an airport layover? If so, you know time seems to crawl by as you watch people scurry to make their next connection.

What would you do if your layover lasted 11 years? That's how long it lasted for one man, Merhan Nasser, in a Paris airport. From 1988 to 1999 Merhan lived in Terminal 1, stuck between a country that did not claim him and a country that would not accept him. You would expect that after finally receiving a French residency permit, Merhan would have "flown" out of that airport. But that was not the case. He refused to leave. He was so affected by his airport experience that he was afraid to make a change. While we may not be able to relate to an 11-year layover, all of us have had experiences, good and bad, which have changed our lives.

Here is a creative twist to consider. Play a carefully selected clip from *The Terminal*, the movie based on this incident.

#### Take a minute and think of one experience that has significantly changed your life.

Since the answer to this question may be deeply personal, think through a significant moment in your life to share with the group to break the ice and help set the tone. It doesn't need to be a painful experience. For example, it could be the story of your marriage or the birth of a child.

Today we want to look at a lesson from Jesus that changed Peter forever.



## Bible Study

Luke 5:1–11 (NIV)

“One day as Jesus was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret, with the people crowding around him and listening to the word of God, <sup>2</sup>he saw at the water’s edge two boats, left there by the fishermen, who were washing their nets. <sup>3</sup>He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little from shore. Then he sat down and taught the people from the boat. <sup>4</sup>When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, ‘Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch.’ <sup>5</sup>Simon answered, ‘Master, we’ve worked hard all night and haven’t caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets.’ <sup>6</sup>When they had done so, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break. <sup>7</sup>So they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them, and they came and filled both boats so full that they began to sink. <sup>8</sup>When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus’ knees and said, ‘Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!’ <sup>9</sup>For he and all his companions were astonished at the catch of fish they had taken, <sup>10</sup>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 catch men.’ <sup>11</sup>So they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed him.”

## Background

Now we have to understand a few things that are going on here. First, Jesus is a carpenter by trade, not a fisherman. Second, Peter had been fishing at night, requiring a whole different set of nets, ones we’re not told he had with him in the boat. So Peter was faced with a choice: listen to this carpenter-turned-teacher giving fishing advice, or ignore Him and head home to catch some well-deserved sleep?



Peter’s response to Jesus revealed his willingness to trust the carpenter-turned-fisherman at His word. The result of Peter’s decision was life altering. That morning on the lake Jesus proved He was the Son of God. This affected the fishermen profoundly.

## Discovery

***The Big Picture: It’s not really about the fish!***

1. Jesus used an everyday situation to make followers out of fishermen.

*The mission of Jesus is to communicate to everyday people worldwide the good news of salvation. Jesus called these fishermen to join Him in this endeavor. He didn’t give a sermon or even hand them a track; instead He used an illustration right from their everyday lives. Jesus used a big catch of fish to teach these men a lesson; it was so powerful that they followed Him—immediately. This profound lesson also set the stage for the disciples to understand Jesus’ last command before ascending into heaven, the transfer of His mission to them, and us, what we refer to today as the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18–20).*

Jesus set an example for His disciples, but He also set an example for all who would follow after Him: through our everyday lives and circumstances, we can fulfill the Great Commission.

**Whom did God use to reach you? Were they that different from you?**



It's sometimes easy to believe that only "specialists" can reach the lost, or that only those with the "gift" of evangelism are responsible to complete the Great Commission. Yet Jesus rarely relied on the religious leaders of the day to complete His mission; He relied upon everyday disciples to do so—just as He does today. Take a moment to have every individual share one skill, profession, or hobby he/she can use as a platform to reach the lost.

2. Jesus prepares the hearts of the lost before He prepares His followers.

Jesus knew exactly where Peter needed to cast his nets. This is true also when it comes to us reaching the lost; He knows exactly where the most responsive people to the gospel message are.

**Ask God where He wants you to cast your net.**

The point here is to recall that Peter and his companions had spent all night fishing with no result. Yet when they followed Jesus' instructions, they had a miraculous catch of fish. Sometimes, in our good intentions, we can work very hard in the Name of Jesus without stopping to ask if this is what He would have us do. The key to effective work in the name of Jesus is to prayerfully seek out those whose hearts God has prepared.

3. Jesus uses those He reaches to affect His followers.

This great intake of fish had a profound effect on the fishermen; they were awestruck by Jesus. When He saves the lost, Jesus not only works in their lives but also in the lives of His disciples.

**Can you remember a time when you were personally affected by seeing a friend, relative, or even a perfect stranger come to know the Lord?**

Seeing God work in the life of another is often as affecting as watching the Lord work in your own life. To emphasize this point, have group members share examples from their lives.



**ACCOMPLISHING CHRIST'S GREAT COMMISSION IS LIFE ALTERING.**

*Fishers of Men 101*

**Read Matthew 9:37–38 and John 4:35**

1. When we take part in accomplishing the Great Commission, we can expect a great **response**.

**How much is one life worth? When Jesus stated that the harvest was full, He was speaking about lives. How many lives do you think make up a full harvest? In light of Matthew 18:14, how many lives won will it take for the Lord to consider it a great response to the gospel?**

God can and does reach large groups of people at one time. The idea here, though, is to help group participants understand that one lost person coming to Christ is a great harvest. Check out Luke 15: 3-7.

**Read Luke 14:27–30**

2. When we take part in accomplishing Christ's Great Commission we can expect a great **challenge**.

**What are some daily challenges you may face if you actively share the gospel with those around you? What are the challenges of supporting an individual missionary or the Great Commission calling with your time or money?**

It's important to remember that there will be times when involvement in accomplishing the Great Commission won't be easy. The challenges we face range from mild to severe, but if we're not willing to face the challenges, we will not experience change in our own lives either.

### Read Acts 1:8 and Luke 5:10

3. When we take part in accomplishing the Great Commission we can expect great **change**.

**According to Acts 1:8, what is one of the key ways Christ's followers are changed? How have you experienced change in your own life as a result of taking part in accomplishing Christ's Great Commission?**

Jesus equipped us for success when he sent the Holy Spirit to help and guide us. For Scripture passages that further explain how the Holy Spirit assists us, read John 14:16-21 and 16:5-11.

It seems like almost every fisherman has a "fish story" to tell. Each story is a little different of course, although most focus on "the big one that got away." Peter and his friends had a whopper to tell too, but their story had a very different ending. Instead of losing the biggest catch of their lives, they simply walked away from it, leaving everything on the beach to follow Jesus. The call of Jesus is so powerful, so appealing, that it causes those who want to follow Him to leave everything behind.

**How can we take part in completing Christ's Great Commission worldwide?**

### Action

#### *Be Informed*

How much do you know about the work Alliance missionaries are doing around the world? As a group, come up with a plan for how you will learn about their ongoing work in the least-reached places in our world.

This is an excellent time to help your group become more knowledgeable about Alliance missions. Tap your pastor or district missions director for resources; take time to find out who your district missionaries and their families are. Find out if your church has a partnership relationship with a particular region or missionary that the group can get to know better.

Lead your group in deciding how you will learn more about Alliance missions and stay informed. This can also be a great plug for your upcoming missions events!

#### *Take Action*

What are you doing to reach the lost in your own community? As this passage has shown us, if we are not reaching our neighbors, we are missing out on the life-change God wants us to experience.

What are you doing to partner with Alliance missionaries who are reaching the lost in places where the Name of Jesus has never been heard? As a group, prayerfully consider how God would have you take part in completing His mission across the globe.

This is a good time to really drive home the importance of personal action on behalf of reaching the lost for Christ. Ask your pastor for ideas about how to encourage your group to get involved in this life altering mission.