

THE GC AND ME

STUDY SERIES

By Steve Grusendorf; edited by OMM Creative Team, May 2009

Never the Same

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



ACCOMPLISHING CHRIST'S GREAT COMMISSION IS LIFE ALTERING.

Opening

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.

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

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, ²he saw at the water's edge two boats, left there by the fishermen, who were washing their nets. ³He 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. ⁴When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, 'Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch.' ⁵Simon answered, 'Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets.' ⁶When they had done so, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break. ⁷So 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. ⁸When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus' knees and said, 'Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!' ⁹For he and all his companions were

astonished at the catch of fish they had taken,¹⁰ 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.'¹¹ 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?

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.

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?



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 _____.

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?

Read Luke 14:27–30

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

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?

Read Acts 1:8 and Luke 5:10

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

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?

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.

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.