

Jesus Calls the First Disciples | 6/9/19

- Introduction
 - After Jesus was baptized and had been tempted in the wilderness, He began to call His disciples whom He chose for a divine purpose.
 - Jesus chose to use them to bring glory to God by teaching and preaching His Gospel unto the world.
 - They would be the ones who would pick up the torch after Jesus would ascend into heaven.
 - We are going to look at the events that led to Jesus calling the first of His many disciples.
- The purpose of Jesus's chosen disciples
 - As we read through the Gospels, we see that Jesus had several people who followed Him that were called disciples.
 - The exact number is not known, but there were many.
 - Anyone who followed Jesus then (and now) is called a disciple.
 - Disciple – The word disciple means "learner, pupil or student." It refers to one who studies under a teacher or master.
 - The Gospels also record for us several times where Jesus handpicked certain people, those whom He chose became his close companions, **but more importantly, they served a divine purpose for God.**
 - **Twelve of Jesus's chosen disciples became apostles.**
 - Apostle – The word apostle means "send or send out." An apostle is one who is "sent out" to preach the Gospel.
 - Original 12 – Matthew 10:1-4
 - Peter, Andrew, James (son of Zebedee), John, Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew, James (son of Alphaeus), Thaddaeus, Simon (the Zealot) and Judas Iscariot.
 - Paul was also an apostle but not one of the 12.
 - **These apostles were closer to Him than the others. He chose them specifically to preach the Gospel.**
 - Mark 3:14
 - "And he went up on the mountain **and called to him those whom he desired**, and they came to him. **And he appointed twelve (whom he also made apostles) so that they might be with him and he might send them out to preach.**"
 - John 15:16a
 - "You did not choose me, but **I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit** and that your fruit should abide,..."
 - **God chose and appointed them so that they would bear fruit that would remain for generations to come.**
 - **While this verse speaks specifically to His disciples, He has also called all Christians unto Him for a divine and holy purpose.**
 - Ephesians 1:4-5
 - "even as he chose us in him, before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will,"
 - **Just as God chose the apostles for a purpose, does God still do this today? Not to make new apostles, but does God actively call people to carry out His will?**

- Ephesians 3:4-5
 - “When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit.”
- **In fact, this was the primary method that was used by the early Christians to find which books of the Bible were canonical.**
 - Irenaeus (130-202) – Early church father and apologist
 - *“For the Lord of all gave the power of the Gospel to His apostles, through whom we have come to know the truth, that is, the teaching of the Son of God...”*
- When they were putting together all the various letters written by Paul and the Gospels for them to even consider them as Scripture, they looked to the human author.
- **The author must have either had direct contact with Jesus OR had been in contact with one of the apostles.**
 - James and Jude were brothers of Jesus
 - Mark was an associate of Peter, while Luke was an associate of Paul.
- **Jesus’s initial encounter with Peter and four other disciples | John 1:35-51**
 - This encounter took place in Judea by the Jordan river, before the calling at Galilee.
 - **The passage that we are most familiar with where Jesus called Andrew and Peter is the one recorded in the synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) at the sea of Galilee.**
 - This account begins at Luke 5:1, Mark 1:16, Matthew 4:18
 - This is where Peter was on the boat, and Jesus told them to throw the nets over, and they were told they would be “fishers of men.”
 - While this was not their first encounter, it is where they were called permanently to abandon their occupation and to be “fishers of men” to fulfill their calling.
 - However, this was not their first encounter with Jesus.
 - John records events that took place before the calling at the sea of Galilee. **This encounter took place in Judea by the Jordan river.**
 - **Everything recorded in the Gospel of John from 1:35 to the end of chapter 3 took place before this event.**
 - The Gospels line back up at chapter 4 (except for Mark it is in chapter 1:16)
 - **In John 1:35 Peter, Andrew, John (presumably), Philip and Nathanael encounter Jesus Christ, believe in who He is and follow Him for a time.**
 - They witness the miracle at the wedding in Cana in Galilee (he visited Galilee, left and returned later for the calling at the sea).
 - **But they return to their occupation and are called permanently at the sea of Galilee.**
 - Disciples of John the Baptist, become disciples of Jesus | John 1:35-42
 - **Read John 1:35-42**
 - John the Baptists proclaims Christ as the Lamb of God, and Andrew and John (presumably) began to follow Jesus.
 - **The unnamed disciple is commonly held to be John based on circumstantial evidence in Scripture.**
 - John the Baptist saw Jesus and proclaimed that He was the “Lamb of God,” and the disciples upon hearing this began following Jesus.

- Jesus turned and asked them what they were seeking, though already knowing their hearts invited them to follow him, and they would see.
- **Andrew and John (presumably) after staying with Jesus believe that He is the Messiah, and Andrew seeks out his brother Simon (Peter).**
 - After a time, Andrew seeks out his brother Simon and tells that they have "found the Messiah."
 - Evidently, what they saw and experienced in the presence of Jesus showed them who He was. That He was the one foretold in the Scriptures, the Messiah had finally come!
 - **Andrew fulfilled a great purpose. He brought Peter to Jesus.**
- Jesus changes Simon's name to Peter
 - Jesus already knowing His great purpose for Peter changes his name.
 - No longer is he Simon, but he is called Peter.
 - Cephas means "rock" in Aramaic, which is translated "Peter" in Greek.
 - Later Jesus referred to Peter as the rock.
 - Matthew 16:18
 - "And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."
- **Jesus will use us to reach others just as He used Andrew to reach Peter.**
 - We all have a purpose in life that Christ has called us to.
 - In many cases, He will use us to reach someone else, to lead them to Jesus.
 - Jesus called Andrew and used him to reach Peter.
 - Andrew told Peter "We have found the Messiah" and brought him to Jesus.
 - This method of using Christians to reach others is at the core of Christ's plan to spread the Gospel.
- **If you reflect upon Andrew and Peter, how important is it that we listen to the Holy Spirit to see who He has called us to reach out to?**
- Jesus calls Philip and Nathanael | John 1:43-51
 - **Read John 1:43-51**
 - Jesus found Philip and told him to "follow me."
 - The powerful call of Jesus upon Philip took hold, and he soon realized who Jesus was.
 - Philip went and found Nathanael and proclaimed that they had found the one that was spoken of by Moses and the prophets.
 - Philip knew that the Scriptures were being fulfilled.
 - Deuteronomy 18:18
 - "I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers. And I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I commanded him.:"
 - Micha 5:2
 - "But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days."
 - Nathanael at first didn't think that the Messiah could come from Nazareth
 - When Philip first came and told Nathanael, he doubted that anything good could come from Nazareth.

- People from Nazareth were not looked highly upon. Judeans looked down on Galileans and Galileans looked down on Nazarenes.
 - Nathanael, though after speaking briefly with Jesus, believed that he was the Son of God.
 - It didn't take long for Nathanael's heart to understand the truth of who Jesus was, that He is the Son of God.
 - Jesus revealed to Nathanael something that only he would know. This gave him direct evidence that there was something different about Jesus.
 - **Jesus continues to call those to Him, whom He has chosen to serve the Kingdom of God.**
- **Jesus calls His disciples to be fishers of men | Luke 5:1-11**
 - Before the calling at the sea of Galilee (Gennesaret), Peter and the disciples had not been called permanently to follow Jesus by abandoning everything. We see they had returned to their fishing trade. Now is the time they would be invested full time in the ministry.
 - **Read Luke 5:1-11**
 - Jesus uses Simon's (Peter) boat to teach to the crowds
 - The crowds have been following Jesus and listening to Him preach. Jesus chose to get into Peter's boat to use it as a platform to preach from. However, this was not His only reason for doing so.
 - Jesus then asks Peter to pull the boats out into the deep waters to let down their nets. | Luke 5:4-5
 - **Read Luke 5:4-5**
 - **Peter knew Jesus and called him "master."**
 - Knowing that Peter had already met Jesus, this provides clarity why he called Jesus "Master."
 - Jesus's reasoning for doing this was to perform a miracle.
 - **Peter and the others would never intentionally go fishing during the day.**
 - They were fishing with nets meaning they need wait until the fish were in shallow waters, which took place at night.
 - To put cast their nets out at this time, wouldn't have made sense. As we can see by Peter's response that he says they have been fishing all night and caught nothing.
 - **But Peter responded to Jesus with obedience, even though he didn't understand "why" he had asked him to do this.**
 - Peter using human reasoning, quickly saw that what Jesus asked didn't make any sense. He did not understand "why" Jesus would ask him to do this.
 - **But Peter showing his faith and trust in Jesus said: "at your word I will let down the nets."**
 - How powerful is Peter's response!
 - Even though Jesus asked him to do something he didn't understand, he showed obedience.
 - With the obedience of Peter, Jesus enacted a miracle by filling their nets with fish.
 - **Jesus, who always has a purpose for what He asks us to do, used this moment to demonstrate to them a miracle.**
 - **Are there other passages in Scripture describing a similar scenario where God is seeking faith and obedience for a request that seems "unreasonable" by human understanding?**

- **Have you had to exercise faith and obedience like Peter in your own life? Has God called you to do something that you didn't understand?**
- **Peter witnessed the miracle and then understood "why" Jesus did this. He then fell down and proclaimed his unworthy sinfulness to Christ.**
 - This event so struck Peter that he understood that he was not worthy of being in the presence of Jesus Christ.
 - Peter knew he was a lowly sinner who didn't deserve to even be in His presence.
- **Jesus responded to Peter, James, and John by telling them that they were no longer going to be catching fish, but they were going to be "fishers of men."**
 - At this moment, Jesus called them into their permanent ministry to learn from Jesus so that they could preach and teach the Gospel to others.
 - This was their great purpose, to fish for men to proclaim to them the truth so that they might receive salvation.
- Peter and the disciples left everything and followed Jesus
 - There is a common thread throughout Scripture that when Jesus calls someone to him to make a full out commitment, that there is always something that they must leave behind.
 - These men left their careers, possessions, and families to follow Christ.
 - This is true for Christians today, we to may have to leave something behind when we follow Jesus.
- **What would be the long-term impact on these disciples when Jesus said they would be "fishers of men"?**
- **What might you have to "leave behind" in order to follow Christ?**