HOMEWORK: Read Luke chapters 5 & 6

**Main Point**

Jesus showed His followers what it meant to follow Him both through spoken words and action.

Read Luke 5:1-16.

* **Given the lack of success the fishermen had faced so far, how easy might it have been to grow hopeless? Why do you think they were willing to take Jesus at His word and obey His command?**
* **What did Jesus reveal to Peter through this miracle? How did Peter respond (v. 8)?**
* **What do you think made the men leave behind everything they knew to follow Jesus?**

Simon and his companions were not the only ones amazed. James and John, who had come up in the other boat (see v. 7), also responded with astonishment at the power of Christ. Luke identified James and John as Zebedee’s sons. The two would join Simon Peter in the inner circle of Christ’s followers. When the fishermen obeyed Jesus’ instructions (and at least Simon Peter probably did so reluctantly), they caught more fish than their nets or boats could handle. Simon then recognized and acknowledged Jesus as the Lord. Although Jesus’ invitation was addressed to Simon, it obviously was also meant for James and John. Luke noted the inclusiveness of the response in the plural pronoun they. Simon and his crew in one boat and James and John in the second boat brought the boats to land. Partners in commercial fishing, these three along with Andrew were to become partners in following Jesus.

Read Luke 5:17-39.

* **What evidence do you see in this passage that the friends of the paralytic man were concerned for him?**
* **What might Jesus have thought about the friends’ efforts to get the paralytic to Him? What can you learn about faith from these men?**

The paralytic’s friends offer us a simple but profound insight about faith that we do well to take seriously. They underscore for us the vital necessity of putting our faith to work in concrete ways. The intersection of our faith in the power of Christ and our concern for people must prompt us to do something tangible that helps them. We should express our faith by taking action that will bring people in our lives to Him. In that way, our faith can be expressed in real-time action. Most importantly is our intercession on behalf of people who cannot help themselves.

Read Luke 6:1-19.

* **What stands out to you about the setting for verse 12? Why is the mountain a meaningful place to go to pray? Can you think of any other stories from Scripture that involve encountering God on a mountain?**
* **What is the significance of Jesus choosing the Twelve from a much bigger group of disciples?**
* **When you look through the list of the apostles, what stands out?**

Going up on mountains to meet with God is a powerful theme in Scripture—Abraham going to sacrifice Isaac; Moses, the burning bush and receiving the Law; Elijah encountering God in the soft whisper; Jesus, most notably at the Transfiguration. Jesus went up to pray “all night.” The phrase carries with it the idea of a continuous all-night vigil. When He came down, He gathered His disciples, a large group of people, and out of this group He called the Twelve and appointed them as His mouthpiece and representatives. Peter’s calling to be a disciple without a doubt had a lasting impact on his life and the history of the world. Let’s continue by looking at some of Peter’s writings to see how his understanding of his calling affected the church then and now.

Read Luke 6:20-26.

* **How would you define each warning or “woe” Jesus gives in verses 24-26? What do the negative traits mentioned in these verses have in common?**
* **How does the lifestyle Jesus affirmed compare with the lifestyle our culture values?**

Verses 24-26 in this section are the exact counterpart to verses 20-23 (blessed vs. woeful; poor vs. rich; hungry vs. full; when people hate you vs. when all people speak well of you). The clear theme in these verses is that God approves of people who know they’re broken, who know they’re nothing without His blessing.

Read Luke 6:20-36.

* **According to Luke 6:20-26, what four qualities ought followers of Christ have? What do each of those traits have in common?**
* **What is the difference between the first blessing and the next two? Why is this significant?**

To be blessed of God means to be a recipient of His special favor and love. These blessings describe those who are in a covenant relationship with God. Through these blessings we see that God’s value system is radically different from that of the world. God’s blessings rest on the poor, not the rich; the hungry, not the full; the weeping, not the laughing; the persecuted, not the popular. In God’s kingdom we can experience suffering as blessing because we no longer live for ourselves. Christ is our eternal treasure.

Read Luke 6:37-49.

* **What do we communicate to God when we take on the role of judge?**
* **What is the point of the speck and the plank (vv. 41-42)?**

Jesus delved into His disciples’ inner character. The speck denoted a small object. The log, however, represented a huge piece of wood that obviously would cause blindness. The word-picture pointed out the ridiculous nature of a judgmental person. The basis of any discussion about judgment must start here: We’re all sinners who deserve God’s judgment but are offered His grace (Romans 3:19-24). God holds all of us to the same standard, and we all fall short of it. Before we attempt to point out another’s sins, we must be aware of our own and remember that only God has the wisdom and authority to judge.

* **How are the two houses and the two builders different (vv. 46-49)? What is similar about their situations?**

The house on the rock is a beautiful image of life as a Christian. Everything around us is chaos and disorder. It batters us, but we stand on God’s promises. It stretches us, but we return humbly to Him for grace. The house on the rock stands, not because it has a better builder, but because its foundation is God. Only with this solid foundation is everything else Jesus talked about—selfless love of others and surrender to following Him—possible.