



small groups

Discussion Guide



When Jesus Steps Into Your Boat

Luke 5:1-11

Ice Breaker

(5 minutes)

Discuss

- Tell your best fish story. If you've never been fishing, tell your best story involving water.

Lesson Review

(45 minutes)

Andy said that this week's passage describes the third time Jesus had called Peter. Not all Bible scholars agree. Read the following passages.

- **John 1:32-42**
- **Matt. 4:18-22 and Mark 1:16-20**
- **Luke 5:1-11**

The story from John 1 almost certainly happened before the others; probably, as Andy alluded to, almost a year before the others. The stories from Matthew and Mark probably describe the same events; they are almost identical. There is debate about whether the Lukan story is a third encounter, or simply a more detailed retelling of the events described by Matthew and Mark.

In either case, the scene Luke describes is not the first time Peter encountered Jesus. Peter may have been wrestling with what to do about Jesus for almost a year. Peter would have heard rumors about Jesus' miracles and teaching, but he hadn't yet become a disciple. Andy called this a "believe / follow gap" and described a time in his life after his salvation (belief) but before he surrendered to God's call to ministry (follow).

Discuss

- Have you ever, or do you now, see a gap between what you believe about Jesus and your response to his call?

Andy noted the symbolism in two sentences from Peter's conversation with Jesus. In verse 4, Jesus says, "Put out into deep water." Symbolically, he may have been saying, "Let's go deep, Peter. Let's plumb the depths of the reasons for your reluctance to follow me."

And in verse 5, Peter himself says, "At your word, I will let down the nets." Peter may not have realized it, but he was speaking to the Word become flesh. (See John 1:1)

There is also Biblical symbolism in Peter's response to Jesus after the miraculous catch. Jason referred to Isaiah's call to ministry during the worship time.

Read Isaiah 6:1-8

Discuss

- What parallels do you see between Isaiah's call and Peter's?

Lent is a season of repentance and renewal. Andy connected those two when he talked about Peter's response to Jesus, "Go away from me Lord!" Andy said that when we acknowledge our sinfulness and repent, Jesus responds with grace. Jesus says, "Don't be afraid. Your unworthiness doesn't mean I will send you away. It means you're finally ready to receive your calling." This is the pattern of repentance and renewal, death and resurrection.

In repentance, Peter was ready to close his believe / follow gap. He was ready to stop treating Jesus as a consultant and start treating him as King. When Peter addresses Jesus in verse 5, he calls him “master.” The Greek word is *epistates* [ἐπιστάτης] which means leader, owner, or person-in-charge. But after the miraculous catch of fish, Peter calls Jesus “Lord.” The Greek word is *kyrios* [κύριος] which has the connotation of sovereignty and is the Greek word ancient Jewish scholars would have used to refer to YHWH.

Discuss

- Andy speculated that Jesus taught from Simon Peter’s boat about the prophet Jonah. What parallels can you find between Jonah’s story and the passage in Luke 5? **(Note to leaders: This may require some pre-meeting work to familiarize yourself with the book of Jonah.)**
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Application

(10 minutes)

Discuss

- It wasn’t easy for Peter to leave his fishing business and follow Jesus. In fact, he had to be convinced by a miracle. Ironically, it took the best catch of fish in his life to convince him to stop fishing. Tell about a time when God seemed to be calling you to something. He may not have provided hundreds of fish, but has God ever provided a sign to convince you to follow him?
- Are you using the IBC Lent Guide? If so, what ideas have stuck out to you so far?

