Following Jesus: Marks of a Disciple – Lesson 1

"Come and Follow Me: Responding to Christ's Call"

Summary

Luke 5:1-11 reveals that Jesus calls ordinary people into an extraordinary relationship with Him. His invitation to "follow Me" is not based on human qualifications, achievements, or spiritual maturity, but on His grace and purpose. Like Peter, disciples are called to trust Christ, surrender their own plans, recognize His lordship, and embrace His mission. Discipleship begins when we respond in faith to Christ's invitation and allow Him to transform both our identity and our purpose.

Scripture

Luke 5:1-11

1. Introduction

Opening Thought

Most people assume God uses only the exceptionally gifted, highly educated, or spiritually mature. Yet throughout Scripture, God repeatedly chooses ordinary people to accomplish extraordinary purposes.

Many believers struggle with feelings of inadequacy:

- "I don't know enough."
- "I have too many failures."
- "Someone else would be better suited."

The story of Peter's call challenges those assumptions. Jesus did not approach Peter after he had everything figured out. He met him in the middle of an ordinary workday and invited him into an extraordinary life.

The call to discipleship is not first about what we can do for Christ. It is about how Christ transforms those who follow Him.

Today's lesson explores how Jesus calls ordinary people, develops their faith, reveals His holiness, and gives them a new purpose.

2. The Method of Jesus' Calling (Luke 5:1-3)

The Context of Peter's Call

Peter and his partners had spent an entire night fishing without success. They were experienced fishermen who understood their trade, yet their efforts had produced nothing.

As they cleaned their nets and prepared to go home, Jesus entered their ordinary circumstances. This moment reminds us that Jesus often calls people in the middle of everyday life rather than extraordinary moments.

God's call comes:

- In workplaces
- In homes
- In ordinary routines
- During seasons of disappointment

Peter believed his day was finished, but Jesus was about to begin something entirely new. Unfulfilled expectations often become the setting where God reveals His greater purpose.

Jesus Calls Ordinary People
One of the consistent patterns throughout Scripture is God's use of ordinary people to accomplish His purposes.

- Moses was a shepherd.
- David was a shepherd boy.
- Amos was a farmer.
- The apostles were common laborers.

God's call is rooted in His grace rather than human ability. The kingdom of God advances not because people are naturally qualified, but because God empowers those He calls. Paul later confirms this truth: "God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise." (1 Corinthians 1:27)

Jesus did not see Peter merely as a fisherman. He saw what Peter would become through His transforming power.

Biblical Illustration
Gideon viewed himself as weak and insignificant (Judges 6), yet God called him a "mighty warrior" before he ever stepped onto the battlefield. God often sees in us what we cannot yet see in ourselves.

3. Jesus Calls Us to Trust Him by Faith (Luke 5:4-7)

After a fruitless night of fishing, Jesus instructs Peter to launch out into deeper water and let down his nets. From a human perspective, the command did not make sense. Peter possessed experience. Jesus possessed authority. Peter responded: "But because You say so, I will let down the nets."

This moment illustrates a foundational principle of discipleship:
Faith places confidence in Christ's word even when circumstances seem to contradict it.

Peter obeyed before witnessing the miracle. His obedience became the pathway to experiencing the power of God. Faith is not believing that God will do what we want. Faith is trusting that God knows what He is doing.

Biblical Illustration
Abraham left his homeland without knowing where God was leading him (Hebrews 11:8). Like Peter, Abraham obeyed first and understood later.

4. Jesus Reveals His Holiness and Our Need (Luke 5:8-10)

When Peter witnessed the miraculous catch of fish, his attention shifted away from the miracle and toward Jesus Himself. His response was immediate: "Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man." Peter suddenly recognized the holiness of Christ and the reality of his own sinfulness. Throughout Scripture, encounters with God's holiness produce humility:

- Isaiah cried, "Woe is me!" (Isaiah 6)
- Job repented in dust and ashes (Job 42)
- John fell at Christ's feet (Revelation 1)

A genuine encounter with Jesus causes us to see both His greatness and our need for grace. Discipleship begins with humility. Before Peter could become a fisher of men, he had to recognize his dependence upon God's mercy.

5. Jesus Gives a New Purpose (Luke 5:10-11)

Jesus responds to Peter's confession with grace: "Don't be afraid; from now on you will fish for people." Jesus transforms Peter's vocation into a mission.

The disciples leave their boats, nets, and livelihoods behind because they have discovered something greater than what they already possessed. Discipleship involves more than believing certain truths about Jesus. It involves reordering our lives around Him. Following Christ means embracing His mission as our mission. Every disciple is called to:

- Know Christ
- Become like Christ
- Help others know Christ

6. Practical Ways to Respond to Christ's Call

Principle	Application
Surrender Daily	Begin each day by yielding your plans to Christ.
Trust God's Word	Obey Scripture even when it challenges your comfort.
Pursue Humility	Remember that every spiritual victory depends on God's grace.
Prioritize Christ's Mission	Look for opportunities to influence others for Christ.
Follow Consistently	Practice faithful obedience in everyday decisions.

7. Discussion Questions

1) What did Peter leave behind to follow Jesus?
2) Why do you think Jesus chose fishermen instead of religious leaders as His first disciples?
3) What might Jesus be asking us to trust Him with today?
4) How does Peter's obedience demonstrate genuine faith?
5) Why did Peter become aware of his sinfulness after encountering Jesus?
6) What does following Jesus look like in everyday life?
7) What is one area of your life where Christ may be calling you to greater surrender?

8. Closing Thoughts

Luke 5:1-11 reminds us that discipleship begins with a simple but life-changing response to Jesus' invitation: "Follow Me." Christ does not call people because they are qualified; He calls them because He intends to transform them. Like Peter, we are invited to trust Him, humble ourselves before Him, and embrace His purpose for our lives.

The same Savior who stood beside the Sea of Galilee continues to call ordinary people today. His invitation remains unchanged: leave what hinders, trust His voice, and follow Him.

Challenge for the Week
Each day this week, ask yourself: "What is one area of my life where Jesus is asking me to trust Him more fully?"

Write down your answer and commit that area to God in prayer. Look for one practical opportunity each day to obey Christ's leading and take a step forward in faith.