

For the Sake of the Call

(Luke 5:1-11)

I. Introduction

A. Ancients were terrified by the celestial event that we call a “*solar eclipse*.”

1. It was frightening— the sun (sun god) was darkened by an unknown force
 - a. They couldn’t understand it, so they invented all kinds of mythology
 - b. In China, a dragon ate the sun (*children bang pans to scare dragon away*)
2. Eventually sky-watchers noticed that eclipses came in predictable cycles
 - a. They predicted next eclipse (*Chinese astrologers executed if missed one*)
 - b. Science meant that gods and dragons weren’t needed to explain mystery.

B. A god that’s predictable isn’t god, and Jehovah is certainly not predictable

1. God has is the **surprising** God who does what we don’t expect (**Isa 64:3**)
³ For when you did awesome things that we did not expect, you came down, and the mountains trembled before you.

a. God was never predictable—“*awesome things that we did not expect*”

- 1) You can never put God in a box or wrap you mind around Him
- 2) Don’t ever tell God what he can’t do or must do—it annoys Him!

b. God is a God who surprises His people with awesome things (**Psa 66:5**)
Come and see what God has done, how awesome his works in man’s behalf!

c. Part of surprise was that God included Gentiles in kingdom (**Isa 56:6-7**).
Foreigners who bind themselves to the LORD to serve him, to love the name of the LORD, and to worship him... these I will bring to my holy mountain and give them joy in my house of prayer... for my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations.”

2. God continues to be the God who does surprising things we don’t expect

a. OK, so maybe we don’t hear God speaking from the burning bush

- 1) But then, most people in the Bible didn’t see burning bushes
- 2) We can’t think God has somehow become domesticated or predictable

b. His ways are still above our ways, His thought above ours (**Isa 55:8,9**)

c. God still surprises us today— He still does things we don’t expect

3. That is reminder from last Saturday’s reading in our text (**Luke 5:1-11**).

a. Luke introduces us to Simon Peter and to Jesus’ surprising call to Peter

b. Peter’s surprising call reminds us of our own surprising call

II. For the Sake of the Call: The Disciples (Luke 5:1-11)

A. In Luke, Jesus meets Peter when He uses his boat as a pulpit (**Luke 5:1-3**).

1. Jesus is preaching by Gennesaret (Galilee) when the crowd gets unruly
 - a. The band can't perform if the groupies are climbing on the stage
 - 1) They always have barriers and security gorillas for crowd control
 - 2) Jesus has no security barrier, but he does have Peter's boat
 - b. So Jesus uses Peter boat as a pulpit— but why is Peter there in first place
 - c. Peter is washing his nets; he was at work, not there to hear preaching!
2. After Jesus uses the boat as a pulpit, he wants to use it for fishing (**5:4-5**)
 - a. Peter resists Jesus' request— after all, he had fished all night w/o success
 - b. Besides, Peter knew all about fishing; he didn't need fishing advice
3. But to his credit, Peter agrees to fish “*Because you say so*” (**v. 5**)
 - a. You already know how Peter big fish story ends (**Luke 5:6-7**)
 - b. Peter has two boats so full of fish they almost sink— some fish story!

B. Peter immediately gets what the greatest minds of Israel had missed (**5:8**)

1. Peter recognizes something about Jesus because he knows fishing so well
 - a. Peter knew there was no explanation for this fish story other than God
 - b. Like Nicodemus, he connects the miracle and miracle worker (**John 3:2**)
Rabbi, we know you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the miraculous signs you are doing if God were not with him
2. Peter sees more than just the miracle— he also sees his unworthiness
 - a. People later questioned Peter because he was just a fisherman (**Ac 4:13**)
 - b. Peter had the same doubts—he is keenly aware of his own unworthiness
 - 1) He fell at Jesus knees in worship; why knees... boat is full of fish!
 - 2) He begs Jesus to leave him (*he doesn't want his boat rocked*)
 - c. But Jesus doesn't leave, not alone— he invites Peter to follow (**5:10**)
3. This is a surprising story; it is filled with several surprising things
 - a. Miraculous catch is surprising; Peter's response in worship is surprising
 - b. Jesus invitation is surprising—most surprising is Peter's response
 - c. Peter and his partners left their boats completely filled with fish (**5:11**)

III. For the Sake of the Call: Today

- A. Are we still amazed and surprised by the Christ who calls us to follow Him?
1. Maybe not— maybe we've heard the story so much that it is ordinary
 - a. Jesus calmed the storm, but he doesn't calm all of our storms today
 - b. Jesus healed all kinds of diseases—but we still struggles with sickness
 - c. Jesus raised the dead— but it looks for all the world like death is final
 2. Do these stories tell us how amazing Jesus WAS or how amazing He IS?
 - a. God doesn't calm all storms, heal all disease or raise the dead... YET
 - b. The story of Jesus is the promise that God will do all these things
 - 1) But we must embrace His promises by faith and through faith
 - 2) Just as it was faith that led Peter to leave his boat filled with fish
 - c. Just as Jesus invited Peter to follow Him, so too must we follow him
 3. Jesus calls us-- "*We have abandoned it all for the sake of the call*" ([song](#))
- B. Maybe we need to be a bit more precise about Jesus' invitation here
1. We call Jesus words here an "*invitation*" and use them in our invitation
 - a. Invitation songs "*Jesus Calls Us*" & "*Footsteps of Jesus*" use this motif
 - b. But in Luke, Jesus words to follow aren't really framed like an invitation
 2. He doesn't really say, "*You are cordially invited to follow me.... RSVP*"
 - a. More familiar with [Mt 4:19](#), "*Follow me and I will make you fishers of men*"
 - b. What Jesus gives in [Luke 5](#) sounds more like a command or promise
 - c. Actually, Jesus says only two things in our text (*check out the red print*)
 - 1) "*Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch*" ([5:4](#))
 - 2) "*Don't be afraid; from now on you will catch men*" ([5:10](#))
 - d. Neither of those sound like an invitation—they are both command
 3. Why was Jesus' call given to Peter? Surely there were more educated men
 - a. There were probably guys who were easier to get along with than Peter
 - b. Peter saw two truths that are essential for all disciples of Jesus to see—
 - 1) **First**, Peter saw in Jesus the holy presence of the holy God
 - 2) **Second**, Peter saw his own absolute need for that presence
 - c. Jesus invites/commands, "*Will you abandon it all for the sake of the call*"

IV. Conclusion

- A. **Question:** Are you willing to accept the invitation call of Jesus
1. We want to see Christ's call as only a **doctrine** or a **philosophy**
 - a. We are OK with propositions to believe and principles to adopt
 - b. We'll even sign up for a volunteer list or two... if it's not too hard
 2. We're not sure we want to get too carried away—like leaving all our fish!
 - a. I once stopped by my sister's house when travelling with best friend
 - 1) She offered coffee; he said, "*O don't drink coffee; I'm a Christian*"
 - 2) Sonya said, "*I'm Christian too; I don't let it make an idiot out of me*"
 - b. Are we just a little worried that faith may make idiots out of us?
 - c. We're cool with principles and doctrines, but let's not get carried away
 3. But Peter could have considered those and stayed in his boat
- B. Jesus' call to Peter (and to us) involves more than just giving mental assent
1. "*For the sake of the call*" for Peter meaning leaving behind his boat and life
 - a. Remember Peter's "Aha" moment after the story of Rich Young Ruler
 - 1) Ruler refused to leave everything behind to be Christ's disciple
 - 2) It then dawns on Peter that he had done exactly that! (**Luke 18:28**)
Peter said to him, "We have left all we had to follow you!"
 - b. Did a boatload of fish abandoned by water's edge flash in his mind?
 2. Well, we don't have boatloads of fish; what does Jesus demands of us?
 - a. Like Peter, the call of Jesus to us is surprising and overwhelming
 - 1) He demands morality in a world that is immoral
 - 2) He demands we seek truth in world of subjectivity
 - 3) He demands selflessness in a world that is self-absorbed
 - 4) He demands spirituality in a world that sees only the material
 - b. What Jesus demands of you is the same he demands of Peter—everything
- C. Will you abandon it all for the sake of the call?