FOLLOWING JESUS VBS · DAY 1 · GRADES 7-8

Student Lesson

Jesus Calls Me: Follow Me! | Jesus Calls the Fishermen (Luke 5:1-11; Matthew 4:18-22; John 1:43-51)

Text: Luke 5:1-11; Matthew 4:18-22; John 1:43-51

Jesus Calls the Fishermen

Following Jesus begins with a call. In John 1:43 Jesus found Philip and said two words: "Follow Me." In the Gospels, the word follow is more than walking behind someone. A disciple followed a teacher to learn his words and copy his life. Jesus was inviting ordinary working men into a whole new way of living.

Luke 5:1-11 shows how that call worked in real life. Peter, Andrew, James, and John were professional fishermen on the Lake of Gennesaret. After a long night with empty nets, a carpenter from Nazareth told Peter how to fish. Peter's answer is the heart of discipleship: "Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing; nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net" (Luke 5:5). Peter did not understand, but he obeyed.

The result was overwhelming: breaking nets and sinking boats. Peter's response is worth noticing. He did not ask for a business partnership. He fell on his knees and said, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!" (Luke 5:8). Seeing who Jesus is always shows us who we are. Yet Jesus answered with grace and purpose: "Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch men" (Luke 5:10).

The cost was real. They "forsook all and followed Him" (Luke 5:11). Peter and Andrew left their nets. James and John left their boat and their father (Matthew 4:20-22). Jesus later said, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me" (Luke 9:23).

Why do people follow Jesus? Some follow a crowd. Some follow out of habit or because their family always has (compare 2 Timothy 1:5, where Timothy's faith had to become his own). Some followed Jesus only for the loaves and fish (John 6:26). The fishermen followed because they saw who He was. The real question for every teen is personal: Why do you follow Jesus, and will you follow Him when it costs you something?

> Then He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men."
>
> **Matthew 4:19 (NKJV)**

Four points to remember

- Jesus calls ordinary people, like fishermen, to follow Him (Matthew 4:18-22).
- Following Jesus means trusting Him even when we do not understand (Luke 5:5).
- Jesus knows each of us by name (John 1:47-48; John 10:27).
- Following Jesus means leaving behind anything that keeps us from Him (Luke 5:11).

Discuss

1. Peter said, "nevertheless at Your word." Where do you find it hardest to obey Jesus when it does not make sense to you?
2. Why does seeing Jesus clearly make us aware of our own sin (Luke 5:8)?
3. What are the "nets" people your age hold onto instead of following Jesus?
4. Read Luke 9:23. What does it cost to follow Jesus daily?

Live it

- Name one habit, distraction, or attitude you will put down this week so you can follow Jesus more closely.
- Read one chapter of a Gospel each day this week and write down one thing Jesus did or said.
- Invite one friend to come to VBS or worship with you. Say, “Come and see.”