

Luke 5

John Karmelich

What Jesus expects of us AFTER we're saved!

Let me share something from an old Monty Python movie (Life of Brian). If you have never seen it, a warning that there's a few adult scenes and I'll leave it at! It is a made-up story about a Jerusalem man living at the same time of Jesus. As I studied this text, a scene from that movie ran through my head: A beggar is telling Brian that Jesus cured him of leprosy! The joke is that beggar did not know what to do next so he's continuing being a beggar! It reminded me of my favorite Biblical question: "We're saved, what now?" I know most of us never had any great miracle like that made up story of the ex-leper, but we're saved as we've accepted Jesus full payment for our sins. I know most of us go to church regularly and use our lives to make a difference for Jesus. Here in Chapter 5, we read of Jesus interacting with a bunch of people around Him. Notice what Jesus calls them to do after they interacted with Him: It was not say to all of them: Follow me as we travel around Israel leading others to Me!

I also realize most Christians know these stories about Jesus' ministry well. I don't want to go over the stuff most of us know well. I just want each of us to notice what the miracle-receiving people did after Jesus finished His miracle with each of them. With that said, time for the short version: The first story is about Jesus dealing with 4 of His disciples (Not official till Chapter 6.) Jesus went on Peter's boat for purposes of preaching and not getting "trampled to death". What He preached was not stated. After He finished Jesus asked Peter to cast his net in the water. They had a record catch and Jesus asked Peter to follow Him. Peter then gave up fishing and followed Jesus. The next story is about when Jesus healed someone with leprosy. The Old Testament (Leviticus 13-14) says how to recognize it but never how to cure it. Jesus cures him by touching him, and Jesus tells him to show the priests as a witness to them!

The chapter also includes when Jesus first met the future disciple, Matthew. He was a tax collector, as I suspect the world has not changed on how people hate tax collectors. It was even worse then, as they were thought of as traitors to Israel! The text mentions how Jesus dined with Matthew and his buddies (I assume Jesus' taxes were paid up!). The underlying point is Jesus spent time with those who needed to hear the Gospel message despite their backgrounds!

Next is a famous story of four men lowering a paralyzed man through a hole they made in the roof! It's to get that man in close proximity to Jesus in a crowded house. He told the cripple to get up, walk, and go home! So why that command? I'll get to that! Luke 5 ends with a question about when one should fast? The only Old Testament requirement for Jewish people only was once a year on a specific Jewish holiday. Jesus gave the illustration that it's not appropriate to fast at a wedding, meaning Jesus is there, so not now. He finishes the chapter with an illustration of not living "the old way", referring to Judaism as practiced then versus a new way of following Him. Even though this last illustration doesn't include a miracle it still teaches what He desires once we dedicate our lives to Him. OK then, time for details:

I should start by saying the 12 apostles were not named yet, but Peter at this point had some interaction with Jesus as He healed Peter's mother-in-law of a high fever in the last chapter. Peter understood Jesus had powers, but not that He's God yet! The chapter opens with Jesus standing by the Sea of Galilee, (a fresh lake with two other Biblical names used). Crowds came most likely to see miracles and hear what Jesus preached. He asked Peter to row him a bit offshore as the water amplified His sound. Jesus could have parted that body of water "Red Sea style", but that would just get the crowds to come closer. The

same with Jesus' walking on the water! The crowds would have been so fascinated by that they would not care what He said!

The text never says what Jesus talked about, just what He said to Peter afterwards. Jesus told Peter that he should lay out his net for a catch. Fishing nets were huge and covered a large area. Fishing is done at night as in the morning, fish go deep. The funny part was Peter told Jesus in effect, "You know all of that biblical stuff, but I know fishing! Fishing at this hour won't work, but since you helped my mother in law, I'll do it!" What he caught was so huge, the net was breaking, and he called his partners to help!

When Peter saw the catch, he realized (given time of day) Jesus is either God or an angel. Peter said he is a sinful man! Jesus told Peter from now on he'll be catching men. The point for us is if we share the Gospel, many will reject it, but some will accept it, and we too will "catch" people. I always preach no purpose in life has greater satisfaction than to know one is being used by the God of the universe! God decided to work through people to lead others to Him, which is how we come in the picture!

The next story is another famous one. A paralyzed man was brought to Jesus by making a roof hole in the house Jesus was speaking at. It was crowded, so the only way the four men who brought him to get to Jesus was to make a roof hole. I noticed Jesus didn't say who's paying for the damage or ignored that incident but addressed the four helpers and the paralyzed man! Jesus told all five their sins are forgiven and that was that! It started a discussion about the fact only God can forgive sins. To prove Jesus was God, he told the guy laying on the floor, get up and go home! Nothing about how that was possible and that healed man didn't have to follow Jesus like the "12"! For many disciples God says in effect, you're saved, now go about your life and when the opportunity comes be a witness for Me! Jesus didn't mean for him to stay home the rest of his life, but to use his life to be a healthy part of society! I suspect that he became a witness for Jesus in effect like the former beggar in the previous story.

After that came the story of Jesus calling Matthew to be a disciple. Consider Jesus called someone who was considered a traitor! That must have been hard to be a witness for Jesus given that background. It probably helped Matthew that he walked away from that job. Realize that fishermen can always return to fishing. For Matthew to walk away from being a tax collector was permanent. It tells us when Jesus does call us to be a witness for Him, it means walking away from our old lives to life as He desires!

The chapter ends with a discussion about fasting. In the Old Testament it's only required to fast once a year! It was a custom at that time for devout Jewish religious leaders to fast twice a week. Disciples of John the Baptist developed that habit! They figured they were saved, and now they must act religious! Jesus used a great illustration: Is it appropriate at a wedding feast to fast? Of course not! Jesus did not condemn fasting as an act, as it can be used to show our "seriousness" about God by giving up food, so we can focus more on Him! At the same time Jesus ignored the issue of "how often". The point for us Christians is there's a time and place for all things biblical! Again, the underlying issue is about how to act as a witness for Jesus. If you see that, you see the point of all these stories. I loved the fact it is not the same for every believer. Just as some are called to drop everything and be a witness for Jesus, then others are told to just go home (saved) and in effect be a witness just like that character from the movie "Life of Brian".

Anyway, that is a summary of the stories in this chapter, and what became of those who interacted with Jesus. Those interactions become great "food for thought" for our lives. Before I wrap up, let me add: if you're not sure what to do next, I'm convinced God loves the prayer of total surrender of our wills to do His will! Obviously, that can change from day to day. If He wants to do something different, it will

be obvious if we seek Him! That's always the goal as we use our lives to glorify Him, which is why He created us in the first place

With that said, hope you like this study. I wrote a more detailed one some years back. If you want to read that, click on the link for the detailed study. It's still a joy to study this stuff and again I'm grateful for everyone who reads this.