

We are in week 4 of our Christus Victor teaching series.

Jesus Christ is the CHAMPION you need IN the battle FOR your life.

In the course of 11 weeks, we are studying what is called “Christology” (which covers the Life of Christ)

- His **person** (Who He is) and His **work** (What He did)

Pastor Bill has taught us so far about the Childhood of Jesus, Jesus’ Baptism, and the Temptation of Jesus.

This week, we are going to learn about **Christ Calling the Disciples**.

- As we read the Gospels, we see that Jesus intended from the outset to initiate an **on-going community of faith** that would continue to carry out His ministry after His death & resurrection.
- From this point on, this will NOT be the story of Jesus alone BUT of Jesus and His disciples...
- Jesus will seldom be found apart from their company until He is taken from them in the Garden of Gethsemane on the night of His arrest.

Here is the Context of Luke 5:

- Jesus, the Son of God, was baptized then sent into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil
- He then goes into the towns to preach, heal people of sickness, drive out demons, and he even heals the mother-in-law of a fisherman known as Simon Peter.

Luke 5:1-3 (NLT) *One day as Jesus was preaching on the shore of the Sea of Galilee, great crowds pressed in on him to listen to the word of God. ² He noticed two empty boats at the water’s edge, for the fishermen had left them and were washing their nets. ³ Stepping into one of the boats, Jesus asked Simon, its owner, to push it out into the water. So he sat in the boat and taught the crowds from there.*

Since the pressure of the crowds prevented Jesus from speaking to the people, he utilizes Simon’s (also called Simon Peter) boat as a pulpit.

In the boat, Jesus sits down to teach (sitting was the common posture of a Jewish teacher in that day).

Luke 5:4-5 (NLT) *⁴ When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, “Now go out where it is deeper, and let down your nets to catch some fish.” ⁵ “Master,” Simon replied, “we worked hard all last night and didn’t catch a thing. But if you say so, I’ll let the nets down again.”*

Simon is exhausted.

He and his partners had been fishing all night and caught NOTHING (*nada; zilch; they were shut out!*)

- They fish at night near the shore because that’s when & where the fish feed

But here comes Jesus (the carpenter’s son) and He gives orders to Simon (the professional fisherman) on HOW and WHERE to catch some fish!

- Fishing in deep water during the daytime made no sense.
- Besides, they had already fished in those waters and came up empty-handed.
- What would YOU do? Would you do something that went against your professional knowledge and experience?
 - For Example: Have you ever had to sell candy bars to raise money for something? Imagine this: You spend hours knocking on every door on a particular street. At every house, someone is there to answer the door, but NOT ONE of them wants a candy bar. THEN some guy tells you, “Go and knock on those same doors again to sell some candy bars.” Would you do what he said???

Well, let’s look at Simon Peter’s response again in verse 5: “Master,” Simon replied, “we worked hard all last night and didn’t catch a thing. But if you say so, I’ll let the nets down again.”

- Peter addresses Jesus as “Master” (In Greek: *epistates* / *ep-iss-TAT-ace*)
- This is a respectful title, but only expresses a general sense of someone’s authority (kind of like “boss” or “chief”)
- Remember this title, because in a short while, Peter is going to change how he addresses Jesus.
- “We’ve worked hard and caught nothing...BUT IF YOU SAY SO, I’ll let down the nets again.”
- “Nevertheless at Your word, I will let down the net.” (NKJV)

Peter wasn't confident...he was probably even skeptical...he may have had just a sliver of faith (or maybe he wanted to prove Jesus wrong)...

...for whatever reason, Peter does what Jesus says.

...over his own knowledge of fishing, over his own experience...

Peter makes a small decision of obedience to Jesus. Peter steers his boat toward deep waters—

...the wrong part of the lake.....the wrong time of day...But with Jesus in the boat (the right

One in charge!)

Luke 5:6-7 (NLT) *⁶ And this time their nets were so full of fish they began to tear! ⁷ A shout for help brought their partners in the other boat, and soon both boats were filled with fish and on the verge of sinking.*

Jackpot! A HUGE catch of fish! Both boats are sinking. This is what fisherman dream of. All night, every night, Peter hoped to net a catch of fish such as this. It's like winning the lottery. Or like a Day Trader who buys stock every morning hoping that the price will jump dramatically before the end of the day so they can sell it and make a financial killing.

You can picture Peter saying, "We're rich, boys!" "We have a new fishing partner!" "Jesus, every time we fish, you're coming with us!"

But that is NOT how Simon Peter responds...Let's see his response in verse 8-10...

Luke 5:8-10a (NLT) *⁸ When Simon Peter realized what had happened, he fell to his knees before Jesus and said, "Oh, Lord, please leave me—I'm such a sinful man." ⁹ For he was awestruck by the number of fish they had caught, as were the others with him. ¹⁰ His partners, James and John, the sons of Zebedee, were also amazed.*

Something profound dawns on Simon Peter:

- "This is no chance happening! This is no strike of luck. Only God could have done this!

Peter and his companions are "awestruck" and "amazed". They recognize this as a miracle.

Peter may have been smelly, exhausted, and uneducated...but he was wise enough to see what had just happened.

Peter found himself face to face with someone who challenged his priorities on the deepest level.

Jesus deserved Peter's attention more than two boatloads of fresh fish (way to go, Peter!).

The focus of the story now turns to Peter's response to Jesus (because Peter in the Gospels represents US...he is an example all men & women who would become disciples of Jesus)

Peter responds as one who is in the presence of God. He falls to knees before Jesus. He addresses Jesus with a new title...NOT "Master" (boss, chief) in verse 5. This time, he calls Jesus "LORD" (kurios / KOO-ree-os) which means "God" or "Supreme in authority." Peter says, "Oh Lord, please leave me—(Depart from me)—I'm a sinful man."

- Peter is **aware** of his own sinfulness and unworthiness
- The premise behind this remark is that a man of God would surely want nothing to do with an everyday sinner like Peter. Peter is saying, "*Jesus, You are HOLY. I am not. I cannot be where You are!*"
- It is similar to the prophet Isaiah's response to seeing the Lord in the temple in Isaiah 6:
"Woe is me! I am ruined because I am a man of unclean lips!"

Peter's response is RIGHT! He acknowledges the GAP between who he is and who Jesus is!

As a sinner, Peter thinks he has **no chance** with God

- But what he doesn't realize is that Jesus came to rescue sinners just like him. Peter admitting his own sin is the first step of repentance and the best indication that one is ready to be used by God for good works.

Peter tells Jesus to leave...But Jesus WILL NOT LEAVE or DEPART FROM THIS SINNER! Instead, Jesus draws NEAR to Peter and will invite Peter into close relationship, for Peter will come Jesus' disciple.

Luke 5:10 (NLT) *Jesus replied to Simon, "Don't be afraid! From now on you'll be fishing for people!"* Jesus issues a call to Peter to no longer fish for fish but to fish for PEOPLE (to "catch" people) instead. But wait...when we catch fish, we kill them and eat them (It's good for US but bad for the fish to be caught).

- In the NKJV, Jesus says in verse 10: "From now on you will **catch** men."
- The Greek word used here in verse 11 to "catch" men is different than the Greek word used in verse 4 when Jesus tells Peter to "catch" some fish.
- The word here in verse 10 is *zogreo* and it means to "take alive" (to capture them and bring them into LIFE).

Illustration: a little boy who fell from the escalator handrail. He was CAUGHT, saved from injury and/or death.

- Jesus is calling Peter to spread his net wide that men & women might get caught in the grace of Jesus Christ and be saved from death and brought into LIFE.

Luke 5:11 (NLT) *"And as soon as they landed, they left everything and followed Jesus."*

Peter and his companions **leave everything** (forsake all) and **follow** Jesus.

Peter's seemingly small "yes" to let down the net prepared him for a bigger "yes" when Jesus called him to leave his boats to follow Him.

They become Jesus' **DISCIPLES**. Their lives were forever changed when they decided to follow the call of Jesus.

My life has been changed, too! (MY STORY)

- I received Jesus as my Savior at age 6
 - I admitted I was a sinner (just like Peter did)
 - I believed that Jesus died on the cross to save me from my sin and bring me into life with God.
 - I chose to trust Jesus as my only hope for salvation.
- God had a call upon my life that He brought about through the influence of three Christian men:
 - Charlie (volleyball coach), Chuck (baseball coach), and Brian (my youth pastor whom I met at age 16).
 - These men followed Jesus. These men modeled taught me God's Word and modeled for me what it looked like to love and obey Jesus.
- I used to have the mindset that *Jesus would follow me* wherever I wanted to go. But through the influence of these men, I began to wonder what it would be like if **I followed Jesus** where HE wanted me to go!
- One day (age 18) I was mowing my lawn, talking to God asking Him, "What is a successful life? Is it lots of money? Is it fame? Is it being the best at something?" Then I remembered thinking about these three Christian men in my life that influenced me toward Jesus. I said to God, "If I could point one person to Jesus like Charlie, Chuck, & Brian did for me...that would be a life worth living!" In that moment, mowing my backyard on a September day in 1991...I sensed the call of God inviting me to follow Him into pastoral ministry. I said "yes."

I imagine it being a bit like Peter's experience on that lake. He may have wrestled with what to do: *Do I leave my boats to follow Jesus where He is leading me?* Peter made the BEST choice: He said YES to the invitation of Jesus. He chose the BETTER story. He let some good things go...to grab hold of better things.

The invitation of Jesus is always to something GREATER... something we could never do on our own.

But we might feel kind of sad for Peter: *“Poor guy...he had to leave his successful fishing business”*

- We mourn for the things we might have to let go of. But don't cry for Peter!
- In Christ, Peter found a love that surpassed comprehension and a purpose in life that was greater than any other pursuit in the world.

Peter made the BEST Choice...not the EASY choice. Peter's response to Jesus' invitation did not lead to the path of least resistance. There was hardship, there was opposition, there was rejection, there was failure, and ultimately, there was death. But there was JESUS! Peter got to see dead people come to life. Peter got to see lepers healed. Peter got a front-row seat to the majesty of God. Peter got to be used by God to “catch” men & women in order that they might live. And Peter is a founder of God's Church...the Church which continues 2,000 years later to this day.

Here's my question for us today: What is the call of God on your life that you are resisting?

- What is Jesus inviting you into today?
- What area of your life is Jesus leading you into deeper waters?
- Are you hesitating to follow God in that area of your life? Why?

Here's the grace: **What God invites you to do, He also empowers you to do.**

- His invitation IS NOT for you to do it alone. His invitation IS for you to walk WITH HIM where He leads you.
- He will never leave you, for He is with you even to the very end of the age.

There is a wonderful comment about Peter and his former fishing companion, John, in the book of Acts. After Jesus' resurrection from the dead, Peter & John continue to preach the Word of God and about 5,000 people have been saved and are following Jesus.

Acts 4:13 (NKJV) *¹³ Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And they realized that **they had been with Jesus.***

It wasn't something special in Peter.

He was an ordinary man like me and like you.

But this **ordinary fisherman** walked with an **extraordinary God** who did an **extraordinary work** IN and THROUGH this **ordinary man**.

Peter chose the better story by simply saying **“YES”** to the invitation of Jesus.

Will you say “yes” to Jesus today?

- “Yes” to receiving Jesus as Savior (the first and biggest “Yes”)
- “Yes” to following Jesus wherever He leads you (a lifetime of going wherever Jesus invites you)