**Live in Community**

 Small Group Study

**Volume Overview**

**Get Going**

[Jesus] said, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I am sending you.” ([John 20:21](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Jn20.21))

*The Holy Spirit was given so that we might have power—power to go and make disciples. Some go to the farthest corners of the globe. Some only cross the street in front of their house. Still, God’s people always go. They go to work, school, grocery stores, kids’ soccer games, and family reunions. And wherever they go, they take their witness of Jesus with them. True believers live going and carrying out His mission.*

**Session Overview**

**Let Go**

**Biblical Encounter:** The Disciples Leave Everything ([Luke 5:1–11](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Lk5.1-11))

**Outcome:** Choose Jesus’ mission over your current situation.

*In this session, we’ll look at what it takes to follow Jesus and choose His mission. A great crowd was gathered, and Jesus used Peter’s boat to teach them from. It was during this encounter that some of Jesus’ first disciples followed Him to share in His mission. Peter and the others decided to answer Jesus’ call. Each of us has to make this same decision, too. We must decide whether we’ll choose Jesus’ mission or our own way.*

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| ***You Will Need*** *• Snack-size packages of fish-shaped crackers for half of your group, plus two extra packages****Getting Ready*** • ***First time leading* Live *for Youth? Look here for the*** [**Facilitator Guide**](https://0b769b0ed3569ef9d18b-f88d8272f61086866d50d048b43ef630.ssl.cf2.rackcdn.com/sites/biblengagementproject/Listen_Facilitator_Guide.pdf)**.** |

*To access session content and videos from a computer, visit:* [***BibleEngagementProject.com/downloads***](https://bibleengagementproject.com/downloads)

**Engage**

**Welcome**

*Take this time to welcome everyone, introduce new students, learn names, and thank everyone for coming. Your friendliness here can create a comfort level that encourages student participation later.*

**Introduction**

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| **QUESTION**What is your most prized possession? Why is it so special to you? |

We all have things that are important to us. Usually, our prized possessions either hold great sentimental value, or they bring us enjoyment in some way. While nothing is wrong with having things that are important to us, at times when we need to decide what—or who—is more important. That who can be Jesus. The actions of some of His first disciples show that choosing to follow Him and His mission may mean leaving other things behind.

**Opening Prayer**

*Prayer thoughts: Thank Jesus in advance for speaking through Scripture and directing the discussion. Ask Him to help build community in your group. Ask that everyone’s heart would be willing to answer His call on their life.*

**Group Activity**

**Fish Catch**

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| ***You Will Need*** *• Snack-size packages (individual servings) of fish-shaped crackers for half of your group, plus two extra packages**No prep is needed for this activity.* |
| **QUESTION**Who likes to fish? Who’s never been fishing? |

Today’s Bible story is about fishing. Since we can’t actually go fishing, I’ve brought some fish. Only we aren’t going to eat them, at least not right away. The goal is for each team of two to pull out twenty-seven fish and put them in a straight line. The first two teams to finish this task will compete in the final round.

• *Have students form teams of two.*

• *Give each pair a snack pack of fish-shaped crackers.*

Remember, you need twenty-seven fish in a row to win. Ready? Go!

• *Play the game and declare the two winning teams.*

• *Let students eat their remaining crackers.*

Good fishing! Now in the final round, the two top teams will compete against each other by counting the total number of fish from a new bag. The first pair to finish counting theirs wins!

• *Give the two winning teams an unopened package of crackers each.*

• *Let the teams race and declare the winners.*

Not only did we discover who can count quickly, but we also handled a lot of fish. That’s something the disciples experienced in our Bible story today. Today’s video will give us a bit more insight into what we’ll be discussing. Let’s take a look.

**Watch**

**Consider What the Bible Says**

*Ensure each student has access to a Bible, preferably the same version.*

We’re going to talk about when some of Jesus’ first disciples followed Him. They were fishermen. And these fishermen had been fishing all night and caught nothing. As they were cleaning their nets, Jesus showed up, and everything changed. They had a life-changing moment. Jesus invited them to go on a world-changing journey. Interestingly, world-changing journeys almost always start with a single act of obedience. Though the disciples didn’t understand all Jesus was calling them to, they trusted Him enough to follow.

**Did You Know?**

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| Although not the norm for the ancient world, fishing in the Sea of Galilee was an incredibly prosperous industry. Both archaeology and documentation tell us that fish from the lake were brought to the city of Magdala (also known as Taricheae) where they were salted for preservation and shipped to Jews throughout the Roman world. The salt used was an incredibly valuable resource, at times even serving as a form of currency in the Roman Empire, The actions of some of Jesus’ followers to leave the lucrative fishing profession speaks highly of their desire to follow Him. |

**Jesus Got in Peter’s Boat**

Read [Luke 5:1–3](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Lk5.1-3).

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| **QUESTION**How do you think Peter felt when Jesus got into his boat and used it while teaching the crowd? |

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| **QUESTION**Why do you think there always seemed to be crowds following Jesus? |

Jesus often had people following Him as He traveled. Most likely, the crowd had heard about Jesus from others and wanted to know more about Him. Jesus was teaching on the shore of the Sea of Galilee when He encountered Simon (who was also called Peter) and his fishing boat.

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| **QUESTION**Do you think it was a coincidence that Jesus got into Peter’s boat? Why do you think this? |

Jesus likely knew whose boat He stepped into. He also probably knew enough about Peter’s life to understand who Peter was. He also knows what He’s doing when He steps into our life. We may think that Jesus entering our life is nothing more than a coincidence. But that’s not true. He has a plan and a purpose for each of us. The fact that you’re here today tells me that Jesus is stepping into your life, too. Jesus is always seeking for us to be a part of His mission, but the decision to follow is ours.

**The Big Catch**

Read [Luke 5:4–7](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Lk5.4-7).

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| **QUESTION**How do you think Peter felt when Jesus told him to go out and fish again? |

Peter seemed a little uncertain about taking directions. For one thing, Jesus probably wasn’t a fisherman. Also, Peter had just returned from a fishing trip. Peter and his companions had fished all night, and they had caught nothing. They were tired and probably hungry from working through the night. Jesus used this experience to teach Peter something about trusting Him. Although Peter didn’t realize it yet, Jesus was about to invite Peter to show trust by joining Him in His mission.

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| **QUESTION**Have you ever offered an excuse when you felt Jesus told you to do something? Would you like to share what it was? |

There may be times when Jesus tells us to do something that we don’t understand. At other times He may tell us to do something again that we just tried to do, but failed. These may be times when Jesus is inviting us to follow Him and join Him in His mission. Imagine if Peter had told Jesus he was too tired to fish again. Look at what he would have missed out on!

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| **QUESTION**What emotions do you think Peter and his friends experienced when they had nets full of fish? |

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| **QUESTION**How might Peter’s view of Jesus have changed from when Jesus asked him to fish again to when he caught so many fish? |

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| **QUESTION**What can we learn about obedience from this big catch? |

Though Peter’s obedience to Jesus’ command seemed hesitant and uncertain, Jesus still performed a miracle on his behalf. Maybe faith and obedience aren’t as much about being confident and certain, but more about obeying in simple ways. There are times when we won’t understand what Jesus is telling us to do or why He’s telling us. He may simply want us to show our willingness to obey Him.

**The Fishermen Were Awestruck**

Read [Luke 5:8–9](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Lk5.8-9).

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| **QUESTION**What caused Peter to kneel in front of Jesus and possibly a crowd of people, too? |

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| **QUESTION**What big change took place in Peter’s life after catching so many fish? |

After catching so many fish, Peter immediately responded to Jesus. He admitted how sinful he was and probably recognized his need to change. Something about this encounter changed Peter’s outlook on life. Our encounters with Jesus can also help us learn more about who Jesus is and realize our own need for Him, too.

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| **QUESTION**Has Jesus ever shown you or done anything in your life that brought about a big change in you? What was it? |

* *You may want to have an example to share with the group. This will help them open up a bit and give them time to think.*

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| **QUESTION**How do you imagine the others who were fishing with Peter responded? |

**Fishing for People**

Read [Luke 5:10–11](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Lk5.10-11).

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| **QUESTION**How did Jesus respond to Peter? |

Jesus told Peter that he didn’t have to be afraid, and that He wanted Peter to be a part of something different. Jesus wanted Peter and the others to join Him in His mission. They had previously spent their days pulling fish from the water. But their future would be filled with helping bring people to Jesus. This meant they would need to leave behind parts of their life to engage in a whole new mission. In a short time, what these men had thought would be their life work now changed to something greater because of Jesus.

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| **QUESTION**What was Jesus saying Peter would do by saying he would be fishing for people? |

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| **QUESTION**How do you think Peter felt knowing Jesus picked him for this assignment? |

Jesus does something similar for each of us too. He invites us to be part of His mission. Although we may not receive exactly the same call in the same way as these first disciples, Jesus invites us to reach people. That mission may look different for each of us, but it’s a mission all followers of Jesus share.

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| **QUESTION**Do you believe Jesus has picked you to be a part of His mission? Why or why not? |

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| **QUESTION**What do you think it means when the Bible says the disciples left everything? |

Remember, Peter and the others just had made a massive catch of fish! This was an unforgettable day of great success for their business and likely for their financial well-being. We don’t know the exact details about what they left. But today’s verses let us know an important truth about the lives of these fishermen. Following Jesus was more important than holding on to anything else.

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| **QUESTION**Do you think it was a difficult decision for them to leave things behind? |

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| **QUESTION**Has Jesus ever told you to leave something behind to follow Him? What was it? |

**Reflect**

**Choose Jesus’ mission over your current situation.**

It was a normal day for these disciples until they encountered Jesus. Their lives changed in a dramatic way because they chose to follow Jesus. Their purpose in life was different. They went from fishing for fish, for a temporary reward, to fishing for people, that had an eternal outcome. But answering Jesus’ call meant leaving their familiar surroundings as fishermen.

Each of us has to make a similar decision, too. Jesus calls each of us to His mission. He has a purpose for you and me. We must decide whether we’ll choose to follow Him or go our own way.

It’s important to know that Jesus uses all types of people for His mission. Peter was not high ranking in society, but Jesus still got in his boat and invited him to follow closely. Peter’s background didn’t prevent Jesus from stepping in either. Jesus is aware that you aren’t perfect either, but that doesn’t stop Him from wanting you to be part of what He’s doing in the world. He will make you a fisher for people if you’re willing to let go of your present circumstances and follow Him.

**Listen to God**

Let’s take time to consider how our life demonstrates a real trust in the Bible. These questions are meant to serve as a conversation between you and God. Sharing your responses with the group is completely voluntary.

• *Pause for a few moments of silent reflection after reading the questions. Then ask students if they want to share. Sharing your personal response may also be helpful to the students.*

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| **QUESTION**Peter could have ignored Jesus’ instruction to cast his nets again because of his previous experience. Are there things in your life that are keeping you from obeying Jesus? |

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| **QUESTION**What may be holding you back from choosing to have a bigger part of Jesus’ mission? |

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| **QUESTION**What might be the next steps in Jesus’ mission for your life? |

**Activate**

Peter, James, and John are great examples of choosing Jesus’ mission over the alternatives. At times, this means obeying even when we’re uncertain. Sometimes it means having confidence in Jesus even if we don’t have confidence in ourself. It always means being willing to let go of anything that is hindering us. This week, let’s work on obeying Jesus even when we aren’t certain of the results. Let’s obey even though we may not understand exactly what Jesus’ mission is for us in that moment.

**Conclusion**

Jesus often calls people who don’t meet all the expected requirements. When He does, He equips us to meet the challenge. He teaches us to obey, pushing past our uncertainty. He shows us who He is and what He is capable of doing in our life. He also shows that we don’t have to be insecure with Him. He knows our weaknesses, but tells us to not be afraid. Then He leaves it up to us to choose to follow Him, to choose His mission and let go of whatever is necessary to follow Him.

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| **Salvation Opportunity***Include this if you think there may be some in the group who do not have a personal relationship with Jesus.*Before we choose to follow Jesus, He first chose us. He gives all of us the opportunity to follow Him, regardless of our past. Jesus is loving, good, patient, and willing to work with us even though we aren’t perfect. Today would be a good day to choose to follow Jesus. After all, He has already chosen you.**Is anyone here that we can pray for who doesn’t have a relationship with Jesus or wants to renew their relationship with Him?***Take a moment to acknowledge those who respond and thank them for their desire to make things right between themselves and God. Pray with them as you close in prayer or after the group time is over. Following group time, talk more about where they are in their walk with God and how you might be able to help.* |

**Prayer**

Jesus, we want to follow You. Thank You for drawing close to us and for having a plan for us. Thank You for patiently leading us toward Your plan. Give us the faith to obey even when we aren’t confident. Help us understand that we don’t have to be afraid that You will reject us. Today we want You to be our Lord. We will follow in Your mission. Help us to let go of anything that is in the way. Amen.

**Dismissal**

Remember, we can listen to the Lord through the devotions in the Bible Engagement Project app. This gives us a chance to encounter Jesus each day this week.