**1. Motivate**

What is a less traveled road that you’re glad you took?

* job at a smaller company
* went to a small country school
* went to college at a small denominational school
* on a detour found a delightful little park for a picnic
* took the wrong turn and found a beautiful beach
* stayed at a very pleasant “mom and pop” motel
* went to lunch with a very plain and quiet colleague and found them interesting company
* visited the home of a struggling student and met a kind and loving family

**2. Transition**

The world is focused on prosperity, popularity, and power.

* The believer is called to set that aside and follow Jesus.
* Faith begins with the decision to follow Jesus.

A video introduction to the Bible Study is available. View it at <http://tinyurl.com/4cjjpww2> . If you have no wi-fi where you teach, it is better to download the video to your computer from <http://tinyurl.com/ek96hw5c>

**3. Bible Study**

3.1 Encounter with the Living Word

Listen for an unusual setting.

Luke 5:1-3 (NIV) One day as Jesus was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret, with the people crowding around him and listening to the word of God, 2 he saw at the water's edge two boats, left there by the fishermen, who were washing their nets. 3 He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little from shore. Then he sat down and taught the people from the boat.

So why did Jesus need the boat?

* people were crowding around him
* there were so many people that wanted to get close that the crowd pressed closer and closer
* He wanted to be able to talk to them, teach them
* They wanted to hear
* He saw the opportunity to use one of the boats as a pulpit or platform
* The people would be held back by the water’s edge
* He could have some space and more people could see and hear

What was unusual about the instructional setting?

* we usually think of an instructor standing in front of the group, behind a podium
* now days they have a white board and/or a video screen
* Rabbis more often instructed sitting down
* in this case Jesus called on a local fisherman to use his boat as a teaching “platform”

When do you remember hearing God’s Word in a way that was especially meaningful?

* in a summer camp campfire service
* hearing someone like Billy Graham in a large stadium or auditorium
* watching a Christian movie
* reading the biography of a Christian missionary
* hearing the gospel message for the first time, shared one on one, presented by a friend or even a stranger

How do you think is the best way to “hear” God?

* when God has prepared your heart
* when the events of your life converge in such a way that you are ready to listen
* when you go to God’s Word with the attitude and trust that God will tell you what you need to hear
* when you pray specifically for God to show you the path to take, the decision to make

Simon’s boats were part of his everyday workplace, but Jesus needed them to teach to the crowd … What normal things in your daily life might Jesus be able to use to share His message with others?

* when you are talking together over the back fence
* when you are at sporting events together in the stands
* on coffee break at work
* having lunch together
* at kids’ sports practices, waiting for them
* at a neighborhood block party
* inviting neighbors or acquaintances to SS social events
* when a neighbor has a need, be quick to help them out (household problems, fixing the car, helping with their kids, etc.)
* loading up the car with neighborhood kids to take them to VBS
* opening up your home for a Bible Study
* inviting kids to your house/yard for a kids Bible club
* opening your home for extended family gatherings

⇨ It was not a coincidence that Peter’s boat was nearby … Jesus may have sought him out.

⇨ It is not a coincidence that God has placed you …

* In your neighborhood
* In your job situation
* In your extended family

3.2 Take the Next Step

Listen for how faith is demonstrated.

Luke 5:4-7 (NIV) When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch." 5 Simon answered, "Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets." 6 When they had done so, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break. 7 So they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them, and they came and filled both boats so full that they began to sink.

Jesus told these professional fishermen to take the boat out into deep water and let down the nets. When Jesus made the request of Simon, what kinds of thoughts do you think Simon was having?

* we just got in from a bad night of fishing
* we didn’t find any then, we’re not going to find any now
* this guy is a carpenter … OK, a rabbi … but what does he know about fishing?
* I’m pooped and I just want to clean up and get some food and some sleep

What words and phrases describe just how great a haul of fish was taken in this single catch?

* “such a large number of fish”
* nets began to break
* had to ask for help from partners
* boats were so filled they began to sink

What do you think Simon learned from this experience? What can *we* learn from this sequence of events?

* Jesus knows what will happen, He can work miracles
* we better be ready to believe what God is telling us and obey His directions
* God can make good things happen in our lives if we trust Him
* God will act in such a way that you *know* it is His doing – it’s not a coincidence

What kinds of things does Jesus ask believers today to do that may seem unreasonable or difficult?

* spend time and effort in service
* give up an evening to be involved in outreach
* be willing to send children, grandchildren to a foreign country as a missionary
* give 10% (or more) of your income to God’s work
* open your home for some sort of outreach (Bible study, kids’ Bible club)

What kinds of things happen when we obey God in these kids of requests?

* other believers are edified, drawn closer to the Lord
* unbelievers are brought to Jesus
* God’s work goes forward, the Kingdom of God advances
* you receive more blessing than you can handle
* you have to share that blessing with others around you

3.3 Commitment and Trust

Listen for God’s call to an adventure.

Luke 5:8-11 (NIV) When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus' knees and said, "Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!" 9 For he and all his companions were astonished at the catch of fish they had taken, 10 and so were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, Simon's partners. Then Jesus said to Simon, "Don't be afraid; from now on you will catch men." 11 So they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed him.

How did Simon respond to Jesus when he experienced in the large catch of fish?

* was in awe of Jesus
* realized his sinful condition
* astonishment
* bowed down to Him, worshiped Him

What call, challenge, and change did Jesus make available to Simon—and others?

* Don’t be afraid
* you worked to catch fish
* now you will “catch” men
* I will make you fishers of men

Note their amazing response.

* They parked their boats
* They left their trade as fishermen
* They followed Jesus

What might we have to "leave behind" in order to follow Christ today?

* the drive to be a success
* the motivation to become popular, powerful, rich, famous
* friends that could take us in the wrong direction
* a job that is accomplishing little for God’s purposes
* a certain genre of entertainment, a harmful, consuming habit
* may be called to leave family (or send a child or grandchild) to serve God in a far off place

How does a person go about being a “fisher of men”?

* Be involved in God’s Word
* Study methods of presenting the Gospel message concisely
* Learn to give a 15 second testimony
* Be challenged to tell your story of faith in Christ
* Be reminded of how to give a 15 second testimony <https://youtu.be/TOjV3B8vEJo>
* Also <https://youtu.be/bqOkHRvNiKU> and <https://watch.liberty.edu/media/t/1_zc35og1f>

Use the last page as a handout so your learners can take home the application points of this week’s lesson.

A qr code with a couple of men in a boat

Description automatically generated

Application

Examine.

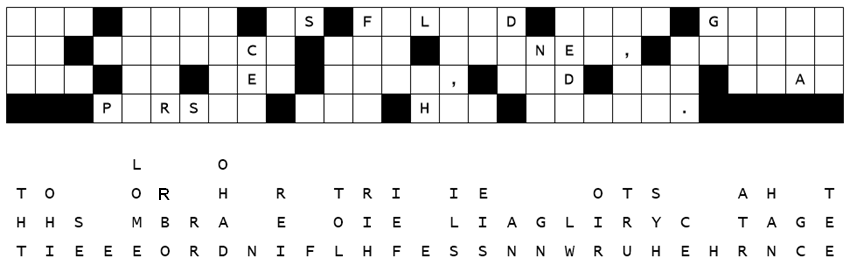
* Take an inventory of your heart.
* Are you willing to follow Jesus wherever He leads?

Drop a net.

* We all have unnecessary, useless activities and pursuits.
* This week, drop something to make room for God’s call.d

Speak.

* Share your personal story of salvation with someone who isn’t a follower of Christ

A cartoon of a person crying

Description automatically generated

Fallen Phrases Puzzle

We are in big trouble! Our resident decoding staff failed to properly glue down the letters in the secret message and they have fallen off … straight down. Can you reconstruct the message for us? Start with single letter columns, then look at two or three letter words and use the letters which seem to make a reasonable word. The underground church in Liazemauchaddesh wants to be sure we are aware of this important Truth. Technical support and further Fun Family Activities can be found at <http://tinyurl.com/ek96hw5c>