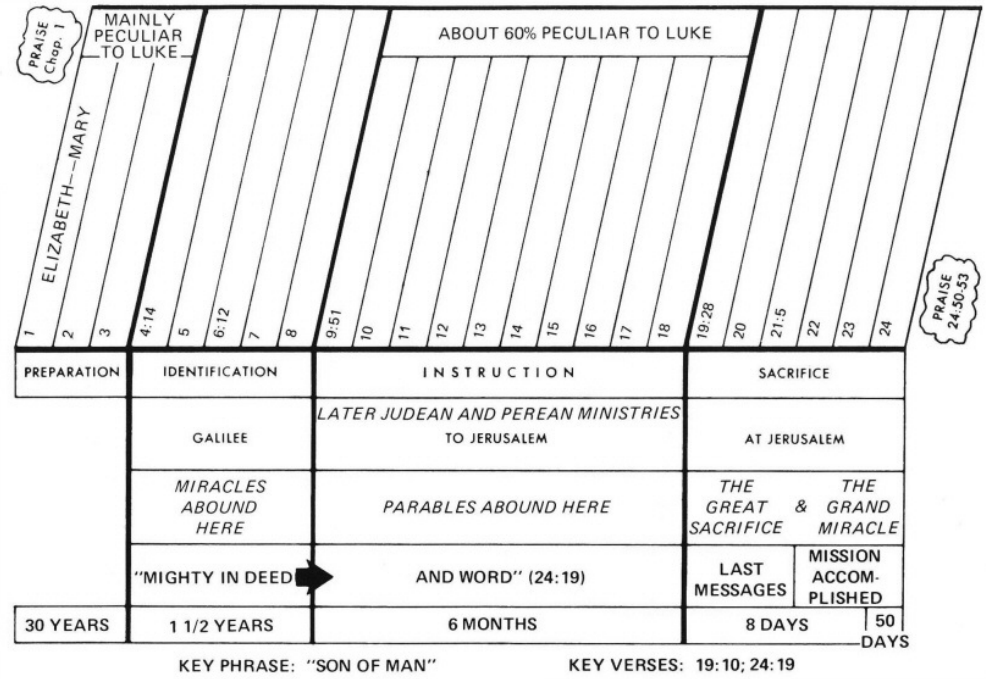
Luke 5 Commentary

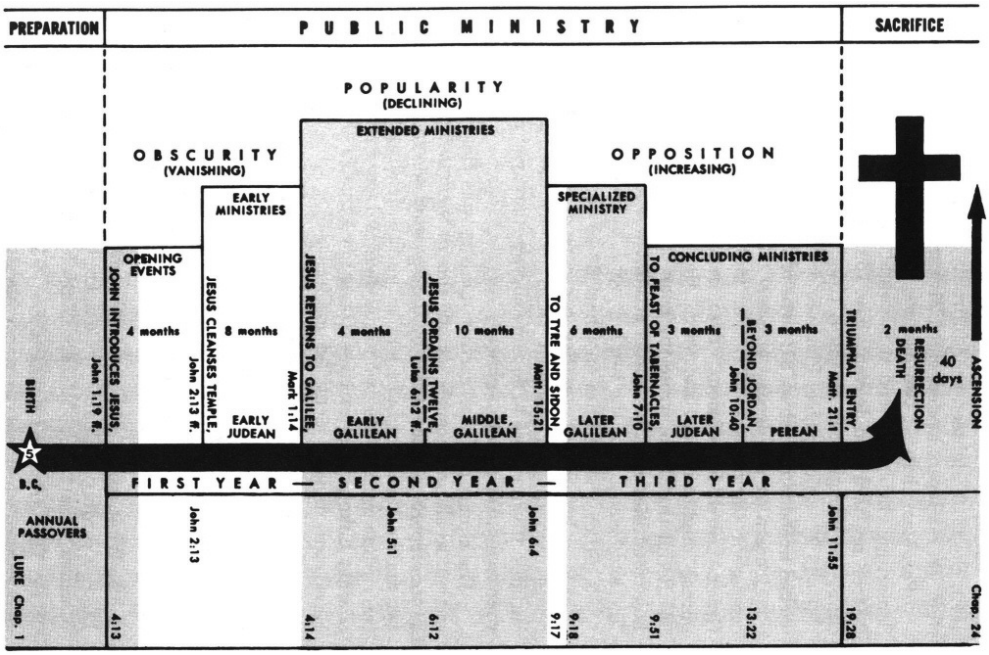
CLICK VERSE

To go directly to that verse

Luke 5:1
Luke 5:2
Luke 5:3
Luke 5:4
Luke 5:5
Luke 5:6
Luke 5:7
Luke 5:8
Luke 5:9
Luke 5:10
Luke 5:11
Luke 5:12
Luke 5:13
Luke 5:14
Luke 5:15
Luke 5:16
Luke 5:17
Luke 5:18
Luke 5:19
Luke 5:20
Luke 5:21
Luke 5:22
Luke 5:23
Luke 5:24
Luke 5:25
Luke 5:26
Luke 5:27
Luke 5:28
Luke 5:28
Luke 5:30
Luke 5:31
Luke 5:32
Luke 5:33
Luke 5:34
Luke 5:35
Luke 5:36
Luke 5:37
Luke 5:38
Luke 5:39



From Jensen's Survey of the NT by permission
John MacArthur's Introduction to the Gospel of Luke
Charles Swindoll's Introduction to Luke
Luke Overview Chart by Charles Swindoll



Click chart to enlarge LIFE OF CHRIST IN GOSPEL OF LUKE (See Shaded Areas)
Chart from recommended resource Jensen's Survey of the NT - used by permission

Ryrie Study Bible -Borrow

c. 5 B.C.	c. A.D. 28–33	c. A.D. 62
Birth of Jesus	Jesus' ministry, death, resurrection	Luke's Gospel written

Source: ESV Global Study Bible

Luke 5:1 Now it happened that while the crowd was pressing around Him and listening to the word of God, He was standing by the lake of Gennesaret;

ICB - One day Jesus was standing beside Lake Galilee. Many people were pressing all around him. They wanted to hear the word of God.

ESV On one occasion, while the crowd was pressing in on him to hear the word of God, he was standing by the lake of Gennesaret,

NET Now Jesus was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret, and the crowd was pressing around him to hear the word of God.

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.

- **it**: Lu 8:45 12:1 Mt 4:18-22 11:12 Mk 1:16-20 3:9 5:24
- **to hear**. Lk 8:18, 21. Mk2:13. 4:1. Jn 5:24. 12:48. 14:23. Acts 8:25. 13:26. 14:3. 15:7. 1 Co 1:18. Ep 1:13. Php 2:16. Col 1:25. 3:16. 2 Ti 2:15. Jas 1:19, 21-25.
- **the word of God.** Lk 8:11, 21. 11:28. Mt 15:6. Mk 4:14-20. 7:13. Jn 10:35. Acts 4:31. 6:2, 7. 8:14. 11:1. 12:24. 13:5, 7, 46, 48. 16:32. 17:13. 18:11. Ro 9:6. 10:17. 1 Th 2:13. Rev 1:2
- **the lake**: Lk8:22, 23, 33. Nu 34:11,
- **to hear**. Lk 8:18, 21. Mk2:13. 4:1. Jn 5:24. 12:48. 14:23. Acts 8:25. 13:26. 14:3. 15:7. 1 Co 1:18. Ep 1:13. Php 2:16. Col 1:25. 3:16. 2 Ti 2:15. Jas 1:19, 21-25.
- **the word of God.** Lk 8:11, 21. 11:28. Mt 15:6. Mk 4:14-20. 7:13. Jn 10:35. Acts 4:31. 6:2, 7. 8:14. 11:1. 12:24. 13:5, 7, 46, 48. 16:32. 17:13. 18:11. Ro 9:6. 10:17. 1 Th 2:13. Rev 1:2
- Luke 5:1-11 Characteristics of Jesus' Divinity, Part 1 - John MacArthur
- Luke 5:1-11 Characteristics of Jesus' Divinity, Part 2 - John MacArthur
- Luke 5:1-11 Catching Fish or Men? - Steven Cole
- J C Ryle's Comments on Luke 5 - clear, devout, and accurate
- Luke 5:1-11 By the Sea of Galilee - the Final Call of the First Disciples, and the Miraculous Draught of Fishes - Alfred Edersheim
- Luke 5 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

The course of the ministry of the Son of Man (Luke 5:1-6:11)

1. The call of Simon (Luke 5:1-11)
    a. The instruction (Luke 5:1-3)
    b. The demonstration (Luke 5:4-9)
    c. The invitation (Luke 5:10-11)
2. The cleansing of the leper ((Luke 5:12-16)
    a. The request (Luke 5:12)
    b. The response (Luke 5:13)
    c. The caution (Luke 5:14-16)
3. The cure of a paralytic (Luke 5:17-26)
    a. The claim (Luke 5:17-21)
    b. The authentication (Luke 5:22-26)
4. The call of Levi (Luke 5:27-39)
    a. The invitation (Luke 5:27-28)
    b. The association (Luke 5:29)
    c. The inquiry (Luke 5:30)
    d. The answer (Luke 5:31-32)
    e. The charge (Luke 5:33)
    f. The explanation (Luke 5:34-39)

    Hannah's Bible Outlines.

Related Passages: some think these are parallel passages but others do not. There are similarities but there are also differences. You be the judge.

Matthew 4:18-22+ Now as Jesus was walking by the Sea of Galilee, He saw two brothers, Simon who was called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. 19 And He *said to them, “Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.” 20 Immediately they left their nets and followed Him. 21 Going on from there He saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and He called them. 22 Immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed Him.

Mark 1:16-20+ As He was going along by the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and Andrew, the brother of Simon, casting a net in the sea; for they were fishermen. 17 And Jesus said to them, “Follow Me, and I will

make you become fishers of men." 18 Immediately they left their nets and followed Him. 19 Going on a little farther, He saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who were also in the boat mending the nets. 20 Immediately He called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants, and went away to follow Him.

SETTING THE CONTEXT - here are several comments on the context

Gene Brooks helps set the context for the events in this chapter - Luke introduces his Gospel with a call to believe that Jesus is the Messiah who fulfills the Abrahamic and Davidic covenants (Luke 1-2). Repenting of sin is the first step in believing (Luke 3:1-20+) in this Jesus who is set apart as God's suffering Servant through his sacrificial death (Luke 3:21-23a+). Unlike sinful Adam, Jesus is the completely obedient Son of God (Luke 3:23b-38+) who defeats Satan himself in a test of every sphere of human life: body, mind, and spirit (Luke 4:1-13+). In the power of the Holy Spirit, then, Jesus moves into his ministry in the region of the Sea of Galilee (Luke 4:14-9:50+). After encountering unbelief and rejection at Nazareth (Luke 4:14-30+), Jesus finds belief, freedom, and healing for the captives in Capernaum (Luke 4:31-44+). After calling his first disciples in belief to follow him (Luke 5:1-11), his ministry arouses the unbelieving hostility of the religious leaders when he announces forgiveness for sins (Luke 5:12-26+). After Levi the tax collector responds in belief to follow Him (Luke 5:27-32+), the Pharisees respond in unbelief to Jesus' dining with sinners (Luke 5:33-39+). (Luke 5:27-39 - Common Sinners & New Wine)

Darrell Bock summarizes Luke 5:1-11 which "details how Jesus confirms the call of four disciples to serve with him. In this passage, miracle, teaching and discipleship form a collage that explains mission and who is qualified for it. Jesus performs a nature miracle, but the saying in Lk 5:10 turns the entire miracle into a picture of mission. Here event and symbol merge. The event signifies not only what disciples are called to do but who disciples are as they do it. Simon Peter and Jesus represent different sides of the theology that undergirds the community Jesus is forging. Simon, for his part, knows that he is a sinner who is not worthy to experience the benefits of God's power and presence. There is no presumption that God owes him anything. Jesus, exemplifying God's grace, makes it clear that such a humble approach to God is exactly what God will use. Jesus calls these fishermen to fish for people rather than for finned water-dwellers. Luke presents these two truths quite dramatically and vividly." (The Gathering of Disciples Luke 5:1-6:16)

William Hendriksen helps us set the context - Luke is indefinite as to time. Note, however, the following: (a) we find Jesus still in Galilee; (b) the disciples are still being "called"—there were several steps in this calling (see N.T.C. on Matthew, p. 245); (c) it would seem that Levi (= Matthew) has not yet joined the group (Luke 5:27–32; cf. Mark 2:13–17); and (d) The Twelve, as a body, have not yet been chosen and charged (cf. Luke 6:12–16; 9:1–6; and see also Mark 3:13–19; 6:7–13; cf. Matt. 10:1–42). On the other hand, (e) "the calling of four fishermen" (Matt. 4:18–22; Mark 1:16–20) has already taken place. Taken as a unit, the story found here in Luke 5:1–11 is peculiar to Luke; it has no parallel (Ed: As noted no all agree with this last statement). (Borrow Baker NT Commentary: Luke)

Wiersbe on Luke 5:1-11 - This event is not parallel to the one described in Matthew 4:18-22 and Mark 1:16-20. In those accounts, Peter and Andrew were busy fishing, but in this account they had fished all night and caught nothing and were washing their nets. (If nets are not washed and stretched out to dry, they rot and break.) Jesus had enlisted Peter, Andrew, James, and John earlier, and they had traveled with Him in Capernaum and Galilee (Mark 1:21-39), but then they went back to their trade. Now He would call them to a life of full-time discipleship. It is possible that at least seven of the disciples were fishermen (John 21:1-3). Consider the fact that fishermen generally have the qualities that make for success in serving the Lord. It takes courage and daring, patience and determination to work on the seas; and it also takes a great deal of faith. Fishermen must be willing to work together (they used nets, not hooks) and help one another. They must develop the skills necessary to get the job done quickly and efficiently. (Borrow The Bible exposition commentary)

J C Ryle - We have, in these verses — the history of what is commonly called the miraculous catch of fish. It is a remarkable miracle on two accounts. For one thing, it shows us our Lord's complete dominion over the animal creation. The fish of the sea are as much obedient to His will — as the frogs, and flies, and lice, and locusts, in the plagues of Egypt. All are His servants, and all obey His commands. For another thing, there is a singular similarity between this miracle worked at the beginning of our Lord's ministry, and another which we find Him working after His resurrection, at the end of His ministry, recorded by John. (John 21.) In both we read of a miraculous catch of fish. In both the Apostle Peter has a prominent place in the story. And in both there is, probably — a deep spiritual lesson, lying below the outward surface of the facts described. J C Ryle's

Comments on Luke 5)

Capernaum in Galilee
Source: ESV global study Bible

IT JUST SO HAPPENED

Jesus is still in Galilee which is fascinating for Galilee was known as "Galilee of the Gentiles" (Is 9:1, Mt 4:15+) and was not technically Jewish, but it contained a large Jewish population. Much of Jesus' ministry took place in Galilee -- Sermon on the Mount; Bread of life discourse (Jn 6:59 in Capernaum synagogue); 25 out of 35 recorded miracles.

Now it happened - Nothing just "**happened**" in Jesus' life that was not ordained by His Father and filled with purpose. Everything that happened in Jesus' life was by PROVIDENCE and with PURPOSE! Beloved, nothing just "happens" in our lives by accident! Our Father is in control -- superintending the seemingly random events in our life with His providence and for His purpose. O, to be so in touch with that prayer we often pray "Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven." Let it be so Lord. Amen. Note that Dr Luke places this account after the events in Capernaum incidents rather than before (Mk 1:16-20) as described in Mark (Mark 1:21-28 describes the time in Capernaum). Although I have listed the passages in Matthew and Mark as representing "parallel" calls of Peter, James and John, it should be noted that scholars are divided over whether this incident in Luke 5:1-11 is identical with Jesus' call in Mt 4:18-22 and Mk 1:16-20. Therefore, I will avoid dogmatism.

> **NOTE ON SIMILAR MIRACLE IN JOHN 21** - While the miracles in Luke's account and John's account after the resurrection (John 21:1–14) are similar they are distinct and not the same occurrences. **Darrell Bock** explains "The main reason for the separation is not only the clearly distinguished settings, but also the differences in the description of the nets, Peter's reaction, and Jesus' location during the event. In Luke 5:6 the nets are breaking; in John 21:11 they are not. In Luke 5:8 Peter bows before Jesus; in John 21:7 he flees. In Luke 5:3 Jesus is in the boat; in John 21:4 he is on the beach. Surely if the same event were in view, these differences would not be present."

MacArthur explains this time phrase **Now it happened** "indicates that an indefinite amount of time had passed since the events recorded in Luke 4:38-44. The Lord was still in Galilee, preaching (Lk 4:44), healing, and casting out demons (Lk 4:40–41), which, understandably, resulted in large crowds following Him (Lk 4:42; cf. Lk 4:14; 5:15; 6:17; 7:11–12, 24; 8:4, 42, 45; 9:11, 37; 11:14, 29; 12:1, 54; 14:25. Writing later in the first century, the Jewish historian Josephus estimated the population of Galilee at about three million, which allows for the vast size of the crowds that followed Jesus.). In a day when no media existed, gifted communicators drew huge crowds, and Jesus was obviously unparalleled (John 7:46)." (See LukeCommentary

Steven Cole introduces Luke 5:1-11 - In the opening verses (Lk 5:1-3), Jesus is teaching God's Word, but Peter is working at his fishing business. By Lk 5:11, Peter has left his business to follow Jesus in catching men, not fish. Jesus' words in Lk 5:10 are the key for understanding and applying this story: "Do not fear, from now on you will be catching men." The word "**catch**" literally means "to capture alive." Although in their vocation, the fish they caught would die, in their new focus, dead men would be caught and come alive for Jesus. The story shows us how Jesus transforms everyday people (even sinful people, like Peter) into His servants, involved in His great cause of catching people for God. It teaches us that …The greatest purpose we can have in life is to follow Jesus in catching men for Him. (Catching Fish or Men?)

The crowd was pressing around (epikeimai - present tense - continually pressing around) **Him** - Clearly His miracles and His preaching were attracting a crowd. The pressing crowd reminds one of the scene in Mark 3:9+ "And He told His disciples that a boat should stand ready for Him because of the crowd, so that they would not crowd Him." and Mark 4:1 "He began to teach again by the

sea. And such a very large crowd gathered to Him that He got into a boat in the sea and sat down; and the whole crowd was by the sea on the land." As **Bock** says **crowd** "refers simply to the curious masses, not to the responsive (Luke 6:19; 7:9; 8:40; 9:18; 19:3; 23:48)."

Pressing around (epikeimai) **Him and listening** - They were pushing Him near the edge of the water! The verb **pressing around** literally means they were "lying upon" Him, giving us the picture that Jesus was being pushed into the lake. They were pressing near straining to hear (cf "gracious words which were falling from His lips" = Lk 4:22+, cf Lk 4:36+). O, to have this problem in the Church = pressing near, straining to hear the Word of God! Let it be Lord. Amen! Some feel they were pressing not so much to hear but to be near seeking miraculous healing (cf. Luke 6:19). It is fascinating that in Lk 5:1 **epikeimai** means the crowd was pressing near, in Lk 23:23+ the crowd was pressing Pilate to crucify Jesus. As Spurgeon 'once said 'You set your heart aflame with the Word of God and man shall come and watch you burn!"

Listening to the word (logos) **of God** - **Listening to the word of God** from the **Word** Who is God! (Jn 1:1) One has to wonder if these hearers really comprehended that what they were hearing was indeed the true Word of God? I doubt they had such a comprehension, but they clearly knew there was something different about the words He spoke and the authority with which He spoke them. No man ever spoke like Jesus! (Lk 4:22+, Lk 4:32+, Lk 4:36+)

> **THOUGHT** - Some today suggest we need to be careful to not preach too much of the Word of God for people are seeking authenticity and want to hear interesting stories and applications. This verse suggests we should preach the word and they will come. I frequently ask younger folks why they attend a certain often crowded local church in Austin and they say it's because the preach the Word of God. Dear preacher, never for a moment think true seekers do not want to hear the pure milk of the Word! Paul warned of the day that is upon us in many churches where the Word is relegated to almost an afterthought!
>
> > I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: 2 **preach** (ALL VERBS IN BOLD RED = aorist imperative = "JUST DO IT!" see our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey) the word; **be ready** in season and out of season; **reprove**, **rebuke**, **exhort**, with great patience and instruction. 3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine (IT HAS ARRIVED IN AMERICA!); but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, 4 and will turn away (ACTIVE VOICE = CHOICE OF THEIR WILL) their ears from the truth and will turn aside (PASSIVE VOICE = ACTED UPON BY OUTSIDE SOURCE - BE CAREFUL WHEN YOU TURN FROM GOD'S WORD -- THERE IS NO NEUTRAL GROUND -- YOU WILL BE TURNED) to myths. (2 Ti 4:1-4+)

Word (logos) **of God** - What Word? Lk 4:43 says He continued to preach **the Good News, the Gospel of the Kingdom of God**, for the Gospel was (IS) the "key" to open the door to enter the Kingdom of God (cf Nicodemus receipt of the "key" - Jn 3:1-5+ and Jn 19:38, 39). Jesus spoke with **authority** what from God (cf Mt 7:29+; Mk 1:27+), whereas the rabbi's spoke what the heard spoken by other rabbis! Fresh words from God versus stale words from men! The voice of God versus the traditions of men! Jesus words were words from God, Jesus explaining...

> For I did not speak on My own initiative, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me a commandment as to what to say and what to speak. I know that His commandment is eternal life; therefore the things I speak, I speak just as the Father has told Me." (John 12:49-50)

Jesus declared John 5:24

> Truly, truly (Amen, Amen), I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life (into the "Kingdom of God").

MacArthur on **word of God** - The phrase **of God** is a subjective genitive in the Greek, indicating source; the people were listening to Jesus speak the word that came directly from God. (See Luke Commentary)

> **THOUGHT** - Today when we read the Word of God, we are reading the Word that came directly from God.

Luke's other uses of this phrase **word of God** - notice in two Jesus emphasizes not just HEARING the Word (that's a good start) but DOING the Word of God (cf James 1:22+) Interesting that each of the other Gospel writers uses this phrase only one time. It is clearly a Lucan phrase.

> Luke 8:11+ "Now the parable is this: the seed is the **word of God.**
>
> Luke 8:21+ But He answered and said to them, "My mother and My brothers are these who hear the **word of God** and do it."

Luke 11:28+ But He said, “On the contrary, blessed are those who hear the **word of God** and observe it.”

Luke's other uses of the **word of God** in Acts - notice in the majority of these uses the "Word of God" is synonymous with the Gospel (Acts 4:31, 6:7, 8:14, 11:1, 13:5, 46, 17:13)

Acts 4:31+ And when they had prayed, the place where they had gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the **word of God** with boldness (GREAT PATTERN FOR US - THEY ONLY WAY TO SPEAK THE GOSPEL WITH BOLDNESS IS TO BE FILLED...AND IT IS ALSO GOOD TO PRAY BEFORE YOU SPEAK!)

Acts 6:2+ So the twelve summoned the congregation of the disciples and said, “It is not desirable for us to neglect the **word of God** in order to serve tables.

Acts 6:7+ The **word of God** kept on spreading (GOSPEL IS PERSONIFIED, cf Col 1:5, 6-note); and the number of the disciples continued to increase greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were becoming obedient to the faith ("THE FAITH" HERE EQUATES WITH THE GOSPEL. NOTE THAT TRUE, SAVING FAITH IS NOT JUST HEARING AND INTELLECTUALLY COMPREHENDING BUT IS SHOWN TO BE GENUINE BY OBEYING. WHY? PRIMARILY BECAUSE WE CANNOT OBEY IN OUR OWN POWER -- THE FACT THAT THEY OBEYED SIGNIFIED THAT THEY HAD A NEW HEART AND A NEW POWER SOURCE, THE INDWELLING SPIRIT.)

Acts 8:14+ Now when the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the **word of God,** they sent them Peter and John,

Acts 11:1+ Now the apostles and the brethren who were throughout Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the **word of God.**

Acts 13:5+ When they reached Salamis, they began to proclaim the **word of God** in the synagogues of the Jews (NOTE THEIR SOURCE FOR SUCH BOLDNESS IN Acts 13:4. WHO SENT THEM OUT?); and they also had John as their helper.

Acts 13:7+ who was with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, a man of intelligence. This man summoned Barnabas and Saul and sought to hear the **word of God.**

Acts 13:46+ Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly and said, “It was necessary that the **word of God** be spoken to you first; since you repudiate it and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles.

Acts 17:13+ But when the Jews of Thessalonica found out that the **word of God** had been proclaimed by Paul in Berea also, they came there as well, agitating and stirring up the crowds.

Acts 18:11+ And he settled there a year and six months, teaching the **word of God** among them.

Word of God in all of Scripture - 47x in 46v - as noted genitive of source signifying the word from God (the Source). 1 Sam. 9:27; 2 Sam. 16:23; 1 Ki. 12:22; 1 Chr. 17:3; Prov. 30:5; Matt. 15:6; Mk. 7:13; Lk. 3:2; Lk. 5:1; Lk. 8:11; Lk. 8:21; Lk. 11:28; Jn. 10:35; Acts 4:31; Acts 6:2; Acts 6:7; Acts 8:14; Acts 11:1; Acts 13:5; Acts 13:7; Acts 13:46; Acts 17:13; Acts 18:11; Rom. 9:6; 1 Co. 14:36; 2 Co. 2:17; 2 Co. 4:2; Eph. 6:17; Phil. 1:14; Col. 1:25; 1 Thess. 2:13; 1 Tim. 4:5; 2 Tim. 2:9; Tit. 2:5; Heb. 4:12; Heb. 6:5; Heb. 11:3; Heb. 13:7; 1 Pet. 1:23; 2 Pet. 3:5; 1 Jn. 2:14; Rev. 1:2; Rev. 1:9; Rev. 6:9; Rev. 19:13; Rev. 20:4

He was standing by the lake of Gennesaret- (Sea of Galilee - Mt. 4:18; Mk 1:16+). **Gennesaret** derives from the fertile plain of that name to the northwest of the lake. **Sea of Galilee**. It is about 13 miles in length and about 8 miles wide and 700 ft below sea level (the level of the Mediterranean Sea) and is surrounded by rolling hills (see depiction). Here are the 5 synonyms - Gennesaret = Sea of Chinnereth (Nu 34:11; Josh 13:27) = Sea of Chinneroth (Josh 12:3) = Sea of Tiberias (Jn 6:1; Jn 21:1) = "The Sea" (Mt 13:1; Mk 4:1). The primary source of inflow for the **Sea of Galilee** is the Jordan River, which arises from several sources near Mt Hermon (9,200 ft above sea level) and flows into the lake from the north. The enlarged Jordan River exits the southern end of the lake, and flows south into the Dead Sea.

Barclay on **Gennesaret** - It lies in a dip in the earth’s surface and is 680 feet below sea level. That fact gives it an almost tropical climate. Nowadays it is not very populous but in the days of Jesus it had nine townships clustered round its shores, none of fewer than 15,000 people. Gennesaret is really the name of the lovely plain on the west side of the lake, a most fertile piece of land. The Jews loved to play with derivations, and they had three derivations for Gennesaret all of which show how beautiful it was. (i) From kinnor, which means a harp, either because “its fruit is as sweet as the sound of a harp” or because “the voice of its waves is pleasant as

the voice of the harp." (ii) From gan, a garden, and sar, a prince—hence "the prince of gardens." (iii) From gan, a garden, and asher, riches—hence "the garden of riches." (Gospel of Luke - Chapter 5).

William Barclay's on the **Sea of Galilee** from the Gospel of Matthew - ALL Galilee centered round the Sea of Galilee. It is thirteen miles long from north to south, and eight miles across from east to west. The Sea of Galilee is therefore small, and it is interesting to note that Luke, the Gentile, who had seen so much more of the world, never calls it the sea (thalassa), but always the lake (limnē). It is the shape of an oval, wider at the top than at the bottom. It lies in that great rift in the earth's surface in which the Jordan valley runs, and the surface of the Sea of Galilee is six hundred and eighty feet below sea level. The fact that it lies in this dip in the earth's surface gives it a very warm climate, and makes the surrounding countryside phenomenally fertile. It is one of the loveliest lakes in the world. W. M. Thomson describes it: "Seen from any point of the surrounding heights it is a fine sheet of water—a burnished mirror set in a framework of rounded hills and rugged mountains, which rise and roll backward and upward to where Hermon hangs the picture against the blue vault of heaven." In the days of Josephus there were no fewer than nine populous cities on its shore. In the 1930's, when H. V. Morton saw it, only Tiberias was left and it was little more than a village. Today it is the largest town in Galilee and steadily growing. In the time of Jesus the Sea of Galilee was thick with fishing boats. Josephus on a certain expedition had no difficulty in assembling two hundred and forty fishing boats to set out from Tarichaea; but nowadays the fishermen are few and far between. **There were three methods of fishing.** There was fishing by line. There was fishing with the casting net. The casting net was circular, and might be as much as nine feet across. It was skillfully cast into the water from the land, or from the shallow water at the edge of the lake. It was weighted with pellets of lead round the circumference. It sank into the sea and surrounded the fishes; it was then drawn through the water as if the top of a bell tent were being drawn to land, and in it the fish were caught. That was the kind of net that Peter and Andrew, and James and John, were handling when Jesus saw them. Its name was the amphiblēstron. The drag net was used from a boat, or better from two boats. It was cast into the water with ropes at each of the four corners. It was weighted at the foot so that, as it were, it stood upright in the water. When the boats were rowed along with the net behind them, the effect was that the net became a great cone, and in the cone the fishes were caught and brought into the boat. This kind of net is the net in the parable of the dragnet; and is called the sagene. (Daily Study Bible - Matthew 4)

Josephus was so impressed by the beauty of the Sea of Galilee and the fertility of its setting that he wrote, "One may call this place the ambition of Nature".

Mark Twain visited the Sea of Galilee in 1867 and wrote - "In the starlight, Galilee has no boundaries but the broad compass of the heavens, and is a theatre meet for great events; meet for the birth of a religion able to save a world (**Ed**: Fascinating statement for an agnostic! He knew ABOUT Jesus, but he did not KNOW Him!); and meet for the stately **Figure** appointed to stand upon its stage and proclaim its high decrees. But in the sunlight, one says: Is it for the deeds which were done and the words which were spoken in this little acre of rocks and sand eighteen centuries gone, that the bells are ringing to-day in the remote islands of the sea and far and wide over continents that clasp the circumference of the huge globe?" (MY ANSWER? YES, LET IT BE LORD. AMEN!)

Was pressing (present tense - continually pressing)(1945)(**epikeimai** from **epí** - upon, and **keímai =** to lie on) means literally be placed on, lie on. (John 11:38; 21:9); Figuratively **epikeimai** means to be laid upon, imposed upon, e.g., of a necessity laid upon the apostle Paul (1 Cor. 9:16). By implication, to lie heavy upon, push against, press upon (Luke 5:1). Figuratively of a storm beat on, pressing upon (the rush and swirl of the tempest), raging around (Acts 27.20). Metaphorically to press upon, be urgent with entreaties, to continue with entreaties, as in Lk 23:23 where the crowd had no desire for compromise and thus refused to let Pilate's verdict stand but were insisting (imperfect tense = over and over they insisted - vivid picture of this tumultuous scene!) with loud voices ("mega phone") that Jesus be crucified. Of legal ordinances be imposed, be in control over, have power over (Heb 9.10) conveying the idea of what is painful and/or burdensome.

Mattoon - This same word was used to describe the pressure and power of a terrible storm or hurricane. The passion of these folks was very intense. The sense of urgency and interest of the people to hear the words of Christ indicated the spiritual vacuum that characterized the people in that region. They were starving spiritually and found satisfaction in sitting at the feet of the Bread of Life, the Lord Jesus Christ. Let me ask right here, "Do you have this same kind of attitude for the Word of God or for the Lord Jesus Christ? Do you hunger to learn His truths? Is there a desire to learn more about Christ and how you can serve Him better or have you become distracted or satisfied with other matters?" Instead of a close walk with God, are you in the pursuit of prestige, position, popularity, or power? (Mattoon - Treasures from the Scriptures)

The 19th century Bible scholar G. S. Bowes pointed out the ultimate futility of ambition and quest for power and prestige that isn't accompanied by a fervent dedication to God. Citing four powerful world rulers of the

past, here is what Mr. Bowes wrote:

Alexander the Great was not satisfied, even when he had completely subdued the nations. He wept because there were no more worlds to conquer, and he died at an early age in a state of debauchery.

Hannibal, who filled three bushels with the gold rings taken from the knights he had slaughtered, committed suicide by swallowing poison. Few noted his passing, and he left this earth completely unmourned.

Julius Caesar, staining his garments in the blood of one million of his foes, conquered 800 cities, only to be stabbed by his best friends at the scene of his greatest triumph.

Napoleon, the feared conqueror, after being the scourge of Europe, spent his last years in banishment.

Beloved, these men in the end were left with nothing because they pursued vanity. The Bible, on the other hand, repeatedly assures us that if we will thirst and hunger for the Lord, we will find the satisfaction that we are looking for in our lives. This is why we are challenged to seek God's truth and have a hunger for His fellowship and presence.

Epikeimai - 7x in 7v - Usage: am under(1), assailing(1), imposed(1), insistent(1), lying(1), placed(1), pressing around(1).

Luke 5:1 Now it happened that while the crowd was **pressing** around Him and listening to the word of God, He was standing by the lake of Gennesaret;

Luke 23:23 But they were **insistent**, (kept up the pressure-CSB; they insistently demanded - NIV) with loud voices asking that He be crucified. And their voices began to prevail.

John 11:38 So Jesus, again being deeply moved within, came to the tomb. Now it was a cave, and a stone was **lying (placed across)** against it.

Comment: From the usage of the verb in 11:38 one can conclude that the structure of the tomb of Lazarus is to be visualized differently from that of the tomb of Jesus, for which a large stone blocked the horizontal access to the tomb. The tomb of Lazarus is to be visualized as a hole in the ground covered and sealed by a stone. This structure corresponds to the graves spoken of in Luke 11:44 and the tomb of Lazarus which is currently displayed

John 21:9 So when they got out on the land, they saw a charcoal fire already laid and fish **placed on** it, and bread.

Acts 27:20 Since neither sun nor stars appeared for many days, and no small storm was **assailing** us, from then on all hope of our being saved was gradually abandoned.

1 Corinthians 9:16 For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for I **am under** compulsion (KJV and ESV more literal = "necessity is laid upon me"); for woe is me if I do not preach the gospel.

Hebrews 9:10 since they relate only to food and drink and various washings, regulations for the body **imposed** until a time of reformation.

Word (3056)(**logos** from **légō** = to speak with words; English = logic, logical) means something said and describes a communication whereby the mind finds expression in words. Although **Lógos** is most often translated **word** which Webster defines as "something that is said, a statement, an utterance", the Greek understanding of **lógos** is somewhat more complex. Logos was in use among Greeks before John used it used to denote principle which maintains order in world. I like that in regard to the Word of God for indeed that alone is what really maintains order in the world! Logos has the double meaning of thought and speech.

Lake (3041)(**limne** from **leíbo** = pour; limnology is the study of bodies of fresh water) refers to a body of (fresh) water, a pool, a lake. Limne is used (a) in the Gospels, only by Luke, of the Sea of Galilee, Luke 5:2; Luke 8:22, 23, 33, called Gennesaret in Luke 5:1 (Matthew and Mark use thalassa, "a sea"); (b) of the **"lake" of fire**, which is a synonym for Gehenna (geenna), the second death (Rev 20:14+), the final above of "death and Hades" (Rev 20:14+), the final abode of the beast (Antichrist), his false prophet (Rev 19:20+) and all whose name is not found in the **Book of Life** (Rev 20:15+), described as a place of "fire which burns with brimstone." (Rev 19:20+). See article on See **Births, Deaths, and Resurrections**.

Limne - 11x in 10v - Three uses in the Septuagint Ps 107:35, 114:8, Song 7:4.

Luke 5:1+ Now it happened that while the crowd was pressing around Him and listening to the word of God, He was standing by the **lake** of Gennesaret;
Luke 5:2+ and He saw two boats lying at the edge of the **lake**; but the fishermen had gotten out of them and were washing their nets.

Luke 8:22+ Now on one of those days Jesus and His disciples got into a boat, and He said to them, "Let us go over to the other side of the **lake**." So they launched out.
Luke 8:23+ But as they were sailing along He fell asleep; and a fierce gale of wind descended on the**lake**, and they began to be swamped and to be in danger.
Luke 8:33+ And the demons came out of the man and entered the swine; and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the **lake** and was drowned.

Revelation 19:20-note And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet who performed the signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image; these two were thrown alive (DON'T MISS THIS DETAIL - THEY WILL NOT BE ANNIHILATED BUT ETERNALLY PUNISHED!) into the **lake** of fire which burns with brimstone.
Revelation 20:10-note And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the **lake** of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.
Revelation 20:14-note Then death and Hades were thrown into the**lake** of fire. This is the second death, the **lake** of fire.
Revelation 20:15-note And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the **lake** of fire.
Revelation 21:8-note "But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in the **lake** that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

ILLUSTRATION Years ago the British agnostic Thomas Huxley had to leave early one morning to go from one speaking assignment to another, so he got into a horse-drawn taxi to go from his hotel to the train station. He assumed that the hotel doorman had told the driver of the carriage that they were to go to the train station. So when he got in, he simply said to the driver, “Drive fast.” Off they went. After a short while, Huxley, who was somewhat familiar with the area, realized that they were actually going in the opposite direction from the train station. He yelled to the driver, “Do you know where you’re going?” Without looking back, the driver replied, “No, sir, but I’m driving very fast.” Obviously, it doesn’t do much good to go fast if you’re not going in the right direction! Yet, many people, even Christians, are like that. Their lives are busy, they are going full bore, but they haven’t stopped to evaluate where they ought to be going. Before we know it, life has whizzed by, but we haven’t spent it focused on the right purpose. As Christians, we all would agree that if we want to spend our lives properly, we must be in line with God’s purpose.

In Luke 5:1-11, we see the Lord Jesus helping some fishermen get their lives aimed in the right direction. **Scholars are divided over whether this incident is identical with Jesus’ call of these fishermen as recorded in Matthew 4:18-22 and Mark 1:16-20**. We probably must leave the question somewhat undecided. But we know that John 1:35-42 records the first meeting between Jesus and Peter. The incident in our text takes place about one year later. James and John, and perhaps some others, such as Peter’s brother, Andrew (although unnamed), were present, but the focus in our text is on Jesus and Peter. These men had all met Jesus and had begun to follow Him, but they were not yet completely committed to His mission. This incident redirected their lives. (Luke 5:1-11 Catching Fish or Men?)

William MacDonald in Believer's Bible Commentary (can be borrowed) has an excellent practical summary of Luke 5:1-11 - These would make great teaching/preaching points.

Several important lessons emerge from this simple account of the call of Peter.

1. **The Lord used Peter’s boat as a pulpit from which to teach the multitude** If we yield all our property and possessions to the Savior, it is wonderful how He uses them, and rewards us too.

2. **He told Peter exactly where to find plenty of fish—after Peter and the others had toiled all night without success** The omniscient Lord knows where the fish are running. Service carried on by our own wisdom and strength is futile. The secret of success in Christian work is to be guided by Him.

3. **Though an experienced fisherman himself, Peter accepted advice from a Carpenter,** and as a result, the nets were filled. “… at Your word I will let down the net.” This shows the value of humility, of teachability, and of implicit obedience.

4. **It was in deep waters that the nets were filled to the breaking point.** So we must quit hugging the shore and launch out on full surrender’s tide. Faith has its deep waters, and so do suffering, sorrow, and loss. It is these that fill the nets with fruitfulness.

5. **Their net began to break and the ships began to sink** (Lk 5:6, 7). Christ-directed service produces problems—but what delightful problems they are. They are the kind of problems that thrill the heart of a true fisherman.

6. **This vision of the glory of the Lord Jesus produced in Peter an overpowering sense of his own unworthiness** It was so with Isaiah 6:5; it is so with all who see the King in His beauty.

7. **It was while Peter was engaged in his ordinary employment that Christ called him to be a fisher of men** While you are waiting for guidance, do whatever your hand finds to do. Do it with all your might. Do it heartily as to the Lord. Just as a rudder guides a ship only when it is in motion, so God guides men when they too are in motion.

8. **Christ called Peter from catching fish to catching men, or more literally, "taking men alive."** What are all the fish in the ocean compared to the incomparable privilege of seeing one soul won for Christ and for eternity!

9. **Peter, James, and John pulled their boats up on the beach and forsook all and followed Jesus** on one of the best business days of their lives. And how much hung on their decision! We would probably never have heard of them if they had chosen to stay by their ships.

Luke 5:2 and He saw two boats lying at the edge of the lake; but the fishermen had gotten out of them and were washing their nets.

- **washing**: Mt 4:21 Mk 1:19
- Luke 5:1-11 Characteristics of Jesus' Divinity, Part 1 - John MacArthur
- Luke 5:1-11 Characteristics of Jesus' Divinity, Part 2 - John MacArthur
- Luke 5:1-11 Catching Fish or Men? - Steven Cole
- J C Ryle's Comments on Luke 5 clear, devout, and accurate
- Luke 5 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

"**The Jesus Boat**"

JESUS PLANS TO SHIFT PULPIT
FROM SHORE TO SHIP

And He saw two (duo) **boats** (ploion) **lying at the edge of the lake -** Why does Luke give us this detail? Jesus is being pressed toward the water by the crowd and needs to change His pulpit. We soon see why Luke says there were two boats -- that would give Jesus a choice which would prove providential and life-changing for one of the boat owners!

But the fishermen (halieus) **had gotten out of them and were washing** (pluno in imperfect tense - pictures them washing one net, then another net, one after another) **their nets** (diktuon) - They would fish at night and wash nets during the day. While the crowd pressed to hear Jesus, the fishermen Peter, James, John and their father Zebedee were washing and mending (Mt. 4:21+; Mk 1:19+). They were focused on their work at this point in their life, not on His Word (although in fairness perhaps they could hear Him from where they were working). It had been a bad night for fishing as Peter explained in Lk 5:5 "we worked hard all night and caught nothing." Jesus' is about to turn their world upside down (He does that when He comes into our lives!) and to shift their minds off of their fishing nets and onto the Master Fisher of Men, the Messiah! As **Trench** says Jesus was "designing Himself...to take the fishermen in *His* net"! The fisherman would themselves soon be caught in the Master's net!

> **THOUGHT** - Why did Jesus choose these busy **fishermen** who had no theological training? Someone has said that when God looks for someone to use in a special mission, He looks for the person who is already busy, the energetic individual.

David Thompson adds "Jesus calls those to become part of His team who are faithfully doing their work in the secular world. God does not call lazy shirkers into His service; they call themselves into service." (Sermon)

> **THOUGHT**: Has Jesus been trying to get your attention off of the temporal and onto the eternal, but you are resisting relaxing your grip on temporal trinkets and failing to trust the guidance of the Master? As you read this note, the Spirit of Jesus may be calling out to you to "Drop the net!" Let the words of that great old hymn be your watchword - **Trust and obey** for there's no other way to be happy in Jesus but to trust and obey!

When we walk with the Lord in the light of His Word,
What a glory He sheds on our way!
While we do His good will, He abides with us still,
And with all who will trust and obey.

Refrain:
Trust and obey, for there's no other way
To be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.

Mt 4:21 and Mk 1:19+ say they were "**mending** (katartizo) **the nets**" which suggests Matthew and Mark were describing a different event. It is notable that Mark's account mentions **Andrew** (Mk 1:16+), while Luke's account does not, which could support Luke's account as distinct from Mark's account.

Darrell Bock on why the accounts in Matthew and Mark are not perfect parallel accounts of Luke 5:1-11 - "Fitzmyer (1981: 560) notes **three differences between Mark and Luke** that seem to suggest distinct events. **(1)** Jesus teaches in Luke 5:1–3 and is not merely passing by as in Mark 1:16+ and Matt. 4:18. **(2)** In Luke, the call is made after the miracle (Luke 5:4–9); in Mark 1:16–17, 19–20+ and Matt. 4:18–19, 21–22, the nets are merely being cast and washed. In other words, in Luke's Gospel Jesus causes the men to fish, while the other Synoptics have them fishing already. To Fitzmyer's observation on this point, I add one more detail. In the one-event view, it is strange that the "developed" Lucan account has only one call, while the "simpler" Matthew and Mark have two. **(3)** The call in Luke 5:10 is made exclusively to Simon but all follow, whereas in Mark and Matthew, all are called. In Mark 1:17 and Matt. 4:19, the call to be fishers of people is made to both Simon and Andrew. Though Fitzmyer explains the differences in his own way, they seem significant enough to suggest distinct events." (See Luke - Baker Exegetical Commentary)

Two (1417)(**duo** indeclinable, used for all genders) the cardinal number 2. The phrase "two or three" (Mt 18:20; 1 Co 14:29) means some, a few. Luke's attention to detail.

Boats (4142)(**ploion** from **pléo** = to float, sail) refers to a ship, vessel (Acts 20:13, 38; 21:2, 3; 27:2, 6, 10; Jas 3:4). In the Gospels = small fishing vessels on Sea of Galilee (Mt 4:21, 22; Mk 4:1, 36; Lu 5:2, 3; Jn 6:17, 19; Ge 49:13; Dt 28:68; Jonah 1:3–5) Here in Luke 5:3 **ploion** refers to a small boat, an open craft some twenty to thirty feet in length.

Related Resources:

- Wikipedia article on the Sea of Galilee boat
- Interesting article on the Galilean Fishing Economy

Fishermen (231)(**halieus** from **hals** = the sea) is literally one who earned their living from the sea, catching fish. Jesus introduced the great figurative meaning of men who would now be catching men instead of fish. They would be evangelizing and winning disciples to Christ (Mk 1:17, Mt 4:19+). Fishermen on Galilee did not enjoy a high social standing, but their work required skill and was profitable.

> **Halieus** - fishermen(3), fishers(2). - Matt. 4:18; Matt. 4:19; Mk. 1:16; Mk. 1:17; Lk. 5:2. **Septuagint** = Job 41:7; Isa. 19:8; Jer. 16:16; Ezek. 47:10

Washing (imperfect tense - again and again)(4150)(**pluno**) used here literally washing and here of fishing nets. In secular use of washing clothes. The other two uses are in Revelation - Thayer says pluno "is used of those who by faith so appropriate the results of Christ's expiation as to be regarded by God as pure and sinless (Rev. 7:14). In **Septuagint** used of washing garments (Ge 49:11, Ex 19:10) as well as parts of the sacrificial animal (Lev 1:9+ = "'Its entrails, however, and its legs he shall **wash** with water") with most uses in Leviticus. Used figuratively in Ps 51:2,7+ by David in his plea after his sin with Bathsheba - "**Wash** (aorist imperative) me thoroughly from my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin....7 "**Wash** me, and I shall be whiter than snow." Rev 7:14+ = "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and **they have washed** their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." Rev 22:14+ = "Blessed are those who **wash** their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter by the gates into the city." The picture in Revelation is of saints who by grace have "**washed**" their robes (figuratively) by believing in the atoning blood of the Lamb of God and thereby are forgiven of all their sins against God.

> **Pluno** in **Septuagint** - Gen. 49:11; Exod. 19:10; Exod. 19:14; Exod. 29:17; Lev. 1:9; Lev. 1:13; Lev. 6:27; Lev. 8:21; Lev. 9:14; Lev. 11:25; Lev. 11:28; Lev. 11:40; Lev. 13:6; Lev. 13:34; Lev. 13:54; Lev. 13:55; Lev. 13:56; Lev. 13:58; Lev. 14:8; Lev. 14:9; Lev. 14:47; Lev. 15:5; Lev. 15:6; Lev. 15:7; Lev. 15:8; Lev. 15:10; Lev. 15:11; Lev. 15:13; Lev. 15:17; Lev. 15:21; Lev. 15:22; Lev. 15:27; Lev. 16:26; Lev. 16:28; Lev. 17:15; Lev. 17:16; Num. 8:7; Num. 8:21; Num. 19:7; Num. 19:8; Num. 19:10; Num. 19:19; Num. 19:21; Num. 31:24; 2 Sam. 19:24; 2 Chr. 4:6; Ps. 51:2; Ps. 51:7; Mal. 3:2;

Nets (1350)(**diktuon**) is a general name for all nets including the hunting net, the net with which birds are taken, and the fishing net. Diktuon is used figuratively in the Septuagint - of a snare in Job 18:8 and Pr 29:5 (flattery is the snare! MESSAGE = Watch out when folks flatter you!!!).

Diktuon - 13x in 11v - Matt. 4:20; Matt. 4:21; Mk. 1:18; Mk. 1:19; Lk. 5:2; Lk. 5:4; Lk. 5:5; Lk. 5:6; Jn. 21:6; Jn. 21:8; Jn. 21:11

Diktuon - 21x in 18v in the Septuagint - 1 Ki. 7:17; 1 Ki. 7:41; 1 Ki. 7:42; 2 Chr. 4:12; 2 Chr. 4:13; Job 18:8; Pr 1:17; Pr 29:5; Song 2:9; Jer. 52:22; Jer. 52:23; Lam. 1:13; Ezek. 12:13; Ezek. 17:20; Ezek. 19:8; Ezek. 32:3; Hos. 5:1; Hos. 7:12;

> Job 18:8 "For he is thrown into the net by his own feet, And he steps on the webbing.
>
> Proverbs 1:17 Indeed, it is useless to spread the baited net In the sight of any bird;
>
> Proverbs 29:5 A man who flatters his neighbor Is spreading a net for his steps.
>
> Hosea 7:12 When they go, I will spread My net over them; I will bring them down like the birds of the sky. I will chastise them in accordance with the proclamation to their assembly.

Fausset - three kinds of nets are described in Scripture

1. **Diktuon** (from diko "to throw, to cast"); let down, cast, and drawn to shore (Luke 5:2-6; John 21:6-11; Matthew 4:18-22).

2. **Amphiblestron**, "a cast net," from amphiballo "cast about," (amphi = round about + ballo = throw) "cast hither and there" (Mt 4:18; Mk 1:16). The Egyptians make it a tent over their sleeping place to ward off insects (Herodotus ii. 95). (**Ed**: These were skillfully thrown over one's shoulder by a man standing on the shore or in a boat, the net spreading out into a circle, sinking from the lead weights and trapping the fish beneath).

3. **Sageene** , from sattoo "to load" (Matthew 13:47), "a net ... cast into the sea ... gathered (together) of every kind," a sweepnet or dragnet (Habakkuk 1:14 michmereth), or drawnet "seine," that takes in the compass of a small bay. In Pr 1:17 explain "surely in vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird," because the bird sees the net and is on its guard; so youths warned by God's word raise their souls heavenward, on the wings of the fear, faith, and love of God, as the bird flies upward; and therefore escape the net which the tempters fancy they are going to entrap the "innocent" in, but in which really "their own blood and their own lives" are taken (Pr 1:11; Pr 1:18). The tempters think that their intended victims are "innocent in vain" (so translated for "without cause"), i.e. that their innocence will not save them; but it is themselves who "spread the net in vain" (Ps 7:15-16; 9:15; Revelation 16:6). A net is also the image of God's vengeance, which surprises in a moment and inextricably the sinner, when he least expects (Lamentations 1:13; Ezek 12:13; Hos7:12). In 1 Ki 7:17 netted checker work about a pillar's capital.

Washing the Nets - Why would these fishermen be **washing their nets**? Any good net is going to pick up debris. If you do not wash the net this is what will happen.

1. The Fumes of Decay: The net will stink up the boat. Nets catch dead fish, mud, and seaweed from off the bottom of the lake or sea. This debris is pulled into the boat when the net is retrieved and will rot and stink if the net is not cleaned. If the fish and mollusks were not cleared from the nets, rats would feed on the dead debris and chew on the nets, making big holes in them.

2. The Flimsiness of the Cord: If the net is not washed, the cord of the net will eventually rot and weaken the net, making it unreliable, ineffective, and useless.

3. Frustration for the Fishermen: If the net is not cleaned, it will make the work of the fishermen much more difficult. Why? The net is meant to be almost invisible and to easily slide through the waters of the sea. Debris will hinder the ease of the movement of the net.

4. The Fish will be Frightened: The net will frighten the fish if it is not clean. Fish can see a dirty net, even from a long distance. Because of its low location, the Sea of Galilee did not have a lot of movement and tidal flow to stir up the water. There was not a large amount of silt in this sea. This was a problem for net fishermen. The water was usually very clear, making it easier for the fish to see the nets and the boats. This is why most of the fishing was done at night in this region.

Our lives are like these nets in a way. What is a net? It is a bunch of holes tied together for a purpose. A whole is in essence "nothing." As Christians, we are a bunch of nothings, united and tied together by the Lord Jesus Christ, for the purpose of catching the heart and souls of men by pointing them to Christ.

If we are going to be effective, if we are going to be reliable, if we are going to be fruitful and fulfill the purpose for which we were

redeemed, then we need to keep ourselves clean from sinfulness. The stench of sinful habits, need to be removed from our lives. If we fail to do this, we spiritually stink. We become weak in our faith and service for Christ. We create more frustration and stress for ourselves by the complications created by our sin. Finally, like fish spooked by dirty nets, others are repulsed by the sinful debris they see in our own lives. Our eye, our energy, our enthusiasm should be focused on our example for Jesus Christ. (Mattoon - Treasures from the Scriptures)

Luke 5:3 And He got into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little way from the land. And He sat down and began teaching the people from the boat.

- **He got**: Mt 4:18 John 1:41,42
- **He sat**: Mt 13:1,2 Mk 4:1,2, John 8:2
- Luke 5:1-11 Characteristics of Jesus' Divinity, Part 1 - John MacArthur
- Luke 5:1-11 Characteristics of Jesus' Divinity, Part 2 - John MacArthur
- Luke 5:1-11 Catching Fish or Men? - Steven Cole
- J C Ryle's Comments on Luke 5 - clear, devout, and accurate
- Luke 5 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

JESUS FINDS A FLOATING PULPIT!

He got into one of the boats, which was Simon's - Two boats but He can only get into one and He gets into Simon's boat, again showing us the providence and purpose of God! Jesus had plans for Simon. Simon is now "**front and center**" in Mt 5:1-11. He was the owner of the boat, a fact that makes the phrase "they left everything and followed Him" (Lk 5:11) even more striking. Jesus is personally training the man who would be the leader of the disciples. Don't miss the thought that every thought, word and deed of Jesus had as its goal an eternal purpose. In this case Luke has already set the scene by telling us there are two boats. Now we find out that the seemingly useless detail is useful! Of the two boats, Jesus choose the boat Simon Peter was in! Clearly, our Lord was honing in on Simon! Now Simon would have a front row seat and no excuse not to hear what Jesus was teaching! Jesus never did anything by chance or at random. O, to be so eternally purposeful in our every daily thought, word and deed! Let it be Lord! Amen!

"Every pulpit is a fishing boat, a place to give out the Word of God
and attempt to catch fish."
-- J Vernon McGee

Spurgeon - It is very difficult to speak effectively when the people come too close to the speaker; and, sometimes, a little inconvenience like that may interfere with the flow of the speaker's thoughts and words. Even the Saviour seems to have felt that he needed a little breathing space between himself and his audience. That (boat) was what some people would have called an unconsecrated place, but Christ's presence consecrated it, as it does every place where he condescends to meet with us.

"Where're we seek him, he is found,
And every place is hallowed ground."

John MacArthur explains that "The time had come for Him to move not only into Peter's boat, but more intensely into his life, along with the other two who would become His inner circle, James and John, to lift them to the highest level of commitment." (See Luke Commentary)

Thomas Constable on **Simon** - This was not the first time Jesus had talked with Peter and the other disciples mentioned. Andrew had told his brother Peter that he had found the Messiah (cf. John 1:41). However these disciples' thought of the Messiah as their contemporaries did. They expected a political deliverer who was less than God. Jesus had to teach them that He was God as well as Messiah. This lesson and its implications took all of Jesus' ministry to communicate. (Notes on the Bible)

Henry Morris on **Simon** - This was not the first time He had met Simon Peter (John 1:40-42). He had first called Peter and Andrew to follow Him when John the Baptist had so directed them. Although they were intermittently with Him as He traveled around Galilee, they still continued plying their fishermen's trade as well (see note on Matthew 4:18-20). On this occasion, however, they "forsook all" to go with Him (Luke 5:11). Luke's record is not strictly chronological but topical.

And asked him to put out (epanago) **a little way from the land** - Apparently Simon was in the boat or near it washing the net and Jesus makes this request. This is the first of two requests He makes to Simon. This one is easy to obey and Simon obeys. The shore of the lake provided an excellent acoustic "amphitheater."

And He sat down - It was is the rabbinic practice to sit down to teach (Mt. 5:1; 13:1–2; 15:29; 24:3; 26:55; Mk 4:1; 9:35; 13:3; John 6:3; 8:2). Jesus is the ultimate "Rabbi" and He follows this pattern. Jesus also frequently taught in natural settings (Mt. 5:1; Lk 6:17; Mk 8:1, 4)

"I love a commodious room, a soft cushion and a handsome pulpit,
but field preaching saves souls."
-- John Wesley

Began teaching (didasko in imperfect tense - one point, then another and another) **the people from the boat** - Jesus used a fishing vessel as a pulpit with the docks as a meeting hall. At other times He chose a convenient spot on a mountain as his pulpit (Mt 5:1), or a house (Lk 5:17 f.), or a desert (Mk 8:1, 4), or even a cemetery (Jn 11:38).

> **THOUGHT** - What can we learn from Jesus' teaching from the boat? Are you seeking a pulpit? If you are a believer, you have the Holy Spirit Who will empower you to give testimony from any "pulpit" God chooses to provide - a plane seat, a cafe, a family holiday, the office (but be sure you don't "steal" company time!), the schoolroom, etc. May God's Spirit open our eyes to the "pulpits" He has already placed before us to speak of His Son Jesus. Amen

Christ uses Peter's boat as a pulpit,
whence to throw the net of the Gospel over His hearers.
-- Alfred Plummer

John MacArthur - No matter what the exigencies or difficulties, Jesus would not be deterred from preaching the Word of God, which the Father had sent Him to do (Lk 4:43; Mark 1:38). (See Luke Commentary)

This was the first but not the last time Jesus used a boat for His pulpit for the teaching of some of His first parables, Matthew recording...

> And large crowds gathered to Him, so He got into a boat and sat down, and the whole crowd was standing on the beach. And He spoke many things to them in parables, saying, "Behold, the sower went out to sow; (Matthew 13:2-3)
>
> **Comment**: As in Luke 5, Jesus had to get into a boat and sit down because of the crush of the crowd.

J C Ryle - We should observe, in this passage — our Lord Jesus Christ's unwearied readiness for every good work. Once more we find Him preaching to a people who "pressed upon Him to hear the word of God." (Lk 5:1) And where does He preach? Not in any consecrated building, or place set apart for public worship — but in the open air; not in a pulpit constructed for a preacher's use — but in a fisherman's boat. Souls were waiting to be fed. Personal inconvenience was allowed no place in His consideration. God's work must not stand still. The servants of Christ should learn a lesson from their Master's conduct on this occasion. We are not to wait until every little difficulty or obstacle is removed — before we put our hand to the plough, or go forth to sow the seed of the word. We may often be lacking convenient buildings for assembling a company of hearers. We may often be lacking convenient rooms for gathering children to Sunday school. What, then, are we to do? Shall we sit still and do nothing? God forbid! If we cannot do all that we want — then let us do what we can. Let us work with such tools as we have. While we are lingering and delaying — souls are perishing. It is the slothful heart that is always looking at the hedge of thorns and the lion in the way. (Pr 15:19; 22:13.) Where we are and as we are, in season of out of season (2 Ti 4:2), by one means or by another, by tongue or by pen, by speaking or by writing — let us strive to be ever working for God. But let us never stand still. (Amen!) (J C Ryle's Comments on Luke 5)

William Barclay - We are here confronted with a turning point in the career of Jesus. Last time we heard him preach he was in the synagogue (Lk 4:16-21+); now he is at the lakeside. True, he will be back in the synagogue again; but the time is coming when the door of the synagogue will be shut to him and his church will be the lakeside and the open road, and his pulpit a boat. He would go anywhere where men would listen to him. "Our societies," said John Wesley, "were formed from those who were wandering upon the dark mountains, that belonged to no Christian church; but were awakened by the preaching of the Methodists, who had pursued them through the wilderness of this world to the High-ways and the Hedges—to the Markets and the Fairs—to the Hills and the Dales—who set up the Standard of the Cross in the Streets and Lanes of the Cities, in the Villages, in the Barns, and Farmers' Kitchens, etc.—and all this done in such a way, and to such an extent, as never had been done before since the Apostolic age." When the synagogue was shut Jesus took to the open road. (Luke 5)

Teaching (imperfect tense) (1321)(**didasko** from **dáo**= know or teach; English = didactic; see study of related noun **didaskalia** and the adjective **didaktikos**) means to provide instruction or information in a formal or informal setting.

John MacArthur explains that **didasko** "refers to the passing on of information-often, but not necessarily, in a

formal setting. It focused on content, with the purpose of discovering the truth-contrary to the forums so popular among Greeks, where discussion and the bantering about of various ideas and opinions was the primary concern (see Acts 17:21). Synagogue teaching, as illustrated by that of Jesus, was basically expository. Scripture was read and explained section by section, often verse by verse." (See Matthew Commentary)

MacArthur adds that didasko "In all the various forms, the root meaning carries with it the idea of systematic teaching or systematic training. It is the word that is used to refer to a choir director who trains a choir over a long period of rehearsals until they are able to perform. The gift of prophecy could be a one-time proclamation of Christ, but the gift of teaching is a systematic training problem to take a person from one point to another. What is the curriculum for the teacher? The Bible, the Word of God. The gift is to teach systematically the truth of God.It can be used with men—one on one, one on two, one on three, one on five thousand. It can be used with women—one on one, one on two, one on three, one on five thousand. It can be used by a lady in a little group of children. It can be used by a mother to a son. It can be used by a husband to his wife. It can be used in any conceivable way that the Spirit of God desires. It is the ability to pass on truth in a systematic progression so that someone receives it, implements it, and a change of behavior takes place. In fact, it is a gift that belongs to a lot more of us than we realize. (See Spiritual Gifts)

Luke 5:4 When He had finished speaking, He said to Simon, "Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch."

- Let down: Mt 17:27 John 21:6
- Luke 5:1-11 Characteristics of Jesus' Divinity, Part 1 - John MacArthur
- Luke 5:1-11 Characteristics of Jesus' Divinity, Part 2 - John MacArthur
- Luke 5:1-11 Catching Fish or Men? - Steven Cole
- J C Ryle's Comments on Luke 5 - clear, devout, and accurate
- Luke 5 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

NET He got into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little way from the shore. Then Jesus sat down and taught the crowds from the boat.

NLT 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.

Click to enlarge

SET SAIL AND
LET DOWN YOUR NETS!

When He had finished speaking - ("When He had ceased speaking") The "sermon" was over. Simon had been in the "front row!" A veritable "captive audience!" Now it was time for application! Now it is time for a "pop test!"

THOUGHT - When Sunday passes, do the lessons and application of the sermon teaching also pass from your mind for the next 6 days? Or do you "*put out into the deep water*?" What effect might Peter's hearing of the Lord's words have had on him? The Word of God stimulates faith. Paul writes "So **faith** comes from **hearing**, and hearing by the **word** (rhema = the spoken word) **of Christ.** (Ro 10:17+)

Spurgeon - Whenever He borrows a pulpit, or anything else, He pays good interest for the loan. Christ will not be in even a boatman's debt. For every cup of cold water given to His disciples in His Name the Master will take care to pay. (Luke - exposition)

He said to Simon - Unlike the call in Matthew, Luke does not mention Simon Peter's brother Andrew who is mentioned in Mt 4:18 and Mark 1:16, but as noted above, these Gospels may be describing different events.

Imagine the scene - a carpenter instructing fishermen where to cast their nets! Little did they know that the Savior had "supernatural sonar (aka omniscience)!" It was well known that nighttime in the shallow water was the most productive time for fishing, not daytime in the deep water! Jesus was about to turn their world upside down, figuratively and soon literally! Jesus was calling on these experienced fishermen to put in some "overtime" (at the wrong time!) which would forever change their lives!

Put out (epanago) **into the deep water** (bathos) - (Literally "put out into the depth") This is the first of two commands in the aorist imperative. Jesus uses the same verb here in the command that He had just used in the form of a request. A non-fisherman to a seasoned fisherman! Jesus speaks definitively and with authority! He is directing the command to **Simon** to launch the boat as **Simon** was undoubtedly at the helm. He had to obey the first command or could never have obeyed the second command **(let down**) and had he done so, he would have missed a miracle.

> **THOUGHT** - I have often wondered how many "miracles" or spiritual opportunities I have missed because I was in a state of disobedience/rebellion! Notice also how Jesus uses their business to teach these men eternal truths. He can still teach us in our work if we will keep our eyes and ears open and trust and obey. Ask God to give you "eternal vision" no matter what your "temporal" occupation might be. Is He calling you to be bold and daring and to LAUNCH OUT into the deep water, some place you have not previously traversed? Here is an old '90's Christian song entitled "Set Sail" - give it a listen! And then "Set sail" wherever or to whomever Jesus is telling you to go!

And let down (**chalao**) **your nets** (diktuon) **for a catch** - **Let down** is in the aorist imperative - Do this now! Simon had a choice to believe or disbelieve, to obey or disobey! Jesus' classroom was now the lake and it was time for a "Petrine pop test!" Notice that the command **put out** is singular (to Simon) and the next command **let down** is plural suggesting that Simon and his ship mates must let down the nets. This make sense as the nets were probably not easy to manipulate alone. So clearly others were in the boat with Simon Peter.

> **THOUGHT** - Think about Simon's test in these two commands - It was the wrong time of day to fish and the wrong place to fish, and yet Simon obeyed after some making a reasonable argument in Lk 5:5. Peter could have come up with a number of reasons not to obey Jesus - "I worked all night and I'm tired." "I know a lot more about fishing than some carpenter." "All these crowds and loud teaching has scared the fish away." "We already washed our nets." "Jesus may know religion but He doesn't know fishing." (Adapted from Guzik Luke 5) The point is that Simon did what he did because he believed the Word of Jesus. When Jesus directs our work, we see the rewarding result. How many times have we missed making a "great haul of fish" (so to speak) because we have made excuses and/or overtly disobeyed His commands? Woe! Been there, done that!
>
> **Principle** - Obedience leads to increasing knowledge of God Lk 5:4-10 Jn 7:17 Jn 14:21 Col 1:9-10 Ps 25:14

J C Ryle - **We should observe, secondly, in this passage — what encouragement our Lord gives to unquestioning obedience.** We are told, that after preaching He said to Simon, "**Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch**" He receives an answer which exhibits in a striking manner the mind of a good servant. "Master," says Simon, "we have toiled all the night and have caught nothing — nevertheless, at your word I will let down the net." And what was the reward of this ready compliance with the Lord's commands? At once, we are told, "When they had done so — they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break." (Comments on Luke 5)

We need not doubt that a *practical lesson* for all Christians is contained under these simple circumstances. We are meant to learn *the blessing of immediate unhesitating obedience to every plain command of Christ* The path of duty may sometimes be hard and disagreeable. The wisdom of the course we propose to follow, may not be apparent to the world. But none of these things must move us. We are not to confer with flesh and blood. We are to go straight forward when Jesus says, "Go!" We are to do a thing boldly, unflinchingly, and decidedly — when Jesus says, "Do it!" We are to walk by faith, and not by sight — and believe that what we don't see now to be right and reasonable — we shall see hereafter.

So acting, we shall never find in the long run that we are losers. So acting, we shall find, sooner or, later, that we reap a great reward. (Commentary)

Put out (aorist imperative - Do this now!)(1877)(**epanago** from **epi** = on, upon + **anago** = to bring back) is used in Lk 5:3, 4 where it means to push off (from shore) so as to get out into the open water, to set sail. It was a nautical technical term. **Epanago** also can mean to lead back upon or to a place and so to cause to return as in the only other NT use in Mt 21:8.

Deep water (899)(**bathos** is the noun derived from adjective **bathús** = deep) literally describes a distance below a surface and to the depth or a deep place. Bathos is used literally for the **depths** of the earth (Mt 13:5) and here in Luke referring to the depths of the sea.

Let down (aorist imperative - Do this now!)(5465)(**chalao**) means to let go, to loosen, to relax, to let down (from a higher place to a lower place), to dissolve, to lower. Literally of "they let down the pallet on which the paralytic was lying" (Mk 2:4); let down your nets

the boat (Lu 5:4, 5); let down the lifeboat of the ship into the sea (Acts 27:30); lowering Paul in a large basket over a wall (Acts 9:25; "I was let down in a basket" = 2 Co 11:33; "they let Jeremiah down with ropes" = Jer 38:6); as a nautical technical term where Acts 27:17 probably refers to lowering the anchor (cf Lxx - Isa 33:23).

> **Chalao** - 4x in the Septuagint = Ex 36:28; Isa. 33:23; 57:4; Jer. 45:6 and 7x in the NT = Mk. 2:4; Lk. 5:4, 5; Acts 9:25; 27:17,30; 2 Co. 11:33
>
> **Vincent** on **Let down** (**chalao**) The plural, addressed to the whole of the boat's crew. Originally, to slacken or loosen, as a bowstring or the reins of horses; hence to let sink as a net. Also of unbarring a door. Metaphorically, to be indulgent, to pardon. The word occurs in the New Testament seven times, and five of these in Luke. He uses it of letting down Paul in a basket at Damascus (Acts 9:25); of striking a ship's sails, and of letting down a boat into the sea (Acts 27:17, 30). Matthew, Mark, and John (**instead of chalao**) use ballo or amphiballo, for casting a net (Matt. 4:18; 13:47; Mark 1:16; John 21:6), which appears also in the compound noun for a casting-net (amphiblestron, see Mt. 4:18). **Chalao** as used by Luke was in common use in medical writings (**Ed**: explaining why it was used by Luke and not by the other 3 Gospel writers when they spoke of casting fishing nets), to denote relaxation of the limbs (Cf the word cholos derived from chalao = lame = Mt 11:5, 15:30); loosening of bandages; abatement of sickness; letting herbs down into a vessel to be steeped.

Mattoon - There are several thoughts we will bring to the surface here. First of all, there may be times when we need to return to our place of failure in order to find blessing. Some people quit and run from their problems when they face difficulty and never work through them. In so doing, they rob themselves of the blessings that come from "sticking it out" and the lessons that diligence and determination teach. They end up constantly jumping from one place to another because no matter where they go, they encounter difficulties and problems. Beloved, work out your difficulties. Don't be jumping from one job to another, one church to another, or one marriage to another because you won't deal with your difficulties. You may have failed in your relationship with other people. Perhaps, you were offensive or handled a matter unjustly, unfairly, or in the wrong manner. You may have been a lousy husband or wife, and your marriage ended in divorce. Maybe you were an irresponsible employee for your boss and had to quit or you were fired. What do you do? You go back to those whom you hurt or offended and make the issue right. Clear your conscience by seeking forgiveness and make restitution for damages if this is required. Try to restore the relationship and correct the damage you have done if this is possible. This is what Zacchaeus did. Luke 19:8 (Mattoon - Treasures from the Scriptures)

Spurgeon - Morning and Evening - We learn from this narrative, the necessity of human agency. The draught of fishes was miraculous, yet neither the fisherman nor his boat, nor his fishing tackle were ignored; but all were used to take the fishes. So in the saving of souls, God worketh by means; and while the present economy of grace shall stand, God will be pleased by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. When God worketh without instruments, doubtless he is glorified; but he hath himself selected the plan of instrumentality as being that by which he is most magnified in the earth. Means of themselves are utterly unavailing. "Master, we have toiled all the night and have taken nothing." What was the reason of this? Were they not fishermen plying their special calling? Verily, they were no raw hands; they understood the work. Had they gone about the toil unskilfully? No. Had they lacked industry? No, they had toiled. Had they lacked perseverance? No, they had toiled all the night. Was there a deficiency of fish in the sea? Certainly not, for as soon as the Master came, they swam to the net in shoals. What, then, is the reason? Is it because there is no power in the means of themselves apart from the presence of Jesus? "Without him we can do nothing." But with Christ we can do all things. Christ's presence confers success. Jesus sat in Peter's boat, and his will, by a mysterious influence, drew the fish to the net. When Jesus is lifted up in his Church, his presence is the Church's power-the shout of a king is in the midst of her. "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me. " Let us go out this morning on our work of soul fishing, looking up in faith, and around us in solemn anxiety. Let us toil till night comes, and we shall not labour in vain, for he who bids us let down the net, will fill it with fishes.

Questions from R A Torrey Luke 5:1-11 - Of what was Jesus' command a test? (Compare Mark 3:5; John 2:7; 11:39; 21:6.) What was there that made the command look foolish? What was the only thing in favor of letting down the nets? Was that enough? How many objections of our reason and commonsense ought the word of Jesus to outweigh? Why did Jesus tell Peter to launch out into the deep? How did Jesus know just where the fish were? (Ps. 8:6, 8.) What is the first thing Peter says in answer to Jesus' command? Do we ever have such thoughts arise when Jesus commands us? Is the fact that we have tried and failed any reason for stopping trying when Jesus bids us let down our nets? Suppose Peter had given way to his discouragement, what would have been the consequences? How is it when we surrender to our discouragement? What was Peter's second thought and word? What is there in Peter's reply to Jesus that would make a good motto for every Christian worker? How many of His commands will a true disciple obey? (John 2:5; 15:14.) What was the result of Peter's obedience? What always awaits the obedient? (Deut. 11:27; Is. 1:19.) When was it they enclosed the fishes? When is it always that we get the blessing? Did they get fishes enough? What does that illustrate?

What did Peter do in his emergency? Is there any lesson in that? If Peter had been like a great many men what would he have done? Was there enough for both? What would always become of some of our boats if God should load them as fully as we wish? How did Peter's empty boat become so full?

Following Jesus, Lk 5:8-11 - What did Peter then do? What was it made Peter cry to the Lord to depart—the sight of the great catch of fishes, or the sight of the sinking ship? What did Peter see in Christ in the light of this miracle? ("Master," Lk 5:5; "Lord," Lk 5:8.) Was that right? What did Peter see in himself in the light of this miracle? Was that right? Where then was Peter wrong in his cry? If we truly know ourselves and truly know Jesus, will our cry to Him be to depart? Did the time ever come when the recognition of who Jesus was drew Peter to Him? (John 21:6, 7.) What was the effect of the miracle upon all who beheld it? At what were they astonished in the last chapter? (Lk 4:32, 36.) Did Jesus go away because Peter asked Him to? Does He always go away when we wish Him to? Why not? What is Jesus' answer to Peter's "Depart"? (Compare also "Follow Me," Mt. 4:19.) Would it have been a good thing for Peter if Jesus had departed when Peter asked him to? Would it be a good thing for us if Jesus departed when we ask Him to? For what did Jesus take that day's fishing as a symbol? When did Peter make a bigger catch than that day? (Acts 2:41.) Where is the similarity between winning men and catching fish? What was there about Peter that gave promise of his becoming a successful fisher of men? (Lk 5:2, 8, 5, 11). How might Peter know that he would be a successful fisher of men? How did Peter and the others show that they believed Jesus' promise and appreciated His call? Was it right for them to forsake all? Did it pay? (Lk 18:28–30.) How much does it pay to forsake for Christ? (Phil. 3:7, 8.) Did they do right in forsaking the fish business? Did Jesus call Peter to forsake his business the first time He met him? (John 1:40–42.) Was the forsaking of all the important thing they did? When, then, is it right to forsake all? In what sense must every one who would be a disciple of Jesus forsake all? (Luke 14:33+, R. V. and Greek.)

CLASSIFICATION OF TEACHINGS - Luke 5:1-11

1. **Jesus**

His deity, Lk 5:4, 8.

His humanity, Lk 5:3.

His knowledge—of what is in the sea, Lk 5:4; of what is in man, Lk 5:10.

His compassion—for the ignorant, Lk 5:3; for the unsuccessful, Lk 5:4–7; for the sinful, for the fearful, Lk 5:10.

His sympathy with man in his earthly occupation, Lk 5:4.

As a preacher—preached the Word in the open air, drew crowds, Lk 5:1; always ready, thought more of His audience than of His pulpit, preached instructively, Lk 5:3.

2. **The Essential Conditions of Success in Fishing for Men**

Faithfulness in our secular calling, Lk 5:2; a sense of personal sinfulness, a recognition of Christ as Lord, Lk 5:8; unhesitating faith, unquestioning obedience ("Nevertheless at Thy word"), Lk 5:5; fearlessness founded upon the divine promise, Lk 5:10; forsaking all, following Him, Lk 5:11. (R A Torrey)

Steven Cole - **The first lesson is: To catch men for Christ, we must shift our focus from success in business to success in catching people for the Savior.** (from Catching Fish or Men?)

There is nothing wrong with success in business, per se. God wants us to be diligent and to do well in our work. It is not more spiritual to be mediocre in our jobs and it is not inherently more worldly to become successful. Also, when I say that we must shift our focus from success in business to success in catching people for Christ, I am not implying that everyone must leave so-called "secular" employment and work full-time in the gospel. Some are called to do that, as Peter was, but certainly not all. It is not more spiritual to be in full-time ministry than it is to be a faithful servant of the Lord in some other kind of work. It is just a matter of gifts and calling.

But, having said all that, I do insist that if you are a follower of Jesus Christ, you*must* adopt His purpose for your life, and His primary purpose for His children *never* involves becoming a success in our jobs. His word to all of us is, "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures upon earth," but rather, "Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness" (Matt. 6:19, 33). Whatever you do to make a living, your main goal should be to glorify God and your main focus should be to be a witness for Jesus Christ through your behavior, your attitudes, and your words. This requires a shift in focus where you begin to view people as Jesus did and to view yourself as His representative in your sphere of influence. The people you come in contact with are your mission field.

These fishermen just had what was probably the most successful catch of their careers. The two boatloads of fish probably would have brought in a handsome profit at the local market. Like a miner who finally finds some gold, this successful catch probably whet their appetites to go back out and try for more. They easily could have thought, "Wow, if this keeps up, we could get rich!" But because Jesus clearly stated a new focus for them, we read instead, "when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed Him" (5:11). Things changed from this moment because of what Jesus did and said. Catching fish did not compare to

following Jesus and catching men. Christ and His purpose had now captivated them.

> **THOUGHT** - So my question is, *"Are you living for Christ's purpose for your life?"*As I said, this does not mean that you must be gifted in evangelism or that you must go into full-time ministry. Only some are called to do that. But it does mean that because you have met Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord, your life is not your own. You no longer are living for selfish purposes. You live to glorify Jesus Christ and to use the gifts He has given you to help in the great cause of catching people for Him.
>
> It means that at the end of your life, you will not measure success by whether you have accumulated a lot of money or by how high you have climbed on the corporate ladder. You will measure your life by whether you have faithfully used what God has entrusted to you to further His kingdom. Whether directly through your verbal witness or indirectly through your example, your giving, your good works, your service, or whatever, there will be people in heaven because you did not live for yourself, but for Jesus Christ and His kingdom. We have to make this fundamental shift in focus if we want to be used in catching people for Jesus Christ.

Luke 5:5 Simon answered and said, "Master, we worked hard all night and caught nothing, but I will do as You say and let down the nets

---

- **Master**. Lk 8:24, 45. 9:33, 49. 17:13.
- **we** : Ps 127:1,2 Eze 37:11,12 Joh 21:3
- **But**: Lu 6:46-48 2Ki 5:10-14 Eze 37:4-7 Joh 2:5 15:14
- Luke 5:1-11 Characteristics of Jesus' Divinity, Part 1 - John MacArthur
- Luke 5:1-11 Characteristics of Jesus' Divinity, Part 2 - John MacArthur
- Luke 5:1-11 Catching Fish or Men? - Steven Cole
- J C Ryle's Comments on Luke 5 - clear, devout, and accurate
- Luke 5 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

JESUS' WORD IS OUR COMMAND

Simon answered and said, "Master (epistates) - Simon addresses Jesus as **Master** which as explained below seems to be used by Luke in place of Rabbi, probably to avoid offending the ears of Greek readers. **Rabbi** (rhabbi) was a transliterated Hebrew word which literally meant "my great one," and was used in the NT as a respectful term of address for a scribe or one recognized as an outstanding teacher of the law, interpreted in Jn 1.38 "**Rabbi** (which translated means Teacher), where are You staying?"

We worked hard (kopiao) **all night and caught nothing** (oudeis) - Simon was not arguing with Jesus, just stating the obvious facts. They were seasoned fisherman and knew the "good spots" but still had no success. Jesus' command seems to defy logic! And yet what was their response? They trusted His direction and obeyed His command. In short they were expressing real faith in the words of Jesus, for His words ran so contrary to their experience and common sense. Just the Master had issued two commands and they submitted to Him.

> **TECHNICAL NOTE** - Fishermen of the Galilee would fish at night when the schools of fish worked thelir way toward shore to feed on swarms of minnows in the shallower, warmer waters
>
> **THOUGHT** (Brian Bell) - Maybe this sums up your life so far "we've toiled all night and caught nothing." – If so, hear Peters answer for this problem! **Nevertheless at Your word** – best expression when we don't get God! It is okay to express your true feelings, but be sure to end with doing as He commands.
>
> **THOUGHT** - Simon's words remind us of the vital principle declared by Jesus - "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do (ABSOLUTELY) nothing (oudeis) (OF ETERNAL VALUE)." (John 15:5)

Caught nothing - Simon, James and John, despite their expertise and experience at fishing were to be taught by the Master that all of their training (I would insert "seminary training" here) is worthless **UNLESS** directed by the Word of God and the God of the Word (the Spirit), unless we learn to abide in the Vine (Jn 15:5).

> **THOUGHT**- You may have multiple degrees in ministry, but can I ask you, "Are you catching any "fish"**?**" If not, perhaps, you would benefit by "sitting in the boat" like Simon did, at the Master's feet, seeking His clear direction for what you should do, how you should do it, etc, so that you might catch so many "fish" that your net

begins to "break!" God grant such an abundant "catch" in whatever ministry He has placed each of us, all for His glory! Amen

THOUGHT - Mattoon - Are you in a rut and stuck in the mud of the mundane? Realize that the Lord can bless your ruts.For example, did you know the largest pure gold nugget was discovered in 1869 in Australia? It was found in a wagon rut just a few inches below the soil. It weighed 2,248 troy ounces or around 154 pounds. At today's rate of $925 per ounce, its value would be a little over two million dollars. A great treasure was found in a rut. Beloved, God can provide great blessings for you in your ruts, too. He can water your garden in times of drought. (Mattoon - Treasures from the Scriptures)

BUT I WILL DO
A YOU SAY!

Hendriksen - Simon receives this order, faith and doubt, trust and misgiving, are battling it out. His fisherman's expertise raises a doubt and whispers to him that he must not obey Jesus. His conscience, illuminated by faith, tells him that he must obey. Faith conquers, though still tempered with some misgiving. (Borrow Baker NT Commentary: Luke)

But (nevertheless) - term of contrast. They had finished their night of fishing and caught nothing,**but** (marks a change of direction) they would go out to fish again. The adverb **nevertheless** means despite anything to the contrary and is usually following a concession. Peter knew Jesus was no ordinary carpenter and probably recalled that He was the one who had healed his mother-in-law.

I will do as You say and let down (chalao) **the nets** (diktuon) - ("But at your word" = NET) The NET Note explains "The expression "**at your word**," which shows Peter's obedience, stands first in the Greek clause for emphasis."

THOUGHT - Jesus said it and that was enough for Peter! Too often we are like adolescents who when told to do something respond with "Why?" Well, the reason "why" is that they have just been told. If that is enough for parents to warrant their children's obedience, how much more is does a word from Jesus warrant our unhesitating obedience? Did Jesus tell you to do something, even something somewhat surprising (as in this story in Luke) in your quiet time this morning in His Word? Did He bring to mind someone to whom you need to offer the gift of forgiveness today? We need to be like Peter, and go out into the deep waters and drop our net! Remember the context is that these experienced fishermen had not caught any fish and it would have been easy (and even reasonable) to respond to Jesus that it was not a good day to fish. But Peter said "**I will do as you say**!" We need to do the same! It wasn't logical. It wasn't based on evidence. It was based on the spoken word of Jesus!

Some other examples of Jesus' word as command - Mt 8:8 "just say the word, and my servant will be healed." (cf Lk 7:7) "They have kept Your Word." (Jn 17:6, cf Rev 3:10).

Bock adds that "despite appearances and against his professional judgment, he follows the teacher's command to let down the nets. Simon Peter is responsive to God's messenger and thus an example of faith."

Related Resources:

- The Art of Man Fishing - Thomas Boston (audio) (Written format)

Master (1988)(**epistates** from **ephistemi** = to set over) means "superintendent," a person of high status, chief, commander. All NT uses are by Luke, all spoken by the disciples (except the use by the 10 lepers in Lk 17:13) and all refer to Jesus. Matthew and Mark use either "Teacher" or "Rabbi" instead of Master. TDNT comments that "the transcription **rabbi** used by the other Evangelists is avoided by the Hellenist Luke (directed to Greek audiences who would not understand "rabbi")." Luke employed epistates as an equivalent of didaskalos, "teacher" (Luke 8:24; cf. Mark 4:38; 9:38; Luke 9:49). Epistates could describe a chief commander, a magistrate, a governor of a city, or a president of a college, but one thing all have in common is authority. In using **Master** Simon recognized Jesus' authority.

Epistates - 7x in 6v - Lk. 5:5; Lk. 8:24; Lk. 8:45; Lk. 9:33; Lk. 9:49; Lk. 17:13

Encylopedia Britannica on **epistates** - The 5th-century-BCE Athenian epistatēs acted as chairman of the prytaneis, the executive committee of the Boule (council), and, for the 24-hour period of this office, functioned as the head of the government, keeping the seal of the state and the key to the treasury. In various periods he may have had administrative, political, fiscal, judicial, or military responsibilities. In the Hellenistic kingdoms

and Egypt, the epistatēs became the district official of a nomós (province) or a subject city.

Epistates - 9x in 8v- Ex. 1:11; Ex. 5:14; 1 Ki. 2:35; 1 Ki. 5:16; 2 Ki. 25:19; 2 Chr. 2:2; 2 Chr. 31:12; Jer. 29:26; Jer. 52:25;

Septuagint Usage - In the Septuagint **epistatēs** maintains its general meaning of one in authority in a variety of settings. It is used in Exodus 1:11 and 5:14 of the Egyptian overseers who directed the Jewish forced labor crews. In 1 Kings 5:16 and 2 Chronicles 2:2 it is used of the foremen who supervised the quarry workers who prepared materials for Solomon's temple. Elsewhere, the word describes the officer in charge of the garrison when Jerusalem fell to Babylon (2 Kings 25:19), or the Levite who supervised the storage of offerings brought to the temple (2 Chronicles 31:12). (Gilbrant)

Ralph Earle on **Master** - The noun comes from the verb ephistemi, "set over." So it means "any sort of a superintendent or overseer." Thayer goes on to say that it was used by the disciples "when addressing Jesus, who called him thus 'not from the fact that he was a teacher, but because of his authority' (Bretschneider)"

Liddell-Scott on **epistates** - one who stands near or by, a suppliant, Od. 2. in battle-order, one's rear rank man (as parastates is the right- or left-hand man, prostates the front-rank man), Xen. II. one who stands or is mounted upon a chariot, c. gen., Soph., Eur. 2. one who is set over, a commander, Trag.; of a tutelary god, Soph.; president, steward of the games, a training-master, Xen. III. at Athens the President of the boule, and ekklesia, Aeschin., Dem. 2. an overseer, superintendent, in charge of any public works, Id. IV. the caldron for the hot bath which stood over the fire, Ar.

Gilbrant on **epistates** in classical Greek use - This word occurs in a wide range of meanings in classical Greek. It can denote "one who stands near," as in the case of one who stands behind the front-rank soldier in battle. Or it can refer to "one who stands or is mounted upon," like a charioteer (Liddell-Scott). More often, it refers to one who was set over some area of responsibility, whether as one who watches over herds, an inspector of public works, the leader of a temple, a music teacher, or the head of an athletic training group. The president of the ruling council of Athens was called an epistatēs. It was used at times for an overseer or headmaster of a group of children being educated. (Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary)

We worked hard (2872)(**kopiao** from **kopos** = labor, fatigue) This root word **kopos** is used in secular Greek of "a beating," "weariness" (as though one had been beaten) and "**exertion**," was the proper word for physical tiredness induced by work, exertion or heat. **Kopiao** means to to exhibit great effort and exertion, to the point of exhaustion, the point of physically becoming worn out, weary or faint. It is interesting that Jesus calls these men from the hard work of kopiao, and this same verb is used in Jesus calling all men from hard labor to "Come!"

> **Come** (aorist imperative - Command that conveys sense of urgency - Do it now! Don't delay! Not naturally possible for no man seeks God but must be energized by the Holy Spirit to obey) to Me, all who are **weary** (kopiao) and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest (Matthew 11:28+)

Nothing (3762) oudeis from **ou** = absolutely not + **dé** = but + **heis** = one) Literally "*but absolutely not one*" no one, nothing, none at all; emphasizes not even one, not the least. **Oudeis** is used as a negating adjective (not even one) to negate a noun, denying absolutely and objectively (e.g., Lk 4:24) Note that **oudeis** differs from medeís which also is often translated "*no one*" as the negative particle ***ou*** differs from ***me***. Thus ***ou*** = absolutely NOT and is objective while ***me*** = conditionally NOT and is subjective. For example Paul uses oudeis twice in 1 Cor 12:3+ "Therefore I make known to you that **NO ONE** speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus is accursed"; and **NO ONE** can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit."

Mattoon - What Jesus was recommending seemed fruitless and illogical. Peter knew that the fish were not as active in the day as they were in the night hours. They did not feed near the surface of the waters during the day because of the heat. It would also be much more difficult to catch the fish in the day because they could see the nets and boats. The fact that Jesus was a carpenter, and not a fisherman, probably did not help matters at all. Nevertheless, Peter tells the Lord, "If you say so Lord, I will go ahead and do what you command." Beloved, God's commands are not always logical, practical, or convenient. Where is the faith in that? We do not think the same way as the Lord thinks. This is what Isaiah tried to get across to us.Isaiah 55:8-9. (Mattoon - Treasures from the Scriptures)

We have examined four elements of this story thus far.

- The Crush of the Crowd
- Christ Teaches from the Boat
- The Command for a Blessing
- The Complaint and Compliance of Peter

• Next, the Complications from not Following Instructions

A miraculous catch of fish was repeated again in John 21:1-12 but this time after the Lord had been resurrected

> 1 After these things Jesus manifested Himself again to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias, and He manifested Himself in this way. 2 Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of **Zebedee**, and two others of His disciples were together. 3 Simon Peter *said to them, "I am going fishing." They *said to him, "We will also come with you." They went out and got into the boat; and that night they caught nothing. 4 But when the day was now breaking, Jesus stood on the beach; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. 5 So Jesus *said to them, "Children, you do not have any fish, do you?" They answered Him, "No." 6 And He said to them, **"Cast the net on the right-hand side of the boat and you will find a catch." So they cast, and then they were not able to haul it in because of the great number of fish**. 7 Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved *said to Peter, "It is the Lord." So when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put his outer garment on (for he was stripped for work), and threw himself into the sea. 8 But the other disciples came in the little boat, for they were not far from the land, but about one hundred yards away, dragging the net full of fish. 9 So when they got out on the land, they *saw a charcoal fire already laid and fish placed on it, and bread. 10 Jesus *said to them, "Bring some of the fish which you have now caught." 11 Simon Peter went up and drew the net to land, full of large fish, a hundred and fifty-three; and although there were so many, the net was not torn. 12 Jesus *said to them, "Come and have breakfast." None of the disciples ventured to question Him, "Who are You?" knowing that it was the Lord.

The Master Fisherman

Read: Luke 5:1-11

> Nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net. —Luke 5:5

I'm a fisherman. I know how to catch the smallmouth and walleye and panfish that inhabit the lake by our small cabin. I know where the fish lurk, their feeding habits, and the best times to fish. I have my own proven lures and successful strategies. So I'm reluctant to take the advice of someone who rows over and tells me how to catch the fish in "my" lake.

So I can sympathize with Peter in today's Bible reading from Luke 5. He knew how to catch fish in the Sea of Galilee. It was "his" lake, but he had been out all night and hadn't caught a thing. "Sometimes the fish just don't cooperate," I can hear him say.

Then Jesus told him, "Let down your nets for a catch" (Lk 5:4). Peter said, "Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing; nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net" (Lk 5:5). He caught so many fish, he needed help to bring them to shore! Jesus then told Peter, "From now on you will catch men" (Lk 5:10). Jesus was more concerned that Peter learn to fish for souls.

When it comes to fishing for souls, the issue is not how good we are at persuading people. It's whether we are obeying the Master whenever His Spirit directs us to share the gospel story. Today, "let down your nets for a catch."

If you want to fish for souls,
Seek to follow Christ's commands;
Lay aside unworthy goals,
Let Him lead you by His hand. —Hess

The next person you meet may need to meet Jesus.

By David Egner (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

Thomas Boston's answer to the question why does the Lord begin with this picture of our calling being like that of a fisherman?:

> **1] The design and work of fishermen is to catch fish. This is the work to which Christians have been called, to bring souls to God.**
>
> **2] Fishermen's work is hard work, exposed to the cold and wet, so is the work of evangelism.**(**ED**: cf Peter's statement in Lk 5:5+ "Master, we **worked hard** [kopiao] **all night**")
>
> **3] Bad weather won't keep the fisherman from fishing, nor will it prevent the Christian from bearing witness to Jesus Christ to win men for God.**
>
> **4] Fishermen observe in what places they should cast their nets, and where they may expect fish.** So

preachers observe the two places their nets should be cast, in the public assemblies of God's people and in private conversations.

5] Fishermen may toil long and catch nothing but they don't give up fishing. So too preachers may preach for years and catch few souls but that does not mean they give up. "Hold on, O my soul, and give not way to these discouragements. You know not but Christ may come and teach you to let down your net on the right side of the ship, and may yet be a fisher of men."

6] Fishermen catch fish with a net, and so preachers have a net with which to catch souls. That net is the everlasting gospel.

Here are Boston's original words that have been summarized above.

Ministers are fishers by office; they are catchers of the souls of men, sent "to open the eyes of the blind, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God," Acts 26:18. Preachers of the gospel are fishers; and their work, and that of fishers, agree in several things.

1. The design and work of fishers is to catch fish. This is the work that preachers of the gospel have taken in hand, even to endeavour to bring souls to Christ. Their design in their work should be the same. Tell me, O my soul, what is thy design in preaching? for what end dost thou lay the net in the water? is it to shew thy gifts, and to gain the applause of men? Oh! no. Lord, thou knowest my gifts are very small; and had I not some other thing than them to lean to, I had never gone to a pulpit. I confess, that, for as small as they are, the devil and my corruptions do sometimes present them to me in a magnifying glass, and so would blow me up with wind. But, Lord, thou knowest it is my work to repel these motions. An instance of this see in my Diary, Jan. 1. 1699. But of this see afterwards.

2. Their work is hard work; they are exposed to much cold in the water. So is the minister's work.

3. A storm that will affright others, they will venture on, that they may not lose their fish. So should preachers of the gospel do.

4. Fishers catch fish with a net. So preachers have a net to catch souls with. This is the everlasting gospel, the word of peace and reconciliation, wherewith sinners are caught. It is compared to a net wherewith fishers catch fish,

(1.) Because it is spread out, ready to catch all that will come into it, Isa 55:1. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk, without money, and without price." God excludes none from the benefits of the gospel that will not exclude themselves; it is free to all.

(2.) Because as fish are taken unexpectedly by the net, so are sinners by the gospel. Zaccheus was little thinking on salvation from Christ, when he went to the tree. Paul was not thinking on a sweet meeting with Christ, whom he persecuted, when he was going post-haste on the devil's errand; but the man is caught unexpectedly. Little wast thou thinking, O my soul, on Christ, heaven, or thyself, when thou went to the Newton of Whitsome*, to hear a preaching, when Christ first dealt with thee; there thou got an unexpected cast.

(3.) As fish sometimes come near and touch the net, and yet draw back; so many souls are somewhat affected at the hearing of the gospel, and yet remain in the gall of bitterness, and the bond of iniquity. So Herod heard John the Baptist gladly; but yet the poor man was not caught. Wonder not then, O my soul, that thou seest some affected in the time of preaching; and yet when they are away again, all is worn off.

(4.) Some fish that have not been taken fast hold enough by the net, struggle and get out again. So some souls have their convictions, and may seem to be caught; but yet, alas! they stifle all their convictions, stay in the place of the breaking forth; their goodness is like the morning cloud, and as the early dew that soon passeth away. Wherefore, O my soul, if ever thou be taken up with exercised consciences, have a care that thou do not apply the cure before the wound be deep enough. Take all means to understand whether the soul be content to take Christ on his own terms or not. Alas! many this way, by having the wound sourfed over, are rather killed than cured.

(5.) All that are taken in the net do make some struggling to get free. Even so every one whom the Lord deals with by his word and Spirit, make some kind of resistance, before they are thoroughly caught. Cras, Domine, says Augustine; et modo, Domine, donec, modo non haberet modum. And this thou also knowest, O my soul, how thou wouldst have been content to have been out of the net. Oh! the wickedness of the heart of man by nature! opposite is it, and an enemy to all that may be for its eternal welfare. There is indeed a power

in our will to resist, yea, and such a power as cannot but be exercised by the will of man, which can do nothing but resist, till the overcoming power of God, the gratia victrix, come and make the unwilling heart willing, Phil. 2:13.

(6.) Yet this struggling will not do with those which the net has fast enough. So neither will the resistance do that is made by an elect soul, whom God intends to catch, John 6:37. All that the Father hath given me, shall come to me. Indeed God does not convert men to himself against their will, he does not force the soul to receive Christ; but he conquers the will, and it becomes obedient. He that was unwilling before, is then willing. O the power of grace! When God speaks, then men shall hear; then is it that the dead hear the voice of the Son of man, and they that hear do live.

(7.) In a net are many meshes in which the fish are caught Such are the invitations made to sinners in the gospel, the sweet promises made to them that will come to Christ; these are the meshes wherewith the soul is catched. This then is gospel-preaching, thus to spread out the net of the gospel, wherein are so many meshes of various invitations and promises, to which if the fish do come, they are caught.—But yet,

(8.) Lest the net be lifted up with the water, and so not fit for taking fish, and the fish slight it, and pass under it; there are some pieces of lead put to it, to hold it right in the water, that it may be before them as they come. So lest invitations and promises of the gospel be slighted, there must be used some legal terrors and law-threatenings to drive the fish into the net. Thou seest then that both law and gospel are to be preached, the law as a pendicle of the gospel-net, which makes it effectual; the law being a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ.

(9.) The meshes must not be over-wide, lest the fish run through. So neither must thy doctrine be general, without particular application, lest thou be no fisher of men. Indeed men may be the better pleased, when thou preachest doctrine so as wicked men may run out-through and in-through it, than when thou makest it so as to take hold of them: but be not a servant of men.

(10.) Neither must they be too neat and fine, and curiously wrought, lest they hold out the fish. So have a care, O my soul, of striving to make by wit any fine and curious discourse, which thy hearers cannot understand. Of this more afterwards.

5. Fishers observe in what places they should cast their nets, and where they may expect fish. So do thou, O my soul, observe where thou mayst catch souls. There are two pools wherein the net should be set.

(1.) In the public assemblies of the Lord's people. There it was that Lydia's heart was opened. The pool of ordinances sometimes is made healing water to souls pining away in their iniquity.

(2.) In private conference. Many times the Lord is pleased to bless this for the good of souls. Some have found it so. But more of these things afterwards, when I come to following Christ.

6. Lastly, Fishers may toil long, and yet catch nothing; but they do not therefore lay aside their work. So may preachers preach long, and yet not catch any soul, Isa. 49:4. and 53:1; but they are not to give over for all that. O my soul, here thou art checked for thy behaviour at some times under the absence of Christ from ordinances, when thou hast been ready to wish thou hadst never taken it in hand. This was my sin: the good Lord pardon it. It becomes me better to lie low under God's hand, and to inquire into the causes of his withdrawing his presence from me and from ordinances, and yet to hold on in duty till he be pleased to lay me by. Have a care of that, O my soul, and let not such thoughts and wishes possess thee again. Forget not how God made thee to read this thy sin, in thy punishment, Diary, Nov. 13, 1698. Hold on, O my soul, and give not way to these discouragements. Thou knowest not but Christ may come and teach thee to let down the net at the right side of the ship, and thou mayst yet be a fisher of men. Trust God thou shalt yet praise him for the help of his countenance as thou hast done, and perhaps for some souls that thou mayst be yet honoured to catch. (A Soliloquy on the Art of Man-Fishing)

First Fish

> Jesus said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men." —Mark 1:17

Today's Scripture: Mark 1:16-20

In one of my photo albums is a picture of a friend cradling—no, hugging—a large fish to his chest as if he'd just found a long-lost friend. I ask myself, "Why is he sliming himself with that fish?" Then I remember: It was his first steelhead—ever!

I recall well my first “fish.” I was driving along and thinking about what a friend had said the day before. He regularly leads people to faith in Jesus Christ, and I had asked him how he knew they were willing to talk about spiritual things. “It’s easy,” he replied. “I ask ’em.”

“Well,” I said to myself, “I can do that. I’ll ask the next person I meet.”

As it turned out, the next person I met was a student along the highway thumbing a ride. I picked him up and we chatted for a while. As we neared his destination, I turned to him and asked, “Do you have an interest in spiritual things?” He looked at me for a moment and replied, “I’ve been looking for God all my life. Can you tell me how to know Him?” He was my first “fish” (Mark 1:17).

Not all our efforts are so rewarding, but here and there are people whom God’s Spirit is drawing to the Savior (John 6:44). You can be part of that process. There is no greater joy than to be a fisher of men! — By: David H. Roper (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

I love to tell the story,
For some have never heard
The message of salvation
From God's own holy Word.
—Hankey

Fishers of men cast their nets in faith
and draw them in with love.

Where Are The Fish?

> Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men. —Mark 1:17+

Today's Scripture: Mark 1:14-20

A pastor told me a fascinating story of a church in a Canadian fishing village. The founding fathers had chosen to build the church at the rocky edge of the Atlantic Ocean. Because it was located in the center of where the fishermen and townspeople lived, the church flourished. As the congregation grew, however, the members decided to construct a new building far from the waterfront. Then an interesting thing happened. They seemed to lose their zeal for the lost after they moved. Why? Some said it was because they were no longer among the people.

We see in Mark 1 that Jesus began His ministry by walking along the Sea of Galilee and calling fishermen to be His disciples. He told them, “Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men” (Mark 1:17).

Where are the “fish” in our communities? Do we expect them to come on their own to our church and hear the pastor present the gospel? Or have we chosen to follow Christ and become fishermen who dare to go to where the fish are, taking the message of life and hope to our schools and workplaces and neighborhoods?

Just as we won’t catch fish in a kitchen sink, we can’t “catch” souls if we don’t go where they are. By: David C. Egner Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

You do not have to cross the seas
Nor foreign lands explore
To share God's Word with needy souls—
You'll find them right next door.
—Anon.

After accepting Christ's invitation to **come**, (Mt 11:28-30+)
we must obey His commission to **go**. (Mt 28:18-20+)

Fish Hard

Read: Mark 1:14-20

> Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men. —Mark 1:17+

Okay, I admit it. I like to fish. No, I’m not the buy-the-latest-bass-boat, get-out-every-weekend kind of guy. But I enjoy fishing for walleyes at a nearby dam in the summer or catching perch through the ice on one of Michigan’s many lakes in winter.

That makes me interested in things related to fishing. So I was hooked when I saw this bumper sticker on the back of an old pickup truck:

Life's Short: Fish Hard

I chuckled, but the more I thought about it the more I was caught by this idea: As a follower of Jesus Christ, I am a "fisher of men." I have been commanded by the Lord Jesus to proclaim the gospel message (Matt. 28:19-20), to tell others about the wonderful, saving love of God for all people.

I thought too about the statement, "Life's short." It is! How quickly 10, 20, 30 years pass. All too soon our children are starting school, graduating, marrying, having children of their own. All too quickly those friends and family members we always wanted to talk to about Jesus Christ are no longer with us.

Yes, life is short. So, as obedient followers of Jesus Christ, let's "fish hard" to bring others to Him.By David C. Egner (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

Fishing Tips
Go where the "fish" are.
Use the right "bait."
Be patient!

It's never out of season to fish for souls.

A New Purpose

> "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will send you out to fish for people." Mark 1:17

Today's Scripture & Insight: Mark 1:16–22

Jacob Davis was a tailor with a problem. It was the height of the Gold Rush in the 1800s American West and the gold miners' work pants kept wearing out. His solution? Davis went to a local dry goods company owned by Levi Strauss, purchased tent cloth, and made work pants from that heavy, sturdy material—and blue jeans were born. Today, denim jeans in a variety of forms (including Levi's) are among the most popular clothing items in the world, and all because tent material was given a new purpose.

Simon and his friends were fishermen on the Sea of Galilee. Then Jesus arrived and called them to follow Him. He gave them a new purpose. No longer would they fish for fish. As Jesus told them, "Come, follow me, . . . and I will send you out to fish for people" (Mark 1:17).

With this new purpose set for their lives, these men were taught and trained by Jesus so that, after His ascension, they could be used by God to capture the hearts of people with the message of the cross and resurrection of Christ. Today, we follow in their steps as we share the good news of Christ's love and salvation.

May our lives both declare and exhibit this love that can change the lives, purposes, and eternal destinies of others. By: Bill Crowder (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

Help me, Lord, to represent You well so that others might be drawn to Your love and salvation.

With our new life in Christ we have been given a new purpose.

Luke 5:6 When they had done this, they enclosed a great quantity of fish, and their nets began to break

- **they enclosed**: 2Ki 4:3-7 Ec 11:6 Joh 21:6-11 Ac 2:41 4:4 1Co 15:58 Ga 6:9
- **See Raphael's depiction** of the catch of a great quantity of fish
- Luke 5:1-11 Characteristics of Jesus' Divinity, Part 1 - John MacArthur
- Luke 5:1-11 Characteristics of Jesus' Divinity, Part 2 - John MacArthur
- Luke 5:1-11 Catching Fish or Men? - Steven Cole
- J C Ryle's Comments on Luke 5 - clear, devout, and accurate
- Luke 5 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

A MIRACULOUS CATCH

When they had done this - Done what? Simple but complete obedience. Note the contrast - worked hard yield nothing. Obeying yielded abundant "fruitfulness." This is a perfect illustration of John 15:5 where Jesus declared "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit (IN THIS CASE ABIDING WAS SIMPLY OBEYING), for apart from Me you can do nothing (EVEN FISHING - BUT ULTIMATELY IN FISHING FOR MEN - WE MUST ABIDE TO BE FRUITFUL)."

> **THOUGHT** - Is Jesus telling you to do something? Are you hesitating to obey? Be careful for delayed obedience is often overt disobedience. Blessedness in the Christian life is as simple as completely obeying our Master, even when the commands seem illogical. A man (he and his wife are about 52 with no children) I taught the Word about 10 years ago recently called me and said "I think God is calling me to close my successful business in Austin, sell my house and move to Kenya to teach pastors how to study the Word of God inductively." While I was somewhat surprised, I was even more pleasantly surprised when he said his house was on the market and they had already sold all their furniture! His move at his age does not seem very logical to his parents and his siblings. I think he will enclose "a great quantity of fish" which we will see in eternity future. We shall see. They will head for Africa in the summer of 2017. Hopefully I will remember to give you a follow up of them dropping everything material for the privilege of obtaining the things eternal. May their tribe increase! Amen.

They enclosed (sugkleio) **a great quantity of fish** - Why? As noted above because of obedience. Fruitful fishers of men must be obedience to the Master Fisher of men. **Morris** points out that "This was not necessarily a miracle of creation (like the multiplication of the loaves and fishes at the feeding of the five thousand), but rather, a miracle of providence, whereby the omniscient Lord understood and controlled the time and place where the fish would be (compare to John 21:6-8)."

Utley- Jesus, being Lord of all creation, understood well the habits of fish and could control them (cf. Matt. 17:27). This is not an example of a great fisherman, but Jesus, God's agent of creation and Spirit-filled Messiah!

MacArthur - If Jesus' command surprised them, the result utterly dumbfounded them. When they had let down the nets, much to their amazement they enclosed a great quantity of fish. Nothing in their experience could have prepared them for such an unheard of catch in the middle of the day. But the omniscient Savior knew exactly where the fish were. Later He would tell Peter where to find one specific fish with a specific coin in its mouth (Matt. 17:27). And after His resurrection, the Lord would once again tell Peter and his companions where to let down their nets for a huge catch of fish (John 21:1–6). (See Luke Commentary)

Bock - The result is success and near disaster at the same time. The nets are filled to overflowing, and so is the boat! The fisherman is desperate for help to bring in all the fish. The boat is so full it begins to sink. Jesus has guided Simon to a great catch, but that catch is a picture of how he will guide the disciples in other, more spiritual affairs. (Luke)

Guzik - The story shows us that the worst excuse for not doing what God wants you to do is because you've been a failure in the past. Peter had fished all night with no results, but was instantly blessed when the Lord directed His work. (Luke 5)

And their nets (diktuon) **began to break** (diarresso) - **Began to break** is the vivid imperfect tense picturing the net as beginning to break one strand after another.

Enclosed (4788)(**sugkleio** from **sun/syn** = together + **kleio** = to shut up, enclose) means literally to shut up or enclose together on all sides (there is "no escape"). The idea is to shut up with as fish enclosed in a net , i.e., completely and without the possibility of escape. Paul uses this verb figuratively in Galatians 3 to describe the function of the Scriptures and the Law -

> But the Scripture **has shut up** everyone under sin, so that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. 23 But before faith came, we were kept in custody under the law, **being shut up** to the faith which was later to be revealed.(Gal 3:22-23+)

And in the final use Paul uses **sugkleio** to describe the compelling force of God's will in working out the issues of his grace and mercy

> For God has shut up all (Jews and Gentiles) in disobedience so that He may show mercy to all. (Ro 11:32+)

Began to break(1284) (**diarresso** [diarrégnumi] from **diá** =denoting separation + **rhéssō**/**rhégnumi** = to tear, break, rend) means literally to tear through, rend asunder, such as tearing clothing (Mt. 26:65; Mk 14:83, Acts 14:14, in the Lxx = Rueben in Ge 37:29, Jacob in Ge 37:34 when told of Joseph's supposed death; Joshua at the defeat at Ai - Jos 7:6, and many other OT examples), tearing a net (Luke 5:6); breaking chains (Luke 8:29; Lxx = Ps. 2:3).

Luke 5:7 so they signaled to their partners in the other boat for them to come and help them. And they came and filled both of the boats, so that they began to sink

- **they**: Ex 23:5 Pr 18:24 Ac 11:25 Ro 16:2-4 Ga 6:2 Php 4:3
- Luke 5:1-11 Characteristics of Jesus' Divinity, Part 1 - John MacArthur
- Luke 5:1-11 Characteristics of Jesus' Divinity, Part 2 - John MacArthur
- Luke 5:1-11 Catching Fish or Men? - Steven Cole
- J C Ryle's Comments on Luke 5 - clear, devout, and accurate
- Luke 5 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

CALL FOR ASSISTANCE

So they signaled to their partners (metochos) **in the other boat** (ploion) **for them to come and help** (sullambano) **them** - There were 2 boats as learn from (Lk 5:2). **Signaled** (kataneuo) is used only here and means to make a sign by nodding of one's head or gesturing with one's hands. As **Spurgeon** deduces "they had launched out so far into the sea so scarcely to be within hearing, so they beckoned to their partners in the other ship, and they rowed out to them." **Hendriksen** commenting on signaling partners writes that "In unity there is strength." (cf Esther 4:16; Phil. 2:2)

And they came and filled (pimplemi) **both of the boats** (ploion) **- Hendricksen** adds "Here is an example of the lavish generosity of our Lord. When he gives he does not stint. “He giveth and giveth and giveth again.” (See Mt. 14:20, 21; 15:37, 38)"

Spurgeon adds that "We can have too much of a good thing, aye, too much even of the best things, for our poor frail vessel cannot hold all that God would be willing to put into it." (Luke - exposition)

Mattoon - The catch was so vast that the fishermen in the other boat were called to help them draw in the net. Both ships were filled to the point that they began to sink. God is not cheap in His giving. We cannot out-give Him. Missionary statesman **Hudson Taylor** had complete trust in God's faithfulness. In his journal he wrote: Our heavenly Father is a very experienced One. He knows very well that His children wake up with a good appetite every morning... He sustained 3 million Israelites in the wilderness for 40 years. We do not expect He will send 3 million missionaries to China; but if He did, He would have ample means to sustain them all... **Depend on it, God's work done in God's way will never lack God's supply**. (Mattoon - Treasures from the Scriptures)

So that (term of purpose/result) **they began to sink** (buthizo - present tense - continued to sink) - This is a miraculous catch. One wonders if Jesus was not giving these fishers-of-men-to-be a clue as to how His power would enable them to bring about a miraculous catch of men as Peter would see in his first Spirit filled sermon on Pentecost where "about 3000 souls" were gathered into the Kingdom!

MacArthur points out that the fact that Jesus "knew the location of the fish demonstrated Jesus' **omniscience**, but the staggering, unprecedented size of the catch revealed His **omnipotence**. Peter and the others were shocked and amazed at the enormous number of fish, knowing that there was no possible human explanation for it. Nothing like this had ever happened before; no catch had been anywhere near this size. They were witnessing a display of divine power as the Lord gathered together in one location the vast number of fish that were now causing their nets … to break." (See Commentary)

So this event was just a foretaste of the event at Pentecost where they would witness of similar power but this time with the souls of men not with scales of fish!

Partners (3353)(**metochos** from **metecho** = have with, describing participation with another in common blessings) describes one who shares with someone else as an associate in an enterprise or undertaking. It speaks of those who are participators in something. Business partner, companion. 6v - Lk. 5:7; Heb. 1:9; Heb. 3:1; Heb. 3:14; Heb. 6:4; Heb. 12:8

Help (4815)(**sullambano** from **sun/syn** = together with + **lambáno** = to take, to seize) means literally to seize or take together and conveys the picture of clasping and clearly in this context speaks of "trapping" fish. The most common meaning is to arrest, the very thing that occurred to the fisherman Peter turned disciple in Acts 12:3+ after Herod had beheaded James and then "proceeded to arrest Peter." This same verb is translated "**help**" in Luke 5:7 because the catch of fish was causing the boat to sink. Sullambano is used again in Lk 5:9 in a different context. Here they **help** each other, and in Lk 5:9 they "help themselves" to the fish (so to speak)!

> 16v - arrest(3), arrested(4), became pregnant(1), conceive(1), conceived(3), help(2), seized(1), taken(1). Matt. 26:55; Mk. 14:48; Lk. 1:24; Lk. 1:31; Lk. 1:36; Lk. 2:21; Lk. 5:7; Lk. 5:9; Lk. 22:54; Jn. 18:12; Acts 1:16; Acts 12:3; Acts 23:27; Acts 26:21; Phil. 4:3; Jas. 1:15

Filled (4092)(**pimplemi** from the obsolete **pláō** = to fill) to fill, to make full, to complete. In the passive voice as in this verse pimplemi speaks of of intellectual and spiritual processes signifying to experience completely. Figuratively **pimplemi** speaks of persons filled with something which means they are wholly affected, controlled or influenced with or by what fills them, especially the Holy Spirit (Lk 1:15 = of John the Baptist while still in mother's womb, Lk 2:4, Acts 4:8 = of Peter, Acts 4:31 = the praying believers, Acts 9:17 = of Paul, Acts 13:9 = of Paul) Filled with an emotion often bad (Lk 4:28, Lk 6:11 = filled with **rage**, Lk 5:26 = filled with fear, Acts 3:10 = wonder and amazement, Acts 5:17 = **jealousy**, Acts 13:45 = Jews filled with **jealousy**, compare Acts 19:29 = city filled with confusion). The point is that what fills you controls you and here a spirit of anger and rage filled them and controlled them and led them to seek to actually commit murder! Remember these are the religious people who had just been in the Synagogue presumably to worship a holy God! But sadly the Holy God-Man had provoked a most unholy reaction from His hearers!

> **Pimplemi** is a favorite verb for Luke (22/24 uses) especially to describe filling figuratively - filled with the Spirit (Lk 1:15, Lk 1:41, Lk 1:67, Acts 2:4, Acts 4:8, Acts 4:31, Acts 9:17, Acts 13:9), filled with rage at Jesus' teaching (Lk 4:28, cf Lk 6:11, Acts 5:17, Acts 13:45) and filled with fear that came on all who had seen Jesus heal the lame man (Lk 5:26)

Began to sink (present tense = in process of sinking)(1036)(**buthizo** from **buthos** = depth akin to **bathos** = deep) in passive means to sink (Lk 5:7) and figuratively of sinking or plunging into ruin or loss (1 Ti 6:9 only other NT use). Paul writes "But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin (olethros) and destruction (apoleia)." (1 Ti 6:9+) Note neither of the word for ruin or destruction signify either annihilation or cessation of existence, but they do signify a "change in constitutional existence" (Zodhiates). These persons are in effect "drowned" by defective desires! Be careful what you desire!

Luke 5:8 But when Simon Peter saw that, he fell down at Jesus' feet, saying, 'Go away from me Lord, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!

- he: Mt 2:11 Joh 11:32 Ac 10:25,26 Rev 1:17 22:8,9
- Go away: Ex 20:19 Jud 13:22 1Sa 6:20 2Sa 6:9 1Ki 17:18 1Co 13:12 Da 10:16,17 Mt 17:6
- I am: Job 40:4 42:5,6 Isa 6:5 Mt 8:8
- Luke 5:1-11 Characteristics of Jesus' Divinity, Part 1 - John MacArthur
- Luke 5:1-11 Characteristics of Jesus' Divinity, Part 2 - John MacArthur
- Luke 5:1-11 Catching Fish or Men? - Steven Cole
- J C Ryle's Comments on Luke 5 - clear, devout, and accurate
- Luke 5 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

GO AWAY LORD
I AM A SINNER

But when Simon Peter saw that, he fell down at Jesus' feet (gonu = literally His knees) - Peter may have fallen down in the middle of the fish! Overwhelmed nets overwhelmed Peter! What had Simon Peter just witnessed? Jesus knew where the fish were but the catch was like none they had ever seen before. Peter was now fully aware that Jesus was not only a Man but that He was God! And if Jesus could see into the depths of the lake, He could also see into the depth's of Peter's depraved heart! This was too much for Peter to bear, thus his cry for Jesus to leave!

> **Simon Peter** - 18v - Matt. 16:16; Lk. 5:8; Jn. 6:68; Jn. 13:6; Jn. 13:9; Jn. 13:24; Jn. 13:36; Jn. 18:10; Jn. 18:15; Jn. 18:25; Jn. 20:2; Jn. 20:6; Jn. 21:2; Jn. 21:3; Jn. 21:7; Jn. 21:11; Jn. 21:15; 2 Pet. 1:1

Spurgeon on **go away** - Not knowing what he said, though he knew what he meant; feeling as if he, so sinful, had come too close to the Lord who was so gracious, so he must not dare to keep near to him. Have you never felt the same as that? If not, methinks you have neither known your Lord, not yet yourselves for the knowledge of Christ, combined with the knowledge of ourselves, is sure to produce this holy shrinking, in which we have no need for anyone to say to us, “Put off thy shoes from off thy feet,” for we are almost ready to put off our very body, for we can scarcely bear the glory of the presence of the Lord. (Luke - exposition)

Go away (aorist imperative) - Praise God Jesus did not grant this request! There are often times in our life when we have sinned so willfully and wantonly that our depth of unholiness and shame shuns the holy presence of Jesus. In those moments we to often feel like saying "Depart Lord, I am a sinner!" But thank God for His mercy and forgiveness and His steadfast promise "for He Himself has said, “I WILL NEVER DESERT YOU, NOR WILL I EVER FORSAKE YOU." (Heb 13:5+).

Brian Bell makes an interesting point that "He had seen him do other miracles, greater miracles, but sometimes the simplest things bring a person to Christ."

Lord (kurios) - Peter changes from the respectful acknowledge of Jesus as **Master** in Lk 5:5 to Jesus as **Lord** after witnessing the miraculous catch of fish. Peter's falling down before Jesus was clearly an act of worship and as a good Jew, Peter knew that no human being should be worshiped. But Jesus was no ordinary Man. And notice that Jesus did not tell Peter to not to kneel before Him!

Mattoon - The wonder of the Lord's blessings, power, and deity humbled Peter and left him in awe. When Peter realized Jesus was God, his reaction was an awareness and contempt for his own uncleanness, and confession of his sinfulness. He told the Lord to depart from him. This was not an act of weakness, but greatness. Others in the Bible had the same response including men like Isaiah, Job, and John. (Mattoon - Treasures from the Scriptures)

> Isaiah 6:5+ Then I said, "Woe is me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I live among a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts."
>
> Job 42:5-6. I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear; But now my eye sees You; Therefore I retract, And I repent in dust and ashes."
>
> Revelation 1:17+ When I saw Him, I fell at His feet like a dead man. And He placed His right hand on me, saying, "Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last,
>
> **THOUGHT** - Do you have reverence for the Lord Jesus Christ and His will for your life?

Hendriksen - When one is confronted with Jesus, it is impossible to remain neutral. His enemies react to his miracles with hatred and reviling; his true disciples, with homage and reverence. They stoop and worship. (Borrow Baker NT Commentary: Luke)

David Guzik- When Peter saw the great power of Jesus - displayed in Jesus' knowledge in an area where He should have no knowledge - it made Peter realize his own spiritual bankruptcy compared to Jesus. Because Peter was such an experienced fisherman, and because he knew how unfavorable the conditions were, he knew all the more what a great miracle this was.

For I am a sinful (hamartolos) **man** - The miraculous catch of fish opened Simon's eyes to the truth that this Man was not an ordinary Teacher, but that He was God, which consciousness of unholiness and prompted his reply. The next verse says Simon's partners were in amazement, so presumably they shared in Simon's sense of sinfulness in Jesus' presence.

Utley - The closer we get to God, the more we recognize our own sinfulness (cf. Job 42:5–6; Isa. 6:5). There is also the reassurance that God lives and works with sinful, fallen, marred people (e.g. Moses, David, Apostles). Fallen mankind's only hope is the gracious character of God and the self-giving work of Christ

Peter's response reminds us of Jesus' description of the Pharisee and the tax collector...

> "Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. 11 "The Pharisee stood and was praying this to himself: 'God, I thank You that I am not like other people: swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. 12 'I fast twice a week; I pay tithes of all that I get.' 13 **"But the tax collector, standing some distance away, was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven, but was beating his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me, the sinner!**' 14 "I tell you, this man went to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted." (Lk 18:10-14)

John MacArthur comments on these men's reaction of fear once they realized the Man Jesus was also God - Peter's response of fear and penitence is typical of those in the presence of God. Abraham described himself as "dust and ashes" (Gen. 18:27); Job humbly said, "I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear; but now my eye sees You; therefore I retract, and I repent in dust and ashes" (Job 42:5–6); after encountering the angel of the Lord (the preincarnate Christ) Samson's father "Manoah said to his wife, 'We will surely die, for we have seen God' " (Judg. 13:22); when the Israelites "perceived the thunder and the lightning flashes and the sound of the trumpet and the mountain [Mount Sinai] smoking … they trembled and stood at a distance. Then they said to Moses, 'Speak to us yourself and we will listen; but let not God speak to us, or we will die' " (Ex. 20:18–19); after seeing a vision of God in His heavenly temple, Isaiah cried out in terror, "Woe is me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts" (Isa. 6:5); after he saw a vision of God, Ezekiel fell on his face (Ezek. 1:28); when the apostle John saw the glorified Christ, he "fell at His feet like a dead man" (Rev. 1:17). (See Commentary)

Peter's reaction reminds us of the reaction of the prophet Isaiah when he had seen "the Lord sitting on a throne, lofty and exalted, with the train of His robe filling the temple" (Isa 6:1+) and cried out

> "Woe is me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I live among a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts." (Isaiah 6:5+).

Isaiah's reaction after cleansing is similar to that of these fishermen...

> Then one of the seraphim flew to me with a burning coal in his hand, which he had taken from the altar with tongs. 7 He touched my mouth with it and said, "Behold, this has touched your lips; and your iniquity is taken away and your sin is forgiven." 8 Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?" Then I said, "Here am I. **Send me**!" (Isa 6:6-8+)

J C Ryle - We should observe, thirdly, in this passage — how much a sense of God's presence abases man and makes him feel his sinfulness. We see this strikingly illustrated by Peter's words, when the miraculous catch of fish convinced him that One greater than man was in his boat. We read that "he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying: Depart from me — for I am a sinful man, O Lord!" In measuring these words of Peter, we must of course remember the time at which they were spoken. He was, at best, but a babe in grace — weak in faith, weak in experience, and weak in knowledge. At a later period in his life he would, doubtless, have said, "Abide with me," and not, "depart." But still, after every deduction of this kind, the words of Peter exactly express the first feelings of man — when he is brought into anything like close contact with God. The sight of divine greatness and holiness — makes him feel strongly his own littleness and sinfulness. Like Adam after the fall — his first thought is to hide himself. Like Israel under Sinai — the language of his heart is, "Do not let God speak with us, lest we die." (Exodus 20:19.) Let us strive to know more and more, every year we live — our need of a mediator between ourselves and God. Let us seek more and more to realize that without a mediator, our thoughts of God can never be comfortable — and the more clearly we see God, the more uncomfortable we must feel. Above all, let us be thankful that we have in Jesus the very Mediator whose help our souls require — and that through Him we may draw near to God with boldness, and cast fear away.

Out of Christ, God is a consuming fire!
In Christ, He is a reconciled Father!

Without Christ, the strictest moralist may well tremble, as he ponders his final destiny. Through Christ, the chief of sinners may approach God with confidence, and feel perfect peace. (J C Ryle's Comments on Luke 5)

Lord...Lord (twice) (2962)(**kurios** from **kuros** = might or power, related to **kuroo** = to give authority) primarily means the possessor, owner, master, the supreme one, one who is sovereign (used this way of Roman emperors - Acts 25:26) and possesses absolute authority, absolute ownership and uncontested power. **Kurios** is used of the one to whom a person or thing belonged, over which he has the power of deciding, the one who is the master or disposer of a thing (Mk 7:28)

> **Kurios in Luke** - Lk. 1:6; Lk. 1:9; Lk. 1:11; Lk. 1:15; Lk. 1:16; Lk. 1:17; Lk. 1:25; Lk. 1:28; Lk. 1:32; Lk. 1:38; Lk. 1:43; Lk. 1:45; Lk. 1:46; Lk. 1:58; Lk. 1:66; Lk. 1:68; Lk. 1:76; Lk. 2:9; Lk. 2:11; Lk. 2:15; Lk. 2:22; Lk. 2:23; Lk. 2:24; Lk. 2:26; Lk. 2:39; Lk. 3:4; Lk. 4:8; Lk. 4:12; Lk. 4:18; Lk. 4:19; Lk. 5:8; Lk. 5:12; Lk. 5:17; Lk. 6:5; Lk. 6:46; Lk. 7:6; Lk. 7:13; Lk. 7:19; Lk. 9:54; Lk. 9:59; Lk. 9:61; Lk. 10:1; Lk. 10:2; Lk. 10:17; Lk. 10:21; Lk. 10:27; Lk. 10:39; Lk. 10:40; Lk. 10:41; Lk. 11:1; Lk. 11:39; Lk. 12:36; Lk. 12:37; Lk. 12:41; Lk. 12:42; Lk. 12:43; Lk. 12:45; Lk. 12:46; Lk. 12:47; Lk. 13:8; Lk. 13:15; Lk. 13:23; Lk. 13:25; Lk. 13:35; Lk. 14:21; Lk. 14:22; Lk. 14:23; Lk. 16:3; Lk. 16:5; Lk. 16:8; Lk. 16:13; Lk. 17:5; Lk. 17:6; Lk. 17:37; Lk. 18:6; Lk. 18:41; Lk. 19:8; Lk. 19:16; Lk. 19:18; Lk. 19:20; Lk. 19:25; Lk. 19:31; Lk. 19:33; Lk. 19:34; Lk. 19:38; Lk. 20:13; Lk. 20:15; Lk. 20:37; Lk. 20:42; Lk. 20:44; Lk. 22:33; Lk. 22:38; Lk. 22:49; Lk. 22:61; Lk. 24:3; Lk. 24:34

Sinful man (268)(**hamartolos** from **hamartano** = deviate, miss the mark which some lexicons say is from **a** = negative + **meiromai** = attain -- not to attain, not to arrive at the goal) is an adjective (e.g., "*that through the commandment sin might become utterly **sinful***" - see Ro 7:13 -note) that is often used as a noun (as in this verse and Ro 5:19[note]) to describe those who are continually erring from the way, constantly missing God's mark, living in opposition to His good and acceptable and perfect will. **Hodge** says that the "word **sinners** expresses the idea of moral wickedness and consequent exposure to divine displeasure." (Commentary on Romans)

> **Hamartolos in Luke** - Lk. 5:8; Lk. 5:30; Lk. 5:32; Lk. 6:32; Lk. 6:33; Lk. 6:34; Lk. 7:34; Lk. 7:37; Lk. 7:39; Lk. 13:2; Lk. 15:1; Lk. 15:2; Lk. 15:7; Lk. 15:10; Lk. 18:13; Lk. 19:7; Lk. 24:7

Mattoon - The consequence of obedience to Jesus' command was abundant blessing. The hoard of fish humbled Peter to bow before Jesus with a repentant spirit. Paul tells us in Romans 2:4 that the goodness of God leads us to repentance. This is what it did for Peter. Peter knew there was unbelief and doubt in his own heart. He knew that his obedience was half-hearted. When Jesus kept His word and they caught the vast amount of fish, the abundance of the catch rebuked the disbelief and doubt of Peter. God has

been good to all of us. If you don't realize this or believe this, then you need a refresher course on Counting Your Blessings 101. Rev. Johnson Oatman Jr. put it this way:

When upon life's billows you are tempest tossed,
When you are discouraged, thinking all is lost,
Count your many blessings, name them one by one,
And it will surprise you what the Lord hath done.

Count your blessings
Name them one by one;
Count your many blessings
See what God hath done.

Let me also say that when the Lord prospers you financially, don't use His provision to get out of church, to live in sin, and turn your back on Him. It is a tragedy when people use God's financial blessings to get drunk, get high on drugs, or become immoral. This is the blunder that Israel committed in the Old Testament. The name for Israel which described her upright character was Jeshurun. Unfortunately, God's abundance caused His own people to get their eyes off the Lord and on their possessions.

> Deuteronomy 32:15- “But Jeshurun (means "upright one" = term of endearment ironically referring to disobedient Israel Dt 33:5, 26) grew fat and kicked– You are grown fat, thick, and sleek– Then he forsook God Who made him, And scorned the Rock of his salvation. (Mattoon - Treasures from the Scriptures)

The Best of All Places "Sitting at the feet of Jesus" Luke 10:39+

We learn in the Gospels of nine prostrations before the Saviour.

> 1, Wise men (Matthew 2:11+);
>
> 2, Jarius (Mark 5:22+);
>
> 3, Women healed (Mark 5:33+);
>
> 4, Syrophenician women (Mark 7:25+);
>
> 5, Peter, (Luke 5:8+);
>
> 6, The Leper (Luke 5:12+);
>
> 7, The Gadarene (Luke 8:28+);
>
> 8, The Samaritan (Luke 17:16+);
>
> 9, Mary (John 11:32).

I. Mary Learned the Secret of His Person at Jesus Feet(Luke 10:42)

> Only at His feet can we be taught by Him. Cumbered and worried with much service we will never have time to be at His feet. If we have not time to sit there we will not have time to learn.

II. Mary Learned the Secret of His Purpose at Jesus Feet(John 11:32)

> Only there could she understand why Lazarus died and why Martha and herself must be plunged into the deepest sorrow. To the grave she led him and there at the very place of deepest sorrow, came the highest joy.

III. Mary Learned the Secret of His Passion at Jesus Feet

> This was revealed when she anointed Him for His burial. The secret was out and everywhere her testimony has been told. See Matthew 26:12-13. As I write this I help to fulfil the Lord's prophecy.

Do you sit at Jesus feet? Have you learned these three secrets? - Ian Paisley

---

True Prosperity

Read: Luke 5:1-11

Peter . . . fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!. —Luke 5:8

Imagine having a financial advisor whose stock-market predictions were 100-percent accurate. Wall Street would soon put you on

easy street. Or suppose your livelihood was fishing and you had a friend who could always lead you to just the right spot at just the right time. Every day you could have a money-making catch.

I wonder, did the appeal of such prosperity flash across the minds of the four seasoned fishermen who took Jesus' advice? After working all night with no success, they let down their nets at His command, and the catch nearly sank two boats (Lk. 5:6-7).

Many people today seem to be drawn to Jesus by those who proclaim that God wants them healthy and wealthy. Without question, Jesus showed concern for the sick and the poor. It is not wrong to make health and material needs the objects of our prayers, for our heavenly Father cares deeply about us (Mt. 7:7-11). But His greatest concern and delight is not to "fill our nets with fish." He wants to fill our hearts with His love so we will become fishers of men. And He can do that only when we recognize, as Peter did (Lk. 5:8), how spiritually needy we are. The richest people are those who have experienced the love of Christ and want to share it with others. That's true prosperity! By Dennis J. De Haan (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

The riches of this world are vain,
They vanish in a day;
But sweet the treasures of God's love—
They never pass away.
—Bosch

No one is so poor as he who has nothing but money.

Related Resources:

- Why are there so many televangelist scandals?
- Are all prosperity preachers charlatans and/or false teachers?
- Is "name it claim it" teaching biblical?

Luke 5:9 For amazement had seized him and all his companions because of the catch of fish which they had taken

NET Luke 5:9 For Peter and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish that they had taken,

GNT Luke 5:9 θ μβος γ ρ περι σχεν α τ ν κα π ντας το ς σ ν α τ π τ γρ τ ν χθ ων ν συν λαβον,

NLT Luke 5:9 For he was awestruck by the number of fish they had caught, as were the others with him.

KJV Luke 5:9 For he was astonished, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken:

ESV Luke 5:9 For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish that they had taken,

NIV Luke 5:9 For he and all his companions were astonished at the catch of fish they had taken,

ASV Luke 5:9 For he was amazed, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken;

CSB Luke 5:9 For he and all those with him were amazed at the catch of fish they took,

- **For...Him**: Ps 8:6,8 Mk 9:6
- Luke 5:1-11 Characteristics of Jesus' Divinity, Part 1 - John MacArthur
- Luke 5:1-11 Characteristics of Jesus' Divinity, Part 2 - John MacArthur
- Luke 5:1-11 Catching Fish or Men? - Steven Cole
- J C Ryle's Comments on Luke 5 - clear, devout, and accurate
- Luke 5 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

A SURPRISING SET OF EVENTS

For (**gar**) is a term of explanation. This explains Peter's sense of being in the presence of God. **NET Note** says "An explanatory conjunction (**For**) makes it clear that Peter's exclamation is the result of a surprising set of events. He speaks, but the others feel similarly."

Amazement (thambos) **had seized** (periecho) **him** (Peter) **and all his companions because of the catch of fish which they had taken** - **Amazement** (astonished, awestruck) is first word in sentence for emphasis! **Amplified** says "For he was gripped with bewildering amazement [allied to terror], and all who were with him, at the haul of fish which they had made." These seasoned fishermen are stunned and a bit fearful at the magnitude of the catch, clearly a miracle which pointed straight at Jesus as the "Miracle Worker." Jesus will use this miraculous catch of fish to launch into a description of these fishermen as catchers of men. Indeed, the most outspoken of the fisherman, Peter, would himself be given the Pentecostal privilege to "*throw out the Gospel net*" and preach a powerful and persuasive Spirit energized proclamation (Acts 2:4, 14+), which resulted not in a miraculous catch of fish but a miraculous "catch" of 3000 Jewish "men-fish" (Acts 2:41+), a catch that would never rot like fish can rot over time but which would endure throughout eternity! (cf Peter's words in 1 Pe 1:4+).

Brian Bell - They caught live fish & they would die. Now, They will catch dead fish(sinners) and the fish would now truly live! Men, like fish, were astray, were to be sought, and were to be caught! It is likely there were 7 fishermen in the disciple band (Jn.21:1) Fishermen know how to work together; they don't give up easily; they have courage and they labor diligently. They have the needed qualities: watchfulness, observation, patience, earnestness, perseverance, readiness, strength, & power. These are ideal qualities for disciples of Jesus Christ. The fact that these men were willing to go out again after washing their nets is proof that they were not dismayed by a night of failure.

Amazement (2285)(**thambos**) describes an emotion in which awe and fear are mingled (astonishment, amazement from admiration). We see a similar reaction to Jesus' teaching and casting out demons in Lu 4:32,36+. The only other NT use is Acts 3:10+ when God healed the lame man in the Temple through the apostle Peter "And all the people saw him walking and praising God; and they were taking note of him as being the one who used to sit at the Beautiful Gate of the temple to beg alms, and they were filled with **wonder** (thambos) and amazement (ekstasis - state of consternation or profound emotional experience to the point of being beside oneself) at what had happened to him." (Acts 3:9-10+)

Seized (4023)(**periecho** from **peri** = around + **echo** = to have, hold) means to encompass, to surround or to encircle. It is used figuratively in Lk 5:9 meaning to overwhelm one emotionally, the literal sense of the verb depicting the emotion as surrounding one on all sides simultaneously. In the only other NT use in 1 Peter 2:6 **periecho** speaks of the content of a document and so means to contain (ESV = "it **stands** in Scripture"). To be included as part of the written content. **Vine** says it "means "to encompass, enclose, contain," as a writing contains details. In 2 Sa 22:5 (Ps 18:4) = "the waves of death **encompassed** me." Ps 22:12 = "Strong bulls of Bashan **have encircled** me." Ps 22:16 = "A band of evildoers **has encompassed** me" Ps 32:7 = "You **surround** me with songs of deliverance"

> **Periecho** in **Septuagint** - 2 Sa 22:5; 1 Ki. 6:15; 1 Ki. 6:20; 1 Ki. 6:21; 1 Ki. 6:22; 1 Ki. 6:28; 1 Ki. 6:30; 1 Ki. 6:32; 1 Ki. 6:35; 2 Chr. 4:3; Job 30:18; Ps. 17:9; Ps. 18:4; Ps. 22:12; Ps. 22:16; Ps. 32:7; Ps. 40:12; Ps. 88:17; Ps. 116:3; Jer. 46:5; Ezek. 6:12; Ezek. 16:57; Dan. 7:28

Luke 5:10 and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not fear, from now on you will be catching men.

- **James**: Lu 6:14 Mt 4:21 20:20
- **partners**: Lu 5:7 2 Co 8:23
- **from**: Eze 47:9,10 Mt 4:19 13:47 Mk 1:17 Ac 2:4
- Luke 5:1-11 Characteristics of Jesus' Divinity, Part 1 - John MacArthur
- Luke 5:1-11 Characteristics of Jesus' Divinity, Part 2 - John MacArthur
- Luke 5:1-11 Catching Fish or Men? - Steven Cole
- J C Ryle's Comments on Luke 5 - clear, devout, and accurate
- Luke 5 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

A PROPHECY: FROM NOW ON CATCHING MEN NOT FISH!

So also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon - James and John were also struck with amazement, a mixture of fear mingled with awe. So Jesus mercifully meets their need commanding them not to be fearful. This group of Simon Peter, James and John would become the central core of Jesus' disciples and be allowed to see things not seen by the others, such as Jesus' transfiguration, which amazed them to such as extent "they fell face down to the ground and were

terrified." (Mt. 17:1-5, 6)

Do not fear (present imperative with a negative) - This command more literally means "stop being fearful." Why would Simon fear? When he realized he was in the presence of God, he was uncertain of what fate might await. But Jesus quickly calms his fear with this command. Luke uses this frequently - Luke 1:13, 30; 5:10; 8:50; 12:32; Acts 18:9; 27:24

Guzik- Jesus tells Him to put away that fear. God wants to relate to us on the principle of love, not the principle of a cowering fear.

John MacArthur - In the terror of the recognition of his sinfulness, Peter wanted to send the Lord away, but Jesus wanted to draw Peter closer. The very point at which the sinner feels the most alienation is the point at which the Savior seeks reconciliation. In Psalm 51:17 David wrote, "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise." Through the prophet Isaiah God declared, "For thus says the high and exalted One Who lives forever, whose name is Holy, 'I dwell on a high and holy place, and also with the contrite and lowly of spirit in order to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite' " (Isa. 57:15; cf. 66:2). At their moment of deepest alienation when, overwhelmed by their sinfulness, Peter, James, and John sought to flee, Jesus reached out to pull them to Himself. This is the glorious moment of their repentance. He did the same with Isaiah who, in the presence of God, cursed his own sinfulness and deemed himself unworthy to be in the presence of the Holy One. But the Lord sought to cleanse him and use him as His instrument (Isa. 6:5–9). (See Luke Commentary)

Catching men (zogreo present tense - continually)- Taking men alive, rescuing them from the power of sin and Satan. The Greek word zogreo is used in 2 Timothy where we read in context

> The Lord's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged, 25 with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth, 26 and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, **having been held captive** (ALIVE BY CAPTURED) by him to do his will. (2 Ti 2:24-26+).

The devil's captives would be taken captive to Jesus by the Gospel.

Guzik - Adam Clarke says that the word catch signifies to catch something alive. That is true evangelism; it isn't to bring dead people into a building, but to bring real life. Jesus chose unlearned, unlettered men, but He taught them. You don't need fancy degrees and education to start out in ministry, but you must enroll yourself in the University of the Word. These four (as well as Moses, David, Gideon, Matthew, and Paul, among others) were called while already at work. God's call usually comes while we are busy.

Peter and James and John "had spent their lives catching fish for the purpose of killing them; now they would spend the rest of their lives catching men to give them life." (MacArthur)

Spurgeon - He (Jesus) seemed to imply that he (Peter) should catch them after the same rate, too; and so he did, for the first throw of the net brought in three thousand (Acts 2:41), and very soon the number caught was increased to five thousand (Acts 4:4). That was good fishing by those first Gospel fishermen; **oh, that we could throw the net as they did!** (Luke - exposition)

In 2 Ti 2:26+ **zogreo** speaks of Satan taking captives to do his will (cf Judas Lk 22:3), whereas in Lk 5:10 **zogreo** speaks of the Savior taking captives to do His will! And *never the twain shall meet*, as they say!

How do you rescue men alive from the kingdom of the devil? Preach the Gospel in the power of the Spirit! As Jesus said in Luke 4:18-19+ "THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME, BECAUSE HE ANOINTED ME **TO PREACH THE GOSPEL** TO THE POOR. HE HAS SENT ME **TO PROCLAIM RELEASE TO THE CAPTIVES,** AND RECOVERY OF SIGHT TO THE BLIND, TO SET FREE THOSE WHO ARE OPPRESSED, TO PROCLAIM THE FAVORABLE YEAR OF THE LORD (THE "SPIRITUAL YEAR OF JUBILEE!")." In Acts 26:18+ Jesus told Paul that the Gospel he was to proclaim would "open their eyes **so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God**, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me.'" In Colossians 1:14-15+ Paul explained to the saints at Colossae how they had received an "inheritance...in Light" - For **He rescued us from the domain of darkness,** and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

Edwards notes that "God's program is to catch men alive and turn them into fishers of men; Satan's program is also to catch men alive, but then to turn them into destroyers of men. It is a rather sobering thought to realize that none of us can escape being used, whether by the Prince of peace or by the Prince of darkness. All of us are playing a part on the stage of human history, and our performance will promote either good or evil, light or darkness, Christ or Satan. There is no comfortable middle ground; no haven for the complacent and mediocre saint, though many would vainly imagine that there is."

A A Trites remarks that "It is a profound thought that Christian discipleship really involves Jesus Christ capturing someone for life. His disciples were called to have a vital part in this challenging enterprise." (See Luke, Acts)

John MacArthur summarizes Luke 5:1-11 - This was Jesus' formal and permanent call of these three men to full-time discipleship, so when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed Him (cf. Lk 5:27, 28; 9:23, 49, 57, 59, 61; 18:22, 28, 43). At the very pinnacle of their earthly careers, having just made the greatest catch of fish ever seen on that lake, they abandoned their boats, turned their backs on their fishing business, left everything, and followed Jesus (cf. Luke 9:23–25). Those who recognize their sinful unworthiness and embrace Jesus as the truthful, omniscient, omnipotent, holy, and merciful God are the ones He reconciles to Himself. He forgives their sin, takes away their fear of judgment that sin causes, and commissions them to the great task of evangelization, of catching men alive for the kingdom of God. (See Luke Commentary)

Arnold Fruchtenbaum summarizes the disciples in this passage - We see from this passage that Peter and Andrew, John and James are all fishermen engaged in their trade. Peter and Andrew are brothers, as are John and James. While three (Peter, Andrew, and John) have been named as followers of Jesus, they had not yet been called away from their nets to full time service to Jesus. This is the point at which we see James numbered among the disciples. Even though they are not mentioned, Philip and Nathanael are also His disciples by this time. So at this point in the narrative there are SIX disciples....They will now have to trust Jesus as they leave behind their livelihood and consign it into Jesus' care. They have just had an evidence of Jesus' provision for them. (Yeshua: The Life of Messiah from a Messianic Jewish)

Catching (2221)(**zogreo** from **zoós** = alive + **agreúo** = catch or entrap) means literally to catch alive as hunters or fishermen do their game. **Louw-Nida** says the idea is to "bring under control and to continue to restrain." (Capture alive and capture for life!) In Luke 5:10 **zogreo** is used of winning people for God's kingdom. As noted above (in the only other NT use) in 2 Ti 2:26+, **zogreo** is used figuratively (or spiritually) to describe those who become captives of the devil! **Zogreo** was used in the Septuagint (Lxx) for saving persons alive from danger (e.g., see Nu 31:15, 18, Israel spared the life of Rahab the harlot in Joshua 2:13, 6:25). Indeed the disciples would soon be rescuing sinners from the worst danger of all, eternal separation from God forever!

J C Ryle - We should observe, lastly, in this passage — the mighty promise which Jesus holds out to Peter. **Do not fear, from now on you will be catching men**" That promise, we may well believe, was not intended for Peter only — but for all the Apostles; and not for all the Apostles only — but for all faithful ministers of the Gospel who walk in the Apostles' steps. It was spoken for their encouragement and consolation. It was intended to support them under that sense of weakness and unprofitableness — by which they are sometimes almost overwhelmed. They certainly have a treasure in earthen vessels. (2 Corinthians 4:7.)

They are men of like passions with others. They find their own hearts weak and frail — like the hearts of any of their hearers. They are often tempted to give up in despair, and to leave off preaching. But here stands a promise, on which the great Head of the Church would have them daily lean, "Do not be afraid; from now on you will catch men.

Let us pray daily for all ministers — that they may be true successors of Peter and his brethren — that they may preach the same full and free Gospel which they preached, and live the same holy lives which they lived. These are the only ministers who will ever prove successful fishermen. To some of them God may give more honor, and to others less. But all true and faithful preachers of the Gospel, have a right to believe that their labor shall not prove in vain. They may often preach the Word with many tears, and see no result of their labor. But God's word shall not return void. (Isaiah 55:11.)

The last day shall show that no sincere work for God was ever wasted. Every faithful fisherman shall find his Master's words made good, "You shall catch men." (J C Ryle's Comments on Luke 5)

Related Resources

- How To Handle Fear Part 1
- How To Handle Fear Part 2
- How To Handle Fear Part 3
- How To Handle Fear Part 4
- Anxiety (merimna) - Word Study
- Anxious, be anxious (merimnao) - Word Study
- Jesus' solution "Do not be worried" Mt 6:25ff
- Paul's Solution - Philippians 4:6; Philippians 4:7
- Peter's Solution - Cast your cares on God - 1 Peter 5:7
- Worry - What is it?

Tight Lines - Luke 5:1-11

Read: Matthew 4:18-20 |

Always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear. —1 Peter 3:15

Fishermen sometimes bestow this blessing on one another: “May you keep a tight line,” by which we mean, “May you always have a trout on your line.”

As I’ve gotten older, however, I must confess that a tight line means less to me now than it once did. I get as much enjoyment from fishing as I do from catching.

When I’m fishing, I have more time to walk streamside and enjoy the solitude and silence, and to look for places where fish might be lurking. When I try too hard to catch, I lose too many fish and the enjoyment of the day.

Jesus calls us to be fishers of men, not catchers (Matthew 4:19). My job is to go where the fish are, walk among them, study their habitat, and learn their ways. And then to toss out a line and see if one rises to the surface. There’s more enjoyment in that easy effort, and I have better results.

So I want to fish for people, looking for opportunities to speak a word about Jesus, casting here and there, and leaving the results with God. It’s more calming for me and for the fish—the folks who might get spooked by my clumsiness.

Thus I now bless my fellow fishers with: “May you keep your line in the water.” Or, as another fisherman once put it, “Always be ready” (1 Peter 3:15).

White are the fields for the harvest,
Workers are all too few;
Souls are awaiting the message—
Christ still depends on you.
—Anon.

When you fish for souls, cast your nets in faith and draw them in with love.

By David Roper (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

A Much Greater Plan

Read: Luke 5:1-11 |

Jesus said to Simon, “Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch men.” —Luke 5:10

Recently our family was in Erie, Pennsylvania, visiting a relative. While there, we had a chance to swim in the community swimming pool. It was fun, but our host wanted to take us to Lake Erie to enjoy the sandy beaches, the cresting waves, and the beauty of the setting sun. My children protested because they wanted to swim in the pool. But I tried to get them to see that going to the beaches of Presque Isle would be a much greater plan.

I believe Jesus wanted Simon Peter to see He had something much greater in mind for him—he would “catch men” (Luke 5:10) instead of fish. Jesus told Peter to go to the deeper water and let down his nets for a catch (Lk 5:4). Peter had just returned from an unsuccessful night of fishing, but at Jesus’ command he obeyed and said, “Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing; nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net” (Lk 5:5). Humbled by the miraculous catch of fish, Peter bowed in awe before the Lord, who then told him that from that point on He wanted him to fish for men. Peter left everything and followed Him.

God’s greater plan for us may not be to leave our occupation. But it’s His plan that we use our time, resources, and careers to bring others into the kingdom.By Marvin Williams (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

For Further Study To learn how to share Jesus’ love with others, read the online bookletThe Compassion of Jesus

The next person you meet may need to meet Christ.

God Whispers “Fish”

Read: Luke 5:1-10

From now on you will catch men. —Luke 5:10

A number of years ago our sons and I enjoyed some days together drifting and fishing the Madison River in Montana with two fishing guides who also served as our boatmen.

The guide I drew was a man who had lived on the river all his life and knew where the big trout held. He was a quiet man who spoke scarcely two dozen words in all the time he was with us, but his few words enlivened my days.

We were fishing with small flies in choppy water. My eyesight was not what it once was, and I was missing most of the takes. My guide—who was also a soul of patience—began to alert me by murmuring "fish" when he saw a trout rising under the fly. When I heard his cue, I lifted the tip of my rod and . . . voilà! A trout on the end of my line!

I've often thought of that guide and Jesus' declaration to His fishermen-disciples, "From now on you will catch men" (Luke 5:10). There are great opportunities that come our way every day—people circling around us, searching for that elusive "something" for which their souls crave—occasions to show the love of Christ and speak of the hope that is in us. These are opportunities we might miss if not alerted.

May the Great Angler, who knows every heart, whisper "fish" in our ears and may we have ears to hear. By David Roper (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

All through this day, O Lord, let me touch as many lives as possible for You—through the words I speak, the prayers I breathe, the letters I write,
and the life I live.

When the Spirit prompts, take action.

INSIGHT: Luke 5:1-10, where Jesus called Simon Peter to be a disciple, was probably the third time the two had met. The first time was in John 1:40-42, where Andrew, himself a new follower of Christ, brought Simon to Jesus. The second seems to be in Mark 1:29-31, when Jesus healed Simon's mother-in-law.

What's Your Motto?

Read: Luke 12:4-7,22-32

Do not fear . . . ; you are of more value than many sparrows. —Luke 12:7

Grug Crood, the dad of a caveman family in an animated movie, believes that there's no safe place beyond their cave. They huddle together at night so he can protect them. He thinks his teenage daughter should give up her adventurous side because it can only lead to danger. His motto for his family is "Never not be afraid." In other words, "Always be afraid."

Jesus often told His followers the opposite: "Do not be afraid." He said that to Simon when He called him to follow Him (Luke 5:10). When Jairus, a synagogue leader whose daughter was dying, came to Him, Jesus reassured him with those same words of care (Lk 8:50).

Luke 12 records Jesus telling His disciples not to be afraid when He taught them how God cared for them much more than for the sparrows (Lk 12:7). And after His resurrection, Jesus told the women who came to the tomb, "Rejoice! . . . Do not be afraid" (Matt. 28:9-10).

Fear is a universal feeling. We have concerns about loved ones, our needs, and the unknown future. How can we learn to have faith? The Lord has given us a foundation on which to build our confidence in Him: "He Himself has said, 'I will never leave you nor forsake you.' So we may boldly say: 'The Lord is my helper; I will not fear' " (Heb. 13:5-6).

Father, life in this world can sometimes be scary.
Thank You for the promise that Your love and care
will never be taken away from us. When fear seems
overwhelming, help us to remember Your promises.

The love of God frees us from the prison of fear.

By Anne Cetas (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

Luke 5:11 When they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed Him.

- **They left everything**: Lu 18:28-30 Mt 4:20 10:37 19:27 Mk 1:18-25 10:21,29,30 Php 3:7,8
- Luke 5:1-11 Characteristics of Jesus' Divinity, Part 1 - John MacArthur
- Luke 5:1-11 Characteristics of Jesus' Divinity, Part 2 - John MacArthur
- Luke 5:1-11 Catching Fish or Men? - Steven Cole
- J C Ryle's Comments on Luke 5 - clear, devout, and accurate
- Luke 5 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Parallel passages - note repetition of the key verb aphiemi not to mention the four occurrence of **immediately** (euthus - not used in Luke's version)

> Mt 4:19-20 And He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men." Immediately they **left** (aphiemi) the boat and their father, and followed Him....22 Immediately they **left** (aphiemi) the boat and their father, and followed Him.
>
> > **Robertson**- Then and there. They had already become his disciples. Now they leave their business for active service of Christ. The conduct of this group of business men should make other business men to pause and see if Jesus is calling them to do likewise.
>
> Mark 1:17, 18 And Jesus said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men.18 "Immediately they **left** (aphiemi) their nets and followed Him...20 Immediately He called them; and they **left** (aphiemi) their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants, and went away to follow Him.
>
> > **Robertson** - With the hired servants (meta tōn misthōtōn). One hired for wages (misthos), a very old Greek word. Zebedee and his two sons evidently had an extensive business in co-operation with Andrew and Simon (Luke 5:7, 10). Mark alone has this detail of the hired servants left with Zebedee. They left the boat and their father (Matthew 4:22) with the hired servants. The business would go on while they left all (Luke 5:11) and became permanent followers of Jesus. Many a young man has faced precisely this problem when he entered the ministry. Could he leave father and mother, brothers and sisters, while he went forth to college and seminary to become a fisher of men? Not the least of the sacrifices made in the education of young preachers is that made by the home folks who have additional burdens to bear because the young preacher is no longer a bread-winner at home. Most young preachers joyfully carry on such burdens after entering the ministry.

THE CALL AND COMPLETE SURRENDER

When they had brought their boats to land they left (aphiemi) **everything** - After a tremendous catch of fish like this, which was worth so much, they left them. Luke does not tell us, but both Matthew (Mt 4:20, 22) and Mark (Mk 1:18, 20+) tell us **they left everything immediately** (see in depth discussion of "immediately"- main note, additional note) This is one of those "hard sayings" of Jesus, one that challenges all who desire to follow hard after Jesus (just maybe not this hard)! **Everything** means everything in Greek! And this would include **their boats**, their only means of making a living!

Compare the call to Levi in Luke 5:28 "And he left everything behind, and got up and began to follow Him." And in Luke 14:33 Jesus said "So then, none of you can be My disciple who does not give up all his own possessions."

Left (aphiemi) Literally means to send from one's self, to forsake, to hurl away, to put away, let alone, disregard, put off. It conveys the basic idea of an action which causes separation and describes total detachment and separation from something. In the present context of course it was literal separation of fishermen from their nets, their boats, their means of making a living and thus a separation from their earthly source of security! It would seem to be a "**key word**" in describing how one becomes a disciple for it is used 5 times in the synoptic accounts of Jesus' call to follow Him! (Mt 4:20, 22, Mk 1:18, 20, Lk 5:11)! It is worth noting that one secular use of "**aphiemi**" in the sentence "**drop** the pot" gives us a vivid picture of how radical their leaving really was. It is also fascinating that in the NT aphiemi is often translated **forgive**, which gives us a beautiful picture of how thorough, completely and forever God "severs" us from the guilt of our sins because of the atoning blood of Christ. One of the men called, Peter, would later use this same verb in warning Simon who sought to buy the Holy Spirit to repent and be **forgiven** (Acts 8:9-10, 22+)

The radical act of the disciples is an illustration of what Jesus was calling for in Luke 14 when He declared...

"So then, none of you can be My disciple who does not give up all his own possessions." (Lk 14:33+)

ILLUSTRATION - When the Spanish explorer Hernando Cortez landed at Vera Cruz, Mexico in 1519 he was intent on conquest. To assure the devotion of his men, Cortez set fire to his fleet of eleven ships! With no means of retreat Cortez's army had only one direction to move, into the Mexican interior. Cortez understood the price of commitment—and he paid it.

F B Meyer: We must be prepared to count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord. As a matter of fact, Jesus gives us back all that is right and beautiful to use for Him, but there must be a definite loosing hold on things, and the placing of all in His pierced hands. Abjuring our ownership, we must be willing to act as His almoners and trustees. It is this that gives savor to life, making it sparkle and resist decay.

The Apostle Paul - But whatever things were gain to me, those things **I have counted as loss** for the sake of Christ. More than that, **I count all things to be loss** in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ, 9 and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith, 10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; 11 in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. (Phil 3:7-11-note)

Peter alluded to the fact that the disciples had abandoning everything and Jesus reminded him it would prove to be worth far more than all they had left...

Peter said, "Behold, we have left our own homes and followed You." 29 And He said to them, "Truly I say to you, there is no one who has left house or wife or brothers or parents or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God, 30 who will not receive many times as much at this time and in the age to come, eternal life." (Lu 18:28-30+)

And followed (akoloutheo) **Him** - Akoloutheo is a technical term in Hebrew and Greek for the reactions and relationships of a disciple to his teacher. The essence of Christianity in fact lies in the words "to follow Jesus." When we walk with Him, He promised we would never walk in darkness! (Jn 8:12). He is our Lamp wherever we walk, always walking with us, His Spirit within us enabling us to "Walk by the Spirit." (Gal 5:16) Paul expressed walking after Jesus as being His imitator (1 Cor 11:1) When He says go, I go. When He says stop, I stop. His sheep know His voice and follow Him (Jn 10:27) Sadly , some declined to follow (Mt 19:21-23).

Akoloutheo means in essence to walk in step with Jesus, walking so close behind that even the dust from the Master's sandals covered those following Him! (See discussion walking in the rabbi's dust) The secret of catching fish (men) is to remain near to Jesus, walking like He walked and abiding in Him (Jn 15:5). And how did Jesus walk? In short, He walked in the power of the Holy Spirit (cf Lk 4:1+, Lk 4:14+, Acts 10:38+) and in so doing He presented us the perfect example that we might rely not on our natural ability and strength but imitate Him (1 Cor 11:1+) and rely wholly on the Holy Spirit to enable us to "follow in His steps." (1 Peter 2:21+, cf 1 Jn 2:6+). For more on this very important topic see the in depth discussion of The Holy Spirit-Walking Like Jesus Walked!

"God doesn't call the qualified, but qualifies the called!"

Utley - It is significant to realize they left everything and immediately followed Him! This was a rabbinical way of acknowledging their officially becoming disciples of Jesus (cf. Lk 5:27–28; 9:23, 49, 57, 59, 61; 18:22, 28).

Brian Bell - This was truly the Turning-point in these men lives! They responded w/a "don't-look-back faith" that Jesus was looking for! .1. Peter/Andrew…"left their nets"; James/John…"left their father"Mk 1:20; & Matthew…"will leave his booth" (Lk 5:28). Three Stages for these chosen men:. [1] Discipleship - They become His disciples about 1 yr ago. [2] Ministry - now they leave their business for active service. [3] Apostleship – Luke 6.This group of businessmen ought to cause other business men & women to pause & see if Jesus is calling them to do likewise! Oh, & maybe not even leave their business, but maybe redirect it to Him? Maybe doing it in a foreign land for the sake of ministry purposes? Bringing Jesus into its profits? We cannot follow Jesus until we are willing to forsake our own plans. This doesn't mean He will always take you out of your present job & put you on staff at a church or on the mission field! But the question is "Have you dared ask?"…yes you! - Not the guy next to you…YOU! "God doesn't call the qualified, but qualifies the called!" But He requires Total Commitment!!! A call to obedience, confession, & commitment! 1st He called Peter to cut the ties from shore to go out into the deep. Next, to cut the ties of the past…for good! Q: What might He call you to leave on the beach? 1. Peter finally got "the catch of a lifetime", but not even that mattered, he left that also! Q: What did God do to get your attention to Him? - When you realized who Jesus was did you have an acute awareness of your sin? - What changes in your life can be traced back to your conversion? Here are 4 fishermen that got caught in Jesus' net! 1. He calls ordinary men, walking an ordinary life. "Give God your ordinary life(you, just as you are now) & God will give you back, an extraordinary calling."

Notice the “I will make you!!!” I love that their 1st titles aren’t “bishops, pastors, elders, or deacons”,…but “fishers of men”! Without Jesus: Night of toil; Nothing taken; Nets empty! With Jesus: Full Nets; Full ship; Full hearts! I’ll make you fishers of men - “If the Bible is a missionary book, the people of the Book are charged with being a missionary people.”Q: How do you presently fish for men? Women? Children? Elderly? I have fished all my life! - I have learned I must take time to go fish. I must have a hook. I must fresh bait, or a lure. I must be patient. I must never yell at the fish for not jumping on my hook. Sometimes I’ve had to go back to the same pool a few times before I can catch a certain one. Sometimes I’ve tried & tried & have had to walk away to no avail. Sometimes I’ve tried others techniques & they haven’t worked for me personally. Sometimes I’ve learned awesome techniques that I am indebted to friends for showing me them. As Thomas Boston(in 1699) the famous ‘Scottish Puritan’ once depicted it as “The art of Manfishing”! Our Nets? The Word of God; Our personal story! Our Bait? Loving words & deeds! Jesus will repeat this miracle at an important time for an important person “Peter” & for his restoration (Jn 21). . And will tell him again to Follow me (Jn 21:19, 21), even unto death! Follow me in Discipleship, in ministry, in death-to-self, in death itself if I require it! **Prayer**: Lord we obediently launch out now into the deep of our community! Help us to let down our gospel nets, & use the bait of our lives! We fall at your Son Jesus’ knees, & own our own sinfulness! We forsake all, & chose to follow you & you alone! Invitation: The call to obedience, confession, & commitment!

I want to walk with Jesus Christ,
All the days I live of this life on earth,
To give to Him complete control
Of body and of soul.
Follow Him, follow Him; yield your life to Him.
He has conquered death;
He is King of kings.
Accept the joy which He gives to those
Who yield their lives to Him.

Left (863)(**aphiemi** from **apo** = prefix speaks of separation, putting some distance between + **hiemi** = put in motion, send) conveys the basic idea of an action which causes separation. 1. let go, send away Mk 4:36; give up Mt 27:50; utter Mk 15:37 ; divorce 1 Cor 7:11ff. Cancel, pardon Mt 18:27, 32; remit, forgive sins, etc. Mt 6:12, 14f; Mk 3:28; Lk 12:10; Ro 4:7; 1 J 1:9; 2:12.—2. leave lit. Mt 4:11; 19:27; Mk 13:34; Lk 10:30; abandon Mk 14:50. Let someone have something Mt 5:40; give peace Jn 14:27. Fig. give up, abandon Ro 1:27; Heb 6:1; Rev 2:4; neglect Mt 23:23.—3. let, let go, permit, tolerate Mk 5:19; Acts 5:38; Rev 2:20; 11:9. Let someone go on Jn 11:48. The imperatives are used with the subjunctive, esp. in the first person - let me take out the speck Mt 7:4; let us see Mt 27:49; also with hina and the third person - let her keep it Jn 12:7. Friberg - (1) send off or away, let go (Mt 27.50); (2) as a legal technical term divorce (1Co 7.11); (3) abandon, leave behind (Mt 26.56); (4) of duty and obligation reject, set aside, neglect (Mk 7.8); (5) of toleration let go, leave in peace, allow (Mk 11.6); (6) of sins or debts forgive, pardon, cancel (Lk 7.47); (7) give or utter a loud cry (Mk 15.37) (Borrow Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament)

> **Aphiemi in Luke** - Lk. 4:39; Lk. 5:11; Lk. 5:20; Lk. 5:21; Lk. 5:23; Lk. 5:24; Lk. 6:42; Lk. 7:47; Lk. 7:48; Lk. 7:49; Lk. 8:51; Lk. 9:60; Lk. 10:30; Lk. 11:4; Lk. 12:10; Lk. 12:39; Lk. 13:8; Lk. 13:35; Lk. 17:3; Lk. 17:4; Lk. 17:34; Lk. 17:35; Lk. 17:36; Lk. 18:16; Lk. 18:28; Lk. 18:29; Lk. 19:44; Lk. 21:6; Lk. 23:34;

Followed (190)(**akoloutheo** from **a** = expresses union with, likeness + **keleuthos** = a road, way) means to walk the same road (Ponder that simple definition dear believer - Am I willing to walk the same road as Jesus?) Literally to follow (like the crowds followed Jesus) and in a figurative sense to follow Jesus as a disciple. To follow (closely) and was used of soldiers, servants and pupils. To go after someone or something (not as a true disciple however as we see with the crowds who physically followed Jesus, following however without a willingness to commit wholly to Him! cf John 6:60-65, 66) Early in the history of the Greek language **akoloutheo** came to mean to imitate or follow someone's example. This dual meaning colored the New Testament use of our word akoloutheo.

Note that most of the uses of **akoloutheo** are in the Gospels and thus this verb is firmly linked with the life of Jesus, for He is the One to follow. When Jesus issued a call to "**Follow Me**" (see the 12 **highlighted verbs** in list below, all present imperative) **akoloutheo** was always in the present imperative indicating that Jesus is calling for this to be one's lifelong path, ultimately one which can only be successfully trodden by yielding to His Spirit who enables us to obey that command as our lifestyle (not perfection, but general direction). **There is a big difference between the disciples who followed Jesus in Mt 4:20, 22 and the crowds following Him (Mt 4:25+, Mt 8:1+, etc)** for the former left their possessions (nets, boat), while the latter left nothing. Some claimed they wanted to follow Him but were not willing to count the cost (Mt 8:19, 22). In the Gospels **akoloutheo** is always related to Jesus as the object of following in discipleship (exceptions: Mark 9:38; 14:13 par. Luke 22:10; Matt 9:19; John 11:31; 20:6). The phrase **Follow Me** 19x all present imperative - Matt. 4:19; Matt. 8:22; Matt. 9:9; Matt. 16:24; Matt. 19:21; Mk. 1:17; Mk. 2:14; Mk. 8:34; Mk. 10:21; Lk. 5:27; Lk. 9:23; Lk. 9:59; Lk. 18:22; Jn. 1:43; Jn. 10:27; Jn. 12:26; Jn. 13:36; Jn. 21:19; Jn. 21:22

Click here for an in depth discussion of akoloutheo in the New International Dictionary of the New Testament

Friberg summary - (1) literally follow, go along behind, come after (Mk 10.52); of a crowd go along with, accompany (Mt 21.9); figuratively, of discipleship and self-commitment follow, go after, obey (Mt 9.9); "to join one as a disciple, become his disciple, conform wholly to another's example." (2) generally, of observance of laws and customs obey, follow. (BORROW Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament)

TDNT - In Greek the ordinary sense of following led to that of intellectual, moral, and religious following. (IN NT) External following is still involved (cf. Matt. 8:19; Mark 10:28) but with a total commitment and in an exclusive relation to one who is recognized as not just a teacher but the Messiah. This discipleship brings participation in salvation (Mark 10:17; Luke 9:61-62; Jn. 8:12; Rev. 14:4), but also in suffering (Matt. 8:19-20; Mark 8:34; Jn. 12:25-26). The strength of the figurative use may have been in the presence of sayings like Matt. 10:38, the possibility of discipleship without literally going after Jesus, and the active stress which rules out the use of a noun to express the concept. Since it is the historical Jesus that is followed, it is natural that other terms should be found in the other NT writings to describe the relation to the exalted Lord and his Spirit. Rev. 14:4 simply applies Matt. 10:38 to a particular group. (BORROW Kittel's Theological Dictionary of the New Testament : abridged in one volume)

Akoloutheo is used only 7x in the Septuagint - Nu 22:20; Ruth 1:14 (used to translate "Ruth clung to her" - VIVID ILLUSTRATION OF MEANING OF AKOLOUTHEO!); 1 Sam. 25:42; 1 Ki. 19:20 (OF ELISHA FOLLOWING ELIJAH ~ DISCIPLE); Isa. 45:14; Ezek. 29:16; Hos. 2:5

Mounce says "following is not only a description of movement, but it is also a metaphor of salvation. To follow Christ means to accompany Him to learn from Him, and to respond to His voice.

Lawrence Richards - In the NT, "**to follow**" is from the Greek akoloutheō. It is often used in narrative passages with a common, descriptive meaning. But it also has a special spiritual impact, linked with discipleship. The Christian disciple is one who has chosen to follow Jesus. The disciple expresses that basic commitment by daily choices of obedience to the Lord. Akoloutheō expresses a disciple's commitment in quite a number of NT passages (Mt 4:20, 22; 8:19, 22; 9:9; 10:38; 16:24; 19:21, 27, 28; Mk 1:18; 2:14; 8:34; 10:21, 28; Lk 5:11, 27, 28; 9:23, 57, 59, 61; 18:22, 28; Jn 1:43; 8:12; 10:4, 5, 27; 12:26; 21:19, 22; Rev 14:4) (BORROW Expository Dictionary of Bible Words)

William Barclay - AKOLOUTHEIN THE DISCIPLE'S WORD (Check out a copy of New Testament words**)**

> Akolouthein is the common and normal Greek verb which means to follow. It is a word with many uses and with many associations and all of them add something to its meaning for the follower of Christ. First, let us look at its usage and its meaning in classical Greek.
>
> (i) It is the common and the usual word for soldiers following their leader and commander. Xenophon (Anabasis 7.5.3) speaks about the generals and captains who have followed the leader for whom they are fighting.
>
> (ii) It is very commonly used of a slave following or attending his master. Theophrastus, in his character sketch of the Distrustful Man, says that such a man compels his slave to walk before him instead of following behind him, as a slave would normally do, so that he can be sure the slave will not dodge away (Theophrastus, Characters 18.8).
>
> (iii) It is commonly used for following or obeying someone else's advice or opinion. Plato says that it is necessary to find out those who are fitted by nature to be leaders in philosophy and government, and those who are fitted by nature to be followers of the leader (Plato, Republic 474c). Some people are fitted to give leadership; others are only fitted to accept it.
>
> (iv) It is commonly used of obeying the laws. To follow the laws of a city is to accept them as the standard of life and of behaviour.
>
> (v) It is commonly used of following the thread or argument of a discourse. When the argument has got into a difficult position Socrates says: 'Come now, try to follow me, to see if we can get this matter adequately explained' (Plato, Republic 474c).
>
> (vi) In the papyri akolouthein is very commonly used for attaching oneself to someone in order to extract some favour which is desired. One writes in advice to another: 'stick to Ptollarion all the time.… Stick to him so that you may become his friend.' The idea is that of following a person until the favour desired is finally extracted from him.
>
> **Every one of these usages has light to throw on the Christian life.**
>
> 1. The Christian is in the position of the soldier who follows Jesus Christ, and who must immediately obey his leader's command.
> 2. The Christian is in the position of the slave, who must obey as soon as his master speaks.

3. The Christian must ask for the advice and for the ruling of Jesus Christ and must have the humility to follow it, whatever it may be.
4. The Christian is the man who desires citizenship of the Kingdom of Heaven, and, if he is to receive it, he must agree to live according to its laws.
5. The Christian is the learner and the listener who must listen to the words of Jesus, and who must follow their thread, so that day by day he may learn more of the wisdom which Jesus is ever wishing to teach him.
6. The Christian is always in the position of one who needs and desires the favour and the grace and the help which Jesus Christ can give to him, and who follows Christ because in Christ alone he finds his need supplied.

We now turn to the use of akolouthein in the NT itself It is very frequent there.
(i) It is used of the disciples who left their various trades and occupations and followed Jesus. So it is used of Peter and Andrew (Mark 1:18; cp. Matt. 4:20). It is used of the two disciples of John the Baptist who followed Jesus when John pointed at Jesus as the Lamb of God (John 1:37). It is used of the reaction of the disciples after the miraculous catch of fishes; they forsook all and followed Jesus (Luke 5:11). It is the claim of the disciples towards the end that they have left everything to follow Jesus (Matt. 19:27). It is used of the would-be disciples whom Jesus told to think again before they launched out on the adventure of following him (Matt. 8:19; cp. Luke 9:59, 61).

(ii) It is the word which Jesus used to summon men to himself. On Jesus' lips it is the word of challenge. His commandment to Matthew is: Follow me (Mark 2:14; cp. Luke 5:27; Matt. 9:9). It is Jesus' command to Philip (John 1:43). It is his final command to Peter (John 21:19, 22). It is his unaccepted command to the Rich Young Ruler (Matt. 19:21; cp. Luke 18:22). His command to all his would-be followers is that they should take up their cross and follow him (Mark 8:34; 10:21; Matt. 10:38; 16:24; Luke 9:23).

(iii) Most commonly of all this word is used of the crowds who followed Jesus (Matt. 4:25; 8:1; 12:15; 14:13; 19:2; 20:9; 21:9; Mark 3:7; 5:24; 11:9; John 6:2). This use is very closely connected with the usage of the verb in the papyri to describe the act of attaching oneself to someone until a request is granted. Sometimes the crowds followed Jesus to experience his healing power; sometimes they followed him to listen to his words; and sometimes, towards the end, they followed him in wondering admiration to see what was going to happen to him. Another instance of this use of akolouthein in the sense of following to receive a favour is Matt. 9:27, when the two blind men are said to follow Jesus in order that he might heal them.

(iv) Sometimes the following is the result of gratitude. In Matt. 20:34 the two blind men are said to follow Jesus after they had received their sight; the same is said of the blind man in Luke 18:43; and of Bartimæus in Mark 10:52. They followed because they were drawn with the cords of gratitude for what Jesus had done.

(v) In Mark 2:15 it is said that the sinners followed Jesus. That is a most significant usage. There was that about Jesus which they knew would meet their need; they would have avoided a Pharisee, but Jesus they followed, because they knew that he knew and understood their case.

We can distinguish in these uses of akolouthein five reasons for following Jesus.
(i) The disciples followed Jesus because of the sheer compelling attraction of his summons.

(ii) The crowds followed Jesus because they desired the things which he alone could give them.

(iii) The sinners followed Jesus because they felt that he alone could enable them to mend their broken lives and to begin again.

(iv) The blind men followed Jesus that they might receive their sight. They desired to experience his wonderworking power.
(v) The blind men whose eyes were opened followed Jesus in sheer gratitude for what he had done for them.

There we see in summary the motives of the approach of the heart to Jesus Christ.

It will repay us still further to study the usages of akolouthein in the gospels.

1. We must see what following Jesus involves.
(i) Following Jesus involves counting the cost. In Luke 9:59, 61, Jesus seems actually to discourage people from following him until he has made quite sure that they know what they are doing. Jesus does not want anyone to follow him on false pretences, nor will he accept an emotional and easily-moved offer of an unconsidered service.

(ii) Following Jesus involves sacrifice. Repeatedly it is pointed out what people left to follow him (Luke 5:11; Matt. 4:20, 22; 19:27). The real point for us there is that following Jesus is what in modern language is called a whole-time job. But there is this difference for us—that following Jesus involves for us serving him within our work, and not by leaving it. In many cases it

would be far easier to leave it; but our duty is to witness for him where he has sent us.

(iii) Following Jesus involves a cross (Matt. 16:24; cp. Mark 8:34 and Luke 9:23). The real reason for that is that no man can follow Jesus and ever again do what he likes. To follow Jesus may well mean the sacrifice of the pleasures, habits, aims, ambitions which have woven themselves into our lives. Following Jesus always involves this act of surrender—and surrender is never easy.

2. We must see what following Jesus gives. In this direction there are two great promises from the Fourth Gospel.
(i) To follow Jesus means to walk not in the darkness, but in the light (John 8:12). When a man walks by himself he walks in the darkness of uncertainty, and he may well end in the darkness of sin. To walk with Jesus is to be sure of the way, and in his company to be safe.

(ii) To follow Jesus is to be certain of ultimately arriving at the glory where he himself is (John 12:26). This is the other side of the warning that to follow Jesus means a sacrifice and a cross. The sacrifice and the cross are not pointless. They are the price of the eternal glory. Jesus never promised an easy way, but he did promise a way in the end of which the hardness of the way would be forgotten.

3. We must see that there are inadequate ways of following Jesus. These ways are not to be condemned. They are infinitely better than nothing, but they are not the best.

(i) At the end Peter followed Jesus afar off (Matt. 26:58; cp. Mark 14:54 and Luke 22:54). The real reason was that Peter did not dare to follow any nearer; and the real tragedy is that if Peter had kept close to Jesus, the disaster of his denial might never have happened, for it was when Peter saw Jesus' face again that he discovered what he had done by his repeated denials.

(ii) On the last journey to Jerusalem the disciples followed afraid (Mark 10:32). In a way that was the bravest act of all. They did not understand what was happening; they feared the worst; and yet they followed him. We can take comfort from reminding ourselves that often the man who follows Christ in fear and trembling is showing the highest courage of all.

4. Lastly we must note that a man can refuse to follow Jesus. That is what the Rich Young Ruler did (Matt. 19:21; cp. Luke 18:22). The result of his refusal was that he went away sorrowful. The result of refusal is always sorrow; the result of following, however hard and frightening the way, is always joy. (Check out a copy of William Barclay's New Testament words - very interesting resource - covers about 70 NT Greek words in Barclay's unique style)

Eerdman's Bible Dictionary on Imitation - The concept is more fully expressed by Gk. akolouthéō, with the sense "follow (as a disciple)" or "obey," as used primarily in the Gospels. The term implies more than merely copying Jesus' lifestyle (Matt. 16:24; John 8:12), stressing particularly a readiness to face one's own possible destruction (Matt. 16:24; Mark 8:34; Luke 9:23). It occurs in those passages where Christ calls his disciples (Mark 1:18) and where the disciples respond (Matt. 4:20; Mark 2:14; Luke 5:11). Such a "coming after" suggests a relationship between master and pupil that also removes the parties from other social ties (Matt. 8:22; Luke 9:61). Even the crowds that followed Jesus demonstrated a form of imitation that showed recognition and relatedness. Such imitation is focused on Christ's messiahship (Mark 10:21; John 8:12). At Rev. 14:4 those who have remained morally pure are the redeemed who follow the Lamb "wherever he goes."

John MacArthur notes that **akoloutheo "**has many meanings but it basically translates to follow. Let me give you five meanings and if we can composite these five meanings you'll get an idea of what it is to follow Christ. **First of all,** it's the word used for a **soldier** who follows his captain. It's a common word for battle. And you know, that's what a Christian is, somebody who follows the captain. The captain says, "Men, we're going over there." The soldier doesn't say, "No, I think I'll go over there." No. If the captain says you go over there, you go over there. Fall in. And so the Christian follows the captain. It's also the word that is used beyond that of a **slave** who attends and follows his master. And it's the idea of attending to his master's needs. Jesus is our master and a wonderful master He is. And what does He want of us? But to follow Him, to do His will, to be at His beckon call and to do it with joy. We're to serve Him. It's also the word that is used for someone who **follows wise counsel,** to get advice and to do what the wise counselor told you. And Christ is our counselor. Wonderful counselor, Isaiah said. And we are to follow His wise counselling. He knows. Isn't it amazing how often we think we know what's best? Oh, it's so tragic. You know, some people have the strangest ideas about God. It's just amazing to me. Talking to students, they think that God is just sort of a universal party-pooper, that God is sort of a cosmic killjoy, you know, that God just wants to destroy everybody's fun. And they don't understand that if you just do things God's way, Christ's way, it's always the best way because it's wise counsel. And **follow also means, fourthly, to obey the laws of a government** or the standards that are set up. And isn't that what we as Christians are to do, conform to the image of Jesus Christ, become what He is by His standards? And to **follow also is the idea of following a teacher's argument.** When a teacher is reasoning something out we are to follow it and come to his conclusions. And the Christian listens to Jesus Christ. In every way the word follow is used it fits us. Let me summarize by

saying this. A follower of Jesus Christ is one who gives his body and soul to Christ. Here we go again. Someone who gives his body and soul to Christ … totally, completely, with no loose ends. You know, when we follow Jesus Christ half heartedly, we don't really fulfill the obligation of a believer. Christ never said to us to follow Him half-heartedly. He said leave everything, come out from among them, touch not the unclean thing, be willing to leave father and mother and everything you have to follow Me. That's the kind of following Jesus wants. And the person who comes to Jesus Christ comes on His terms. You know, you hear this dichotomy all the time, "Well Christ is my Savior but not my Lord." That's not true. That is not true. Christ is your Savior and your Lord. The question is not the lordship of Christ, He is Lord. The question is obedience. And don't ever think it isn't. And some people say, "Well I've received Christ as Savior but not as Lord." Oh, don't kid yourself. If you received Him as Savior, He came as He was and He is Lord. The question is not the lordship of Christ, the question is the obedience of the believer. He is Lord. He doesn't come to you on your terms, He comes on His terms. The question is obedience. (Sermon on Jesus: The Light of the World)

Zodhiates on akoloutheo - To attend, to accompany, to go with or follow a teacher (Matt. 4:20, 22, 25; 9:9; 19:27, 28; 27:55; Mark 1:18; 9:38; John 1:41; 12:26; Sept.: 1 Kings 19:20, 21; Isa. 45:14). Generally (Matt. 8:1; 9:19, 27; Mk 5:24; 10:32; Lk 22:54; John 11:31; 1 Cor. 10:4; Sept.: Ruth 1:14; 1 Sa 25:42). The individual calling to follow Jesus involved abiding fellowship with Him, not only for the sake of learning as a scholar from his teacher (Mt 8:19), but also for the sake of the salvation known or looked for which presented itself in such fellowship (Matt. 19:21; Lk 9:61). The first thing involved in following Jesus is a cleaving to Him in believing trust and obedience. Those cleaving to Him must also follow His leading and act according to His example (John 8:12; 10:4, 5, 27). Hence constant stress is laid by the Lord Jesus upon the need of self-denial and fellowship of the cross (Matt. 8:19, 20, 22; 10:38; Mark 8:34; John 8:12; 12:26). Following Jesus thus denotes a fellowship of faith as well as a fellowship of life, sharing in His sufferings not only inwardly, but outwardly if necessary (Matt. 9:9, 19, 27). Such outward fellowship with Jesus, however, could not continue without inner moral and spiritual fellowship, without a life resembling His and a self-denying sharing of His cross. The expression "follow the Lamb (Jesus)" occurs only in Rev. 14:4. In John 8:12; 10:4, 5, 27; 12:26, following Jesus appears as an independent concept apart from any outward act or momentary circumstances of time and place which union with Him might involve. See also Matt. 8:10, 22, 23; 12:15; 14:13; 19:2; 20:29, 34; 21:9; 26:58; Mark 2:14, 15; 3:7; 6:1; 10:21, 28, 52; 11:9; 14:13, 51, 54; 15:41; Luke 5:11, 27, 28; 7:9; 9:11, 49, 59; 18:22, 28, 43; 22:10, 39; 23:27; John 1:37, 38, 40, 43; 6:2; 13:36, 37; 18:15; 20:6; 21:19, 20, 22; Acts 12:8, 9; 13:43; 21:36; Rev. 6:8; 14:13; 19:14. With reference to time, akolouthéō means to follow thereupon (Rev. 14:8, 9, to follow in succession, succeed; 14:13, their good deeds accompany them to the judgment seat of God). Figuratively it refers to spiritual or moral relationships (Matt. 10:38; 16:24; Mark 8:34; Luke 9:23; John 8:12; 12:26). (Borrow The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament by Zodhiates, Spiros)

Swindoll - Literally, this verb means "to go the same way." The metaphorical extension of this idea connotes imitating the thoughts, beliefs, actions, or lifestyle of another. Similarly, we might say of a boy adopting his father's occupation, "He's following in the footsteps of his father." Though the Old Testament makes occasional use of similar imagery (see 1 Kgs. 19:20; for examples of synonyms, see Gen. 5:22; 6:9; Mic. 6:8), the New Testament uses it much more frequently, perhaps because of the accessibility of the human example of Christ and his earthly relationship to his disciples. (Insights on Luke)

Detzler - In the Septuagint, "**following**" often had a negative connotation. It spoke of following evil people into the sin of idolatry (Jdg 2:12). Sometimes it spoke of following Jehovah (Dt. 1:36), though the Jews did not sense an intimate relationship between themselves and their exalted God. People followed examples, as Elisha followed Elijah (1 Ki 19:20). Otherwise "following" is largely a New Testament concept. The idea of following is usually attached to the Lord Jesus Christ. From the first, large crowds came after Him. Early in His ministry crowds came from Galilee, Jerusalem, and Transjordan to follow Him (Mt. 4:25; Mk 3:7-8; Lk 6:17-18). After Jesus gave the Sermon on the Mount multitudes followed Him (Mt 8:1). On His final trek to Jerusalem crowds pursued Him (Mt 19:2). At the Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem the crowds cried, "Hosanna! [Jehovah save]" (Mt 21:9). From the early days of His earthly ministry Jesus was popular with the crowds, not least because of His healing ministry. The primary party of His followers were the disciples. Wherever Jesus went they accompanied Him. Some others said they would follow, but the price put them off. One example was a man who had family responsibilities (Mt 8:18-22), and another was a rich young ruler (Mk 10:17-21; Lk 18:22-23). The true disciples obeyed Christ's command to follow. Matthew gave up his tax business (Mt. 9:9; Mk 2:14; Luke 5:27). Peter packed in his fishing and followed Jesus (Mt. 4:18-20; Mk 1:16-20). This principal of following Jesus is the cornerstone of true discipleship (Lk 9:23). However, discipleship is much more than simply strolling with the Saviour. It means following His lifestyle. Following the Lord means alignment with His kingdom (Lk 9:61-62). Eternal life is defined as following Jesus (Mk 10:17, 21; John 8:12). In the Revelation triumphant disciples are described as those who "follow the Lamb wherever He goes" (Rev 14:4). Jesus placed a high priority on following. Those who do not take up the cross and follow Him are not worthy of Him (Matt. 10:38). This involves counting the cost of discipleship before jumping in at the deep end (Lk 14:27-33). For the disciples of Jesus' day, following Him meant identification with Him in His entire life. Those who followed Jesus had no secure home; they were "transients" as He was (Matt. 8:19-20). Those who followed Jesus were committed to go forward and never look back (Luke 9:61-62). Following Jesus meant taking the daily risk of losing one's life, or at least losing control

over one's life (Mark 8:34). On the verge of His passion Jesus again underlined the total commitment involved in following Him (John 12:25-26). In writing on the subject of following, the German theologian Gerhard Kittel said: "[Following Jesus] is not in any sense an imitation of the example of Jesus .. . but exclusively a fellowship of life and suffering with the Messiah which arises only in the fellowship of His salvation." (NT Words in Todays Language)

BDAG Summarized: 1. Literally, to move behind someone in the same direction, come after (Mt 21:9; Mk 11:9; Jn 21:20; Acts 21:36; 1 Cor 10:4; Rev 14:8. 2. To follow or accompany someone who takes the lead, accompany, go along with, oft. of the crowd following Jesus - Mt 4:25; 8:1; 12:15; 14:13; Mk 5:24; Lk 7:9; 9:11; Jn 6:2. 3. With transition to the fig. meaning = to follow someone as a disciple, be a disciple, follow 4. Generally to comply with, follow, obey

Gilbrant on **akoloutheo** - **Classical Greek** - Originally **akoloutheō** was formed from the noun **keleuthos**, “a path.” It denotes “to go the same way/path, to go somewhere together with someone, to accompany someone, to follow after someone.” Sometimes it reflects a hostile attitude and suggests the pursuit of someone. In classical Greek it referred to soldiers who followed their commander or to slaves who followed their master. It was also common to use **akoloutheō** in reference to following the laws, i.e., to be law abiding. Figuratively the term describes “following the advice or guidance of another,” or “adjusting to the opinion of another,” or “following the teacher’s train of thought or reasoning.” **In the Septuagint akoloutheō** translates several Hebrew words including hālakh,“to go behind, to follow.” In one place the term denotes a rather hostile image of “to pursue” such as “following after” idols (Isaiah 45:14), but in general it simply denotes “to follow.” For example, in 1 Ki 19:20 Elisha “**follows**” Elijah; here akoloutheō joins opisō “after” and reflects the later idiom “to follow after.”**Intertestamental Period -** The negative sense mentioned above continued in Judaism, but it did not dominate. The Hebrew phrase hālakh ’achărê and the Greek expression **akoloutheō** became the ordinary expressions in Palestine for **denoting the relationship between a rabbi and his disciple,** whose objective was to learn and study Torah. The disciple was obligated to follow (literally) his master/rabbi wherever he went in order to be taught by him and to be his servant (Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary)

Akoloutheo - 89x in 86v - Usage: follow(35), followed(36), following(17), follows(1).

Matthew 4:20 Immediately they left their nets and **followed** Him.
Matthew 4:22 Immediately they left the boat and their father, and **followed** Him.
Matthew 4:25 Large crowds **followed** Him from Galilee and the Decapolis and Jerusalem and Judea and from beyond the Jordan.
Matthew 8:1 When Jesus came down from the mountain, large crowds **followed** Him.
Matthew 8:10 Now when Jesus heard this, He marveled and said to those who were **following**, "Truly I say to you, I have not found such great faith with anyone in Israel.
Matthew 8:19 Then a scribe came and said to Him, "Teacher, I will **follow** You wherever You go."
Matthew 8:22 But Jesus said to him, "**Follow** Me, and allow the dead to bury their own dead."
Matthew 8:23 When He got into the boat, His disciples **followed** Him.
Matthew 9:9 As Jesus went on from there, He saw a man called Matthew, sitting in the tax collector's booth; and He said to him, "**Follow** Me!" And he got up and **followed** Him.
Matthew 9:19 Jesus got up and began to **follow** him, and so did His disciples.
Matthew 9:27 As Jesus went on from there, two blind men **followed** Him, crying out, "Have mercy on us, Son of David!"
Matthew 10:38 "And he who does not take his cross and **follow** after Me is not worthy of Me.
Matthew 12:15 But Jesus, aware of this, withdrew from there. Many **followed** Him, and He healed them all,
Matthew 14:13 Now when Jesus heard about John, He withdrew from there in a boat to a secluded place by Himself; and when the people heard of this, they **followed** Him on foot from the cities.
Matthew 16:24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and **follow** Me.
Matthew 19:2 and large crowds **followed** Him, and He healed them there.
Matthew 19:21 Jesus said to him, "If you wish to be complete, go and sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, **follow** Me."
Matthew 19:27 Then Peter said to Him, "Behold, we have left everything and **followed** You; what then will there be for us?"
Matthew 19:28 And Jesus said to them, "Truly I say to you, that you who have **followed** Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.
Matthew 20:29 As they were leaving Jericho, a large crowd **followed** Him.
Matthew 20:34 Moved with compassion, Jesus touched their eyes; and immediately they regained their sight

and **followed** Him.
Matthew 21:9 The crowds going ahead of Him, and those who **followed**, were shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David; BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD; Hosanna in the highest!"
Matthew 26:58 But Peter was **following** Him at a distance as far as the courtyard of the high priest, and entered in, and sat down with the officers to see the outcome.
Matthew 27:55 Many women were there looking on from a distance, who had **followed** Jesus from Galilee while ministering to Him.
Mark 1:18 Immediately they left their nets and **followed** Him.

> **Wuest** - The word is used with the associative-instrumental case, the idea being “to follow with” another. It implies fellowship, joint-participation, a side-by-side walking with another. Thus it has come to mean, “to join one as a disciple, to cleave steadfastly to one, conform wholly to his example, in living and, if need be, in dying.”

Mark 2:14 As He passed by, He saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting in the tax booth, and He said to him, "**Follow** Me!" And he got up and **followed** Him.

> **Wuest** - It means, “to follow one who precedes, to join him as his attendant, to join one as his disciple, to side with his party.” All these things were involved in our Lord’s command. This was more than an invitation. The word is in the imperative mode, issuing a command. It is not, “Would you like to follow Me? I extend this invitation to you.” Here was a King, sovereign in His demands. Levi recognized the imperative tone of our Lord’s voice. This was an effectual call, like the call to salvation. The one called is rendered willing to respond. Levi left his tax collector’s desk in the power of a compulsion which he did not understand. It meant poverty for him, instead of the affluence and luxury to which he had been accustomed. The verb is in the present tense (present imperative), commanding the beginning of an action and its habitual continuance. It is, “**Start following Me, and continue as a habit of life to follow Me**.” This meant for Levi, that henceforth he would walk the same road that Jesus walked, a road of self-sacrifice, a road of separation, a road of altruism, a road of suffering, a road of holiness. But the command was not merely, “Follow Me.” It was “Follow with Me.” The pronoun is in the associative-instrumental case. The person indicated by the pronoun is the instrument which completes the association between the two individuals. Our Lord did not therefore merely command Levi to become His follower. He welcomed him to a participation in His companionship. And this “with Me” companionship, was not one of an Indian-file nature, one following after another. It was a side by side walk down the same road. And this blessed fellowship is for every believer in the Lord Jesus.

Mark 2:15 And it happened that He was reclining at the table in his house, and many tax collectors and sinners were dining with Jesus and His disciples; for there were many of them, and they were **following** Him.
Mark 3:7 Jesus withdrew to the sea with His disciples; and a great multitude from Galilee **followed**; and also from Judea,
Mark 5:24 And He went off with him; and a large crowd was **following** Him and pressing in on Him.
Mark 6:1 Jesus went out from there and came into His hometown; and His disciples **followed** Him.
Mark 8:34 And He summoned the crowd with His disciples, and said to them, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and **follow** Me.

> **Wuest** - Follow Me. The word “follow” is **akoloutheō** “to take the same road as another does.” It is used with the associative instrumental case. It is, “Let him follow with Me.” The idea is not that of following behind another, but that of accompanying the other person, taking the same road that he takes and fellowshipping with him along that road. The first two imperatives are aorist, giving a summary command to be obeyed at once. The “coming after” and the “taking up” are to be obeyed at once and are to be a once-for-all act. That is, these acts are to be looked upon as a permanent attitude and practice of life. The whole life is to be characterized by an habitual coming after and taking up of the cross. After having once for all given over the life to the Lord, the believer must hence-forward count it ever so given over. He is not his own anymore. He belongs to the Lord. He is the Lord’s property. The word “follow” however, is in the present imperative, which commands the doing of an action and its habitual, moment by moment continuance. The first two imperatives give direction to the life. The last speaks of the actual living of that which has been given direction by two once-for-all acts.
>
> **Believer's Church Bible Commentary** - A follower/disciple is thus defined as one who has taken up a position behind Jesus. The second reference to following uses the verb **akoloutheō**, a word that implies movement along with (but still behind) Jesus. Thus discipleship (following after Jesus) is defined with

three qualifiers, each of which deserves a few comments:

• **Self-denial** does not focus on denying things to ourselves or living as an ascetic. The self is denied as the controlling center. Jesus and his cause are taken up as one's chief loyalties. There are two options: one lives for self, or one lives for the one who is confessed as the Christ. To do the former is to remain tied to human things; to do the latter is to give allegiance to divine things (Mk 8:33). Indeed, the word for deny (aparneomai) is used only here and with reference to Peter's denial of Jesus (Mk 14:30–31, 72). In Mark, one either denies self or one denies Christ. That is what the paradoxes in verses Mk 8:35–38 are designed to clarify.

• **Cross-carrying** is loaded with a wealth of associations, especially for later Christian readers who know the outcome of the story and understand a NT theology of the cross. From this perspective, cross-carrying may well allude to such diverse elements as a willingness to suffer (even martyrdom), crucifixion of the flesh (Gal. 5:24), the acceptance of and proclamation of the gospel, a commitment to non-retaliation, peacemaking and reconciliation, freedom from the law, and so on. But in the context of Mark's narrative (and of the historical Jesus' teaching around Caesarea Philippi), cross-carrying has a more restricted meaning: willingness to submit to God's will (and Jesus' teaching), no matter what the cost (on cross-carrying, see TBC, below; TLC for 14:27–15:15) [The Meaning of Cross-Carrying].

• Accompanying Jesus as he journeys toward Jerusalem involves active identification with Jesus, and acceptance of what he teaches. The disciple who has denied self (ceased to live for oneself) and taken up the cross (submitted to God's will) is free to follow (keep in step with Jesus as he models and teaches God's way). All these elements together define what it means to come after Jesus (8:34).

Mark 9:38 John said to Him, "Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in Your name, and we tried to prevent him because he was not **following** us."
Mark 10:21 Looking at him, Jesus felt a love for him and said to him, "One thing you lack: go and sell all you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, **follow** Me."

Wuest - The word "follow" is **akoloutheō** "to follow with another, to take the same road that another takes." Jesus walked a road of self-abnegation, of self-sacrifice, of service to others, of separation. To have obeyed the instructions of Jesus, would not have given this young man eternal life. The latter can only be had in answer to personal heart faith in the atoning sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ. But, that obedience would have been the first and the necessary step for this man to take in order to become a disciple (a learner) of Jesus. Taking the same road with Him, would have eventuated in his receiving salvation in answer to his faith in the Lord Jesus as Saviour. That which was keeping him from the latter step, was his love of wealth. The words "take up thy cross," are not in the best manuscripts.

Mark 10:28 Peter began to say to Him, "Behold, we have left everything and**followed** You."
Mark 10:32 They were on the road going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was walking on ahead of them; and they were amazed, and those who **followed** were fearful. And again He took the twelve aside and began to tell them what was going to happen to Him,
Mark 10:52 And Jesus said to him, "Go; your faith has made you well." Immediately he regained his sight and began **following** Him on the road.
Mark 11:9 Those who went in front and those who **followed** were shouting: "Hosanna! BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD;
Mark 14:13 And He sent two of His disciples and said to them, "Go into the city, and a man will meet you carrying a pitcher of water; **follow** him;
Mark 14:54 Peter had **followed** Him at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest; and he was sitting with the officers and warming himself at the fire.
Mark 15:41 When He was in Galilee, they used to **follow** Him and minister to Him; and there were many other women who came up with Him to Jerusalem.
Luke 5:11 When they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and **followed** Him.
Luke 5:27 After that He went out and noticed a tax collector named Levi sitting in the tax booth, and He said to him, "**Follow** Me."
Luke 5:28 And he left everything behind, and got up and began to **follow** Him.
Luke 7:9 Now when Jesus heard this, He marveled at him, and turned and said to the crowd that was **following** Him, "I say to you, not even in Israel have I found such great faith."
Luke 9:11 But the crowds were aware of this and **followed** Him; and welcoming them, He began speaking to them about the kingdom of God and curing those who had need of healing.
Luke 9:23 And He was saying to them all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take

up his cross daily and **follow** Me.
Luke 9:49 John answered and said, "Master, we saw someone casting out demons in Your name; and we tried to prevent him because he does not **follow** along with us."
Luke 9:57 As they were going along the road, someone said to Him, "I will **follow** You wherever You go."
Luke 9:59 And He said to another, "**Follow** Me." But he said, "Lord, permit me first to go and bury my father."
Luke 9:61 Another also said, "I will **follow** You, Lord; but first permit me to say good-bye to those at home."
Luke 18:22 When Jesus heard this, He said to him, "One thing you still lack; sell all that you possess and distribute it to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come, **follow** Me."
Luke 18:28 Peter said, "Behold, we have left our own homes and **followed** You."
Luke 18:43 Immediately he regained his sight and began **following** Him, glorifying God; and when all the people saw it, they gave praise to God.
Luke 22:10 And He said to them, "When you have entered the city, a man will meet you carrying a pitcher of water; **follow** him into the house that he enters.
Luke 22:39 And He came out and proceeded as was His custom to the Mount of Olives; and the disciples also **followed** Him.
Luke 22:54 Having arrested Him, they led Him away and brought Him to the house of the high priest; but Peter was **following** at a distance.
Luke 23:27 And **following** Him was a large crowd of the people, and of women who were mourning and lamenting Him.
John 1:37 The two disciples heard him speak, and they **followed** Jesus.

> **MacArthur** - That the two disciples followed Jesus does not imply that they became His permanent disciples at this time. It is true that akoloutheō (followed) is used in John's gospel to mean "to follow as a disciple" (e.g., Jn 8:12; 10:27; 12:26; 21:19; cf. Matt. 4:20, 22; 9:9). But it can also be used in a general sense (e.g., Jn 6:2; 11:31; 18:15; 20:6; 21:20). Andrew and John here received their first exposure to Jesus. Later, they became His permanent disciples (Matt. 4:18–22).

John 1:38 And Jesus turned and saw them **following**, and said to them, "What do you seek?" They said to Him, "Rabbi (which translated means Teacher), where are You staying?"
John 1:40 One of the two who heard John speak and **followed** Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.
John 1:43 The next day He purposed to go into Galilee, and He found Philip. And Jesus said to him, "**Follow** Me."
John 6:2 A large crowd **followed** Him, because they saw the signs which He was performing on those who were sick.
John 8:12 Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, "I am the Light of the world; he who **follows** Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life."
John 10:4 "When he puts forth all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep **follow** him because they know his voice.
John 10:5 "A stranger they simply will not **follow**, but will flee from him, because they do not know the voice of strangers."
John 10:27 "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they **follow** Me;

> **MacArthur** - Like sheep submitting to the voice of their shepherd, genuine followers of Christ are characterized by loving obedience to Him and His Word. As the Lord explained to a group of "Jews who had believed Him, 'If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine'" (John 8:31)

John 11:31 Then the Jews who were with her in the house, and consoling her, when they saw that Mary got up quickly and went out, they **followed** her, supposing that she was going to the tomb to weep there.
John 12:26 "If anyone serves Me, he must **follow** Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also; if anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him.
John 13:36 Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, where are You going?" Jesus answered, "Where I go, you cannot **follow** Me now; but you will **follow** later."
John 13:37 Peter said to Him, "Lord, why can I not **follow** You right now? I will lay down my life for You."
John 18:15 Simon Peter was **following** Jesus, and so was another disciple. Now that disciple was known to the high priest, and entered with Jesus into the court of the high priest,
John 20:6 And so Simon Peter also came, **following** him, and entered the tomb; and he saw the linen wrappings lying there,
John 21:19 Now this He said, signifying by what kind of death he would glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He said to him, "**Follow** Me!"

John 21:20 Peter, turning around, saw the disciple whom Jesus loved **following** them; the one who also had leaned back on His bosom at the supper and said, "Lord, who is the one who betrays You?"
John 21:22 Jesus said to him, "If I want him to remain until I come, what is that to you? You **follow** Me!"
Acts 12:8 And the angel said to him, "Gird yourself and put on your sandals." And he did so. And he said to him, "Wrap your cloak around you and **follow** me."
Acts 12:9 And he went out and continued to **follow**, and he did not know that what was being done by the angel was real, but thought he was seeing a vision.
Acts 13:43 Now when the meeting of the synagogue had broken up, many of the Jews and of the God-fearing proselytes **followed** Paul and Barnabas, who, speaking to them, were urging them to continue in the grace of God.
Acts 21:36 for the multitude of the people kept **following** them, shouting, "Away with him!"
1 Corinthians 10:4 and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which **followed** them; and the rock was Christ.
Revelation 6:8 I looked, and behold, an ashen horse; and he who sat on it had the name Death; and Hades was **following** with him. Authority was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword and with famine and with pestilence and by the wild beasts of the earth.
Revelation 14:4 These are the ones who have not been defiled with women, for they have kept themselves chaste. These are the ones who **follow** the Lamb wherever He goes. These have been purchased from among men as first fruits to God and to the Lamb.
Revelation 14:8 And another angel, a second one, **followed**, saying, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, she who has made all the nations drink of the wine of the passion of her immorality."
Revelation 14:9 Then another angel, a third one, **followed** them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand,
Revelation 14:13 And I heard a voice from heaven, saying, "Write, 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on!'" "Yes," says the Spirit, "so that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds **follow** with them."
Revelation 19:14-note And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were **following** Him on white horses.

> **Comment** - Here we see in a sense the culmination and consummation of following Jesus in this short life, for here we will be following our Victorious Leader on white horses. You may be doubtful, but this is what the word of God says. And this is not just the angelic hosts because there is a parallel description of those who follow Jesus in Rev 17:14-note ("called and chosen and faithful") and that description cannot apply to the angels!

Mattoon - Many years ago an Italian recluse was found dead in his house. He had lived frugally all his life, but when friends were going through his house to sort out the few possessions he had accumulated, they discovered 246 expensive violins crammed into his attic. Some even more valuable ones were in a bureau drawer in his bedroom. Virtually all of his money had been spent buying violins. Yet, his misdirected devotion to the instruments had robbed the world of their beautiful sounds. Because he selfishly treasured those violins, the world never heard the music they were meant to play. It is even reported that the first violin the great Stradivarius ever made was not played until it was 147 years old!
Beloved, many Christians treat their faith like this man treated his violins. They hide their light, their knowledge of salvation, their knowledge of Jesus Christ, and bury their treasure and gifts that God has given to them. By not sharing what God has given to them, many to whom they could have witnessed, are left in spiritual darkness and poverty. The joy of knowing Jesus Christ has been kept from others that need Him. If you have made this mistake in your life, then change your attitude, follow the Lord, and do what His word commands. Tell the Lord, "I will obey because you say so."(Mattoon - Treasures from the Scriptures)

Steve Andrews - In 1 Kings 19 there is a great illustration of discipleship. Elijah, the national prophet, was coming to the end of his ministry. God told him to choose a man named Elisha to be his disciple and his replacement as the prophet. Elijah goes and finds Elisha hard at work on the family farm, plowing with twelve yoke of oxen. Now, Elisha probably came from a wealthy family with a large farm because we see him supervising eleven other men as he plowed with the last pair of oxen (for you farmers, it's like having a tractor that with a 12 bottom plow—that's no small tractor!). The prophet Elijah walked up to this farmer and threw his prophet's mantle over him (I'm not sure what exactly a mantle looked like, probably some kind of outer garment, but if the prophet threw his mantle on you it meant you were being called to be a prophet too). We can see that Elisha knew this because he ran after the prophet and said, "I will follow you," (1 Kings 19:20). But before he left his father's farm to be Elijah's disciple he first did something very important. He had a barbeque for his family. Now, why would that be so very important? Elisha slaughtered his oxen and used the wooden yoke and plow as fuel to cook the beef. Do you see what Elisha was doing? When you burn your plow and eat your ox you don't ever intend to go back to farming. He was cutting ties with his past so he wouldn't be tempted to go back to that life. It was

his way of showing he was totally committed to following his new master. That's what Jesus' disciples did. They left all to follow Jesus. That's discipleship—forsaking all to follow Jesus.

> **THOUGHT** - Do you have some things in your life that are keeping you from following Jesus? Keeping you from walking the way Jesus walked? Some of you guys may need to burn your pornography; you may need to delete the phone number or email address of that person who could take your love away from your mate; you may need to leave behind whatever it is that is keeping you from following Jesus. (Sermon)

Walking In His Dust

> [Jesus] called them, and they left their father . . . and went after Him. —Mark 1:20

Today's Scripture:Mark 1:16-20

In the first century, a Jewish man who wanted to become a disciple of a rabbi (teacher) was expected to leave family and job to join his rabbi. They would live together 24 hours a day—walking from place to place, teaching and learning, studying and working. They discussed and memorized the Scriptures and applied them to life. The disciple's calling, as described in early Jewish writings about basic ethics, was to "**cover himself in the dust of [the rabbi's] feet,**" drinking in his every word. He followed his rabbi so closely that he would "walk in his dust." In doing so, he became like the rabbi, his master.

Simon, Andrew, James, and John knew that this was the type of relationship to which Jesus was calling them (Mark 1:16-20). So immediately they walked away from their work and "went after Him" (Mark 1:20). For 3 years they stayed close to Him—listening to His teaching, watching His miracles, learning His principles, and walking in His dust.

As Jesus' followers today, we too can "walk in His dust." By spending time studying and meditating on His Word and applying its principles to life, we'll become like our rabbi—Jesus. By: Anne Cetas (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

Reflect & Pray

What holds me back? Some earthly tie? A thirst for gain?
A strange entanglement with life? A pleasure vain?
Dear Lord, I cast it all aside so willingly;
The path of true discipleship I'll walk with Thee.
—Adams

Faith in Christ is not just a single step—
it's a lifelong walk with Him.

The Honor Of Following Read: Matthew 4:18-22

> Then [Jesus] said to them, "Follow Me." —Matthew 4:19

> When they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed Him. Luke 5:11

While visiting Jerusalem, a friend of mine saw an old rabbi walking past the Wailing Wall. The interesting thing about the aged rabbi was the five young men walking behind him. They too were walking bent over, limping—just like their rabbi. An Orthodox Jew watching them would know exactly why they were imitating their teacher. They were "followers."

Throughout the history of Judaism, one of the most honored positions for a Jewish man was the privilege of becoming a "follower" of the local rabbi. Followers sat at the rabbi's feet as he taught. They would study his words and watch how he acted and reacted to life and others. A follower would count it the highest honor to serve his rabbi in even the most menial tasks. And, because they admired their rabbi, they were determined to become like him.

When Jesus called His disciples to follow Him (Matt. 4:19), it was an invitation to be changed by Him, to become like Him, and to share His passion for those who need a Savior. The high honor of being His follower should show in our lives as well. We too have been called to catch the attention of the watching world as we talk, think, and act just like Jesus—the rabbi, the teacher, of our souls.By Joe Stowell (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

Thank You, Lord, for the high honor of being
called to follow You. May my life so imitate
You that others will know that You are the
pursuit of my life and the rabbi of my soul.

Follow Jesus and let the world know He is your rabbi.
(**Ed**: And YOUR LORD!)

INSIGHT: In the region surrounding the Sea of Galilee in the first century, fishing was one of the primary industries. This fishing normally took place at night, with the laborious task of casting weighted fishing nets and then hauling them back in. Fishing was not an easy occupation, but it did provide a decent living and, as seen in today's text, was often operated as a family business. Here, two brothers, Peter and Andrew, worked together (v.18), as did James, John, and their father (v.21). In this case, however, these two families also had a partnership in their fishing business, as recorded in Luke 5:10. Jesus used this partnership to His advantage in calling these four men as disciples.

Quest For Stolen Treasure

Read: Matthew 4:18-22 Luke 5:1-11

> [Jesus] said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men." —Matthew 4:19

In J. R. R. Tolkien's The Hobbit, the dwarfs gathered to go up against Smaug, the fierce dragon, to retrieve their stolen treasure. In spite of the dangerously frightening quest, Balin, the dwarfs' second-in-command, expressed confidence in Thorin: "There is one I could follow. There is one I could call King." His commitment to the mission, as dangerous as it was, was empowered by his confidence in his leader.

At the beginning of Jesus' earthly ministry, He gathered a group around Him that would join Him in the kingdom task of rescuing the treasure of lost souls from our enemy, Satan. When He called them, He said, "Follow Me" (Matt. 4:19). For them, following Jesus would mean a radical transition from catching fish to the enterprise of being fishers of men and women who were lost in the grip of sin. But the task would not always be easy; Jesus referred to the quest as taking up our cross to follow Him (see Matt. 16:24; Mark 8:34; Luke 9:23).

How do we stay engaged in the battle to reclaim Christ's lost treasures when it seems intimidating or awkward? By keeping our eye on our Leader. He indeed is worthy—One we can follow, the One we call King! By Joe Stowell (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

Lord, in the face of intimidation and fear when seeking to engage others with the gospel, remind me that they are Your lost treasures. I count it a privilege to follow You into others' lives.

Follow your Leader into the lives of those around you.

INSIGHT: These two pairs of brothers (Peter and Andrew, James and John) were the earliest disciples to respond to Jesus' call. Most likely, Peter, Andrew, and John had an earlier encounter with Jesus (John 1:35-42). In today's passage, the Lord is calling them to abandon their fishing trade and to follow Him fully and permanently (Matt. 4:20,22). Later, Peter declared that they had left all to follow Jesus (19:27). These four had been partners in the fishing business (Luke 5:10). Peter, James, and John were also privileged to become the inner circle among Jesus' 12 disciples (Mark 5:37; 9:2; 14:33).

Learning To Fish

Read: Matthew 4:18-22 | Luke 5:1-11

> He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men." —Matthew 4:19

Thomas Boston, a young minister and fly fisherman from Scotland, wrote this in his diary in 1699: "Reading in secret, my heart was touched with Matthew 4:19, 'Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.' My soul cried out for the accomplishing of that to me, and I was very desirous to know how I might follow Christ, so as to be a fisher of men."

Boston later wrote a booklet titled, A Soliloquy on the Art of Man Fishing, in which he spelled out what he learned about soul-winning by following the Master Angler. He pointed out that the habits of fish and the habits of sinners are often quite similar.

I am an avid fisherman, and I have worked our Idaho trout streams many times. I agree with Boston that catching fish and winning souls are very much alike. But analogy can only take us so far. The best way to become an effective "fisher of men" is simply to follow Jesus.

For us that means watching how the Master "fished" and then imitating Him. It involves reading the Scriptures and lingering over His words and deeds, learning how He "caught souls." Then we must cry out, as Thomas Boston did, and ask Jesus to make us like Him —great "fishers of men." By David Roper (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by

permission. All rights reserved)

Keeping in step with the Savior,
Living a life that is true,
Clearly let's sound out a witness,
Proving what God's grace can do.
—Bosch

If you're not fishing for souls,
you are not following the Savior.

Follow The Right Leader

Read: Matthew 4:18-23 | Luke 5:1-11

> Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men. —Matthew 4:19

"Follow me!" That was the invitation given by Marshall Applewhite, self-appointed leader of the Heaven's Gate cult. He promised to those who would become his disciples that he would teach them how they could move on to a higher level of life in a new world. Sincere but gullible men and women heeded his call. They left families, friends, homes, and jobs to live and work together and to obey their leader's teachings.

Those 38 disciples followed him even when he told them to commit suicide. He said they would be liberated from terrestrial bondage and enter into an exalted state of being. In March 1997 they followed their leader to death and eternal loss.

The true Leader, Jesus Christ, gives the invitation, "Follow Me" (Mt. 4:19). But He is the opposite of Marshall Applewhite. After Jesus' death on Calvary's cross, He arose from the grave and is alive forevermore (Mt. 28:6; Rev. 1:18). When we respond to His call to follow Him as our Savior, our Master, our Lord, He forgives all our sins (Col. 2:13) and promises an abundant life of joy and hope (Jn. 10:10). And someday we will live with Him eternally in the glory of heaven (1 Jn. 5:11-13). By Vernon C. Grounds (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

Be sure to follow the right Leader!

Controlling other people's lives
Is not a godly leader's trait;
But serving other people's needs
Is what the Lord considers great.
—Sper

Many leaders have risen to greatness; only Jesus has risen from the grave.

Close On His Heels - Luke 5:11

Read: Matthew 4:18-25, Luke 5:1-11

> Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men. —Matthew 4:19

Stan and Jennifer were speaking at a mission conference in Marion, North Carolina, after their first term of service on the field.

Jennifer told of a Bible study she had held with one woman. The two were discussing Matthew 4:19, and the woman told Jennifer about a word in her native language, which means **follow**. She said, "It is the word for following closely, not at a distance." To illustrate, Jennifer held up slippers used by the native women, showing one far behind the other. Then she moved one slipper right up against the back of the other one, and said that the word means "**to follow right on one's heels**." It suggests that we are to follow Jesus as closely as possible.

Later, when Jennifer was reading over the journal she had been keeping, she was surprised to see that she had often questioned, "Is Jesus enough?" She had been working her way through culture shock, loneliness, illness, and childlessness. At times she had felt far from Christ. But when through prayer and faith she had drawn as close to Him as she could, walking "right on His heels," He had calmed her soul, restored her strength, and given her peace.

Are you feeling far from the Lord—empty, weak, and afraid? It's time to follow close on His heels. By David Egner (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

God, give me the faith of a little child!
A faith that will look to Thee—
That never will falter and never fail,
But follow Thee trustingly.
—Showerman

The closer we walk with God, the clearer we see His guidance.

Who Are You? -

Read: Matthew 4:18-25 | Luke 5:1-11

> Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men. —Matthew 4:19

If someone were to ask, “Who are you?” my guess is that you would tell a little about yourself and what you do—“I’m an electrician” or “I’m a nurse.” But that’s not really who you are—it’s what you do. Which leads to the question, If what you do is who you are, who will you be when you stop doing what you’re doing?!

Who you are is found in your relationship to Jesus. And this sense of identity will drive your behavior. Take Matthew, for example. As a tax collector during the reign of the Roman Empire, his life was driven by greed. But everything changed the day Jesus showed up and invited Matthew to follow Him (Matt. 9:9). Suddenly Matthew had a whole new identity as a follower of Christ! And he wasn’t the only one. We also read about four fishermen in Matthew 4:18-25, Peter, Andrew, James, and John, who left their nets to follow Him.

Jesus is a compelling Person, and He is still looking for followers. He wants to make something of your life by giving you the identity of a follower of Jesus. It doesn’t mean giving up your career, but it does mean that you will do your work—and all of life—according to His will and ways.

So next time someone asks, “Who are you?” I hope you’ll answer, “I’m a follower of Jesus”! By Joe Stowell

For Further Study Read about 10 perspectives that should form our attitudes and actions as followers of Jesus in Kingdom Living at

- What We Believe? - A summary of 10 important doctrines
- 10 Reasons To Believe In The Christian Faith
- 10 Reasons To Believe In A God Who Allows Suffering
- 10 Reasons To Believe Christ Rose From The Dead
- 10 Reasons God Offers the Perfect Gift
- 10 Reasons To Believe In The Bible
- 10 Reasons To Believe In The Existence of God
- 10 Reasons To Believe God Became A Man
- 10 Reasons To Believe In Christ Rather Than Religion
- 10 Reasons To Believe In Life After Death

If you are a follower of Jesus, that’s all the identity you need.

Fishing - Luke 5:1-11

Read: Matthew 4:18-22

> He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men." —Matthew 4:19

A skilled fly fisherman whips his line back and forth over his head. Then he releases the line and sets the fly-like lure down on the water’s surface exactly where he wants it. If he’s successful, a big rainbow trout will rise, strike the lure, and the fisherman will set the hook. The battle is on!

That’s one way to catch fish. Halibut fishermen use another method. They go out on the ocean and drop big baited hooks, sometimes as far down as 125 or 150 feet. When one of those big, flat fish goes for the bait and is hooked, he begins a long ride to the surface.

Jesus told Peter and Andrew to follow Him and He would make them “fishers of men” (Matthew 4:18-19). As followers of Christ today, we too are to be “fishing” for people in our world, using different methods to spread the good news. We are to be telling men and women, family and friends, young and old, about their sin, the love of God, and His offer of salvation through faith in Jesus.

Are you fishing for men? Have you tried different methods to tell others about Christ and the gospel? Have you reached out to your neighborhood and community with the good news? Keep following Jesus, and He'll teach you how to fish.By David Egner (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

THINKING IT OVER
Think of a way you can share Christ with people in your neighborhood, workplace, or school. Talk it over with others, then go out and try it.

If you follow the Savior, He'll teach you how to fish.

Making The Cut

Read: Matthew 4:18-22 | Luke 5:1-11

> [Jesus] said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men." —Matthew 4:19

Every year, high-school seniors apply to their favorite universities and then watch the mailbox for the letter announcing their acceptance.

It was different for teens in New Testament times. Jewish boys would often attend rabbinical schools until age 13. Then only the best and brightest would be chosen to "follow" the local rabbi. This small, select group of disciples would go where he went and eat what he ate—modeling their lives after the rabbi. Those who didn't make the cut would pick up a trade like carpentry, sheep-herding, or fishing.

Guys like Simon, Andrew, James, and John hadn't made the cut. So instead of following the local rabbi, they were down by the docks, knee-deep in the family business. It's interesting that Jesus sought out the men the local rabbi had rejected. Instead of targeting the best and brightest, Jesus offered His invitation, "Follow Me," to ordinary run-of-the-mill fishermen. What an honor! They would become followers of the ultimate Rabbi.

Jesus extends the same honor to you and me—not because we are the best or brightest, but because He needs ordinary people like us to model His life and to lovingly rescue people on His behalf. So, follow Him and let Him make something of your life! By Joe Stowell (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

As followers of Jesus
Who love Him from the heart,
We may be ordinary,
But we've been set apart. —Sper

Even the ordinary and the outcast can make the cut to follow Jesus.

Follow Me

Read: Mark 2:13-17 | Luke 5:11

> It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. Mark 2:17

Health clubs offer many different programs for those who want to lose weight and stay healthy. One fitness center caters only to those who want to lose at least 50 pounds and develop a healthy lifestyle. One member says that she quit her previous fitness club because she felt the slim and fit people were staring at her and judging her out-of-shape body. She now works out 5 days a week and is achieving healthy weight loss in a positive and welcoming environment.

Two thousand years ago, Jesus came to call the spiritually unfit to follow Him. Levi was one such person. Jesus saw him sitting in his tax collector's booth and said, "Follow me" (Mark 2:14). His words captured Levi's heart, and he followed Jesus. Tax collectors were often greedy and dishonest in their dealings and were considered religiously unclean. When the religious leaders saw Jesus having dinner at Levi's house with other tax collectors, they asked, "Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?" (Mk 2:16). Jesus replied, "I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners" (Mk 2:17).

Jesus came to save sinners, which includes all of us.

Jesus came to save sinners, which includes all of us. He loves us, welcomes us into His presence, and calls us to follow Him. As we walk with Him, we grow more and more spiritually fit.

Read Acts 9:10-19 and see how one man obeyed God and welcomed someone who was considered spiritually unfit. What were the

results? How can you reach out to those who need the Savior? How can you help your church become a more welcoming place for the spiritually unfit? By Marvin Williams (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

Jesus' arms of welcome are always open.

INSIGHT: Mark 2:13–17 and Luke 5:27–32 both tell the story of Jesus calling a man named Levi to be His disciple. It appears that Levi was employed by Herod Antipas to collect tolls (travel taxes) from those outside of his territory who passed through Capernaum. There is almost universal agreement that the Levi in Mark 2 and Luke 5 is the apostle Matthew, since Matthew is identified as a tax collector and his own calling mirrors the calling of Levi (Matt. 9:9-12). After Levi started his new life as an apostle, he was called by his Greek name—Matthew—which means "gift of God."

Luke 5:12 While He was in one of the cities, behold, there was a man covered with leprosy; and when he saw Jesus, he fell on his face and implored Him, saying, "Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean."

> NET While Jesus was in one of the towns, a man came to him who was covered with leprosy. When he saw Jesus, he bowed down with his face to the ground and begged him, "Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean."
>
> GNT Κα γ νετο ν τ ε ναι α τ ν ν μι τ ν π λεων κα δο ν ρ πλ ρης λ πρας· δ ν δ τ ν ησο ν, πεσ ν π πρ σωπον δε θη α το λ γων, K ριε, ν θ λ ς δ νασα με καθαρ σαι.
>
> NLT In one of the villages, Jesus met a man with an advanced case of leprosy. When the man saw Jesus, he bowed with his face to the ground, begging to be healed. "Lord," he said, "if you are willing, you can heal me and make me clean."
>
> KJV And it came to pass, when he was in a certain city, behold a man full of leprosy: who seeing Jesus fell on his face, and besought him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.
>
> ESV While he was in one of the cities, there came a man full of leprosy. And when he saw Jesus, he fell on his face and begged him, "Lord, if you will, you can make me clean."

- **a man:** Mt 8:2-4 Mk 1:40-45
- **full of leprosy**: Lu 17:12 Ex 4:6 Lev 13:1-14:57 Nu 12:10-12 De 24:8 2Ki 5:1,27 7:3 2Ch 26:19,20 Mt 26:6
- **he fell on his face**: Lu 17:16 Lev 9:24 Jos 5:14 1Ki 18:39 1Ch 21:16
- **implored Him**: Lu 17:13 Ps 50:15 91:15 Mk 5:23
- **if You are willing**: Ge 18:14 Mt 8:8,9 9:28 Mk 9:22-24 Heb 7:25
- J C Ryle's Comments on Luke 5 - clear, devout, and accurate
- Luke 5:12-15 A Lesson from a Leper - John MacArthur
- Luke 5:12-15 The Cleansing Power of Jesus - Steven Cole
- Mt. 4:3; 8:2-4; Mk 1:35-45; Lk 4:42-44; 5:12-16 - Second Journey through Galilee - the Healing of the Leper - Alfred Edersheim
- Luke 5 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

> Matthew 8:2-4+ And a leper came to Him and bowed down before Him, and said, "Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean." 3 Jesus stretched out His hand and touched him, saying, "I am willing; be cleansed." And immediately his leprosy was cleansed. 4 And Jesus *said to him, "See that you tell no one; but go, show yourself to the priest and present the offering that Moses commanded, as a testimony to them."
>
> > **Robertson** - If You are willing ([ean thelēis]). The leper knew that Jesus had the power to heal him. His doubt was about his willingness. "Men more easily believe in miraculous power than in miraculous love" (Bruce). This is a condition of the third class (undetermined, but with prospect of being determined), a hopeful doubt at any rate. Jesus accepted his challenge by "I will." The command to "tell no one" was to suppress excitement and prevent hostility.
>
> Mark 1:40-44+ And a leper came to Jesus, beseeching Him and falling on his knees before Him, and saying, "If You are willing, You can make me clean." 41 **Moved with compassion**, Jesus stretched out His hand and touched him, and *said to him, "I am willing; be cleansed." 42 Immediately the leprosy left him and he was cleansed. 43 And He sternly warned him and immediately sent him away, 44 and He *said to him, "See that

you say nothing to anyone; but go, show yourself to the priest and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded, as a testimony to them."

Comment - **Moved with compassion** is used only by Mark in this story of the leper. **Moved with compassion** is the verb splanchnizomai from splagchnon bowel, viscera - see splagchnon note below) means to experience a deep visceral feeling for someone, to feel compassion for, to feel sympathy, to take pity on someone. Compassion is the sympathetic consciousness of others' distress together with a desire to alleviate it. This verb expresses an outward flow of one's life in contrast to our natural tendency toward self-centeredness. It is notable that 8/12 NT uses describe this deep seated emotion in Jesus. It follows that if we desire to imitate Jesus, we need to be men and women of deep compassion!

Numbers 5:2-4+ "Command the sons of Israel that they **send away from the camp every leper** and everyone having a discharge and everyone who is unclean because of a dead person. 3 "You shall send away both male and female; you shall send them outside the camp so that they will not defile their camp where I dwell in their midst." 4 The sons of Israel did so and sent them outside the camp; just as the LORD had spoken to Moses, thus the sons of Israel did.

Man Covered With Leprosy

JESUS IS WILLING TO TOUCH THE UNTOUCHABLE

Brian Bell entitled his sermon on this section "SEE SPOT RUN!"

While He was in one of the cities - This is probably on the edge of the city because lepers were shunned in Jesus' day (Mosaic requirements Leviticus 13:45-46) and thus were not generally seen inside the cities.

THOUGHT- The point is that you may feel isolated, alone, apart from the populace, but Jesus knows where you are and He is ready to meet you wherever you are! Will you call out to Him as the despised leper did? Rest assured that He will respond!

Hendriksen has these thoughts on the **time** and **place** of this miracle - The time and place are indefinite, both here and in the other Gospels. Most natural, however, is the theory according to which this meeting took place during the Galilean circuit to which the more chronologically arranged Gospel According to Mark has just referred (see Mark 1:39, 40+). If so, the incident occurred shortly before the healing of the paralytic (Luke 5:17–26+; cf. Mark 2:1–12+), which, in turn, was followed by the call of Levi (Luke 5:27–32+; cf. Mark 2:13–17+). All this transpired sometime before the calling of The Twelve (to apostleship) and the preaching of the Sermon on the Mount (Luke 6:12–49+; cf. Mark 3:13–19+; and for the sermon cf. Matt. 5–7). (Borrow Baker NT Commentary: Luke)

There was a man covered (pleres - "full of") **with leprosy** (lepra) - Luke could just have said a **leper** approached and we would have understood. But he adds an interesting detail telling us the man is **covered** (pleres - used of Jesus in Lk 4:1+) which means full of and speaks of the totality of this man's body which was "wholly filled" with the disease and with no skin surface lacking the effect of the disease! One can just picture the sight! (You don't have to imagine - look at this picture of a man "covered" with scaly skin lesions of leprosy). It may have been the worst case of leprosy in all of Palestine, but this leper would soon find that Jesus' power is enough for even the worse case!

THOUGHT - You may be covered with the leprosy of some unconfessed sin as you read this note. You can take comfort in the fact that your Jesus is the Healer (cf Jehovah Rapha) Who does not reject even those with the most horrible case of "leprosy!" Fall on your face and implore Him and He will make you clean today! He can turn your mourning to dancing, loose your sackcloth and gird you with gladness! (Ps 30:11) Our sin before a holy God is like a case of "advanced leprosy" and needs a miraculous cure and cleansing by the precious blood the Lamb! Praise the Name of Jesus that the price for our cleansing has been "PAID IN FULL!"

Spurgeon - That is a characteristic touch of Luke, who, as a physician, with a glance of his eye, took in the condition of the man, not as merely a leper, but as one "full of leprosy." As far gone with leprosy as he could be; thoroughly tainted, and eaten up with that loathsome disease. What a contrast there was between these two persons,— the Lord Jesus full of purity,— and this man full of impurity,— full of leprosy! He could not be more than full; he had as much leprosy as a man could contain. (Luke - exposition)

THOUGHT - You may not have leprosy like this man, but your situation may be similar in some ways. You may be failing in your relationships with others, in your finances, in your health, or in your spiritual growth. If so, may you realize how a fearless faith in the Lord Jesus Christ can turn your entire life around completely. Let's open the curtain and see what we learn from this portion of Scripture. (Mattoon - Treasures from the Scriptures)

R Kent Hughes - What is important to note is that leprosy, or Hansen's disease as it is better know today (after the man who diagnosed its cause), is not a rotting infection as is commonly thought, nor are its horrible outward physical deformities imposed by the disease (See picture). In recent years, the research of Dr. Paul Brand and others has proven that the disfigurement associated with Hansen's disease comes solely because the body's warning system of pain is destroyed. The disease acts as an anesthetic, bringing numbness to the extremities as well as to the ears, eyes, and nose. The devastation that follows comes from such incidents as reaching one's hand into a charcoal fire to retrieve a dropped potato, or washing one's face with scalding water, or gripping a tool so tightly that the hands become traumatized and eventually stumplike. In Third-World countries, vermin sometimes chew on sleeping lepers. Thus, Dr. Brand, after performing corrective surgery on a leper, would send a cat home with him as normal post-operative procedure. Dr. Brand calls the disease a "painless hell," and indeed it is. The poor man in our story had not been able to feel for years, and his body was *full* of leprosy, mutilated from head to foot, rotten, stinking, repulsive. (SeeMark: Jesus, Servant and Savior)

Anyone familiar with the **Law of Moses** would have quickly seen the impropriety of this scene

> Leviticus 13:45, 46+ (cf Nu 5:2-4, 12:14, 15, 2 Ki 7:3) "As for the leper who has the infection, his clothes shall be torn, and the hair of his head shall be uncovered (UNCOMBED), and he shall cover his mustache and cry, '**Unclean! Unclean!**' "He shall remain unclean all the days during which he has the infection; he is unclean. He shall live alone; his dwelling shall be outside the camp.
>
> > **Comment**: A person with leprosy, apart from the telltale malignant raw flesh and white hair, was to be otherwise identified by tom clothes, announcement of "unclean" when in the streets and was to live isolated from the community. See more detailed description of the instructions concerning leprosy in Leviticus 13
> >
> > **NET Note** - Tearing one's clothing, allowing the hair to hang loose rather than bound up in a turban, and covering the mustache on the upper lip are all ways of expressing shame, grief, or distress (cf., e.g., Lev 10:6 and Micah 3:7).
> >
> > **Hughes** adds "We can hardly imagine the humiliation and isolation of this leper's life. He was ostracized from society because it was thought at that time that leprosy was highly contagious (which it is not). He had to assume a disheveled appearance and cry, "Unclean! Unclean!" whenever he came in range of the normal population. Think about how you would feel shouting this while entering a grocery store or a mall —the pervasive sense of worthlessness and despair." (Preaching the Word)

Jesus knew the Law of Moses and yet He does not chastise this man for (1) approaching Him (recall the 10 lepers "**stood at a distance**" - Lk 17:12) and (2) not crying out "Unclean! Unclean!" Jesus saw the man's heart and his intent, not his scaly disgusting rash! And Jesus looks at you and I that same way -- at our heart, always looking for a heart of loving obedience (empowered by the Spirit) (cf 1 Sa 15:22).

William Barclay - "In Palestine there were two kinds of leprosy. There was one which was rather like a very bad skin disease, and it was the less serious of the two. There was the one in which the disease, starting from a small spot, ate away the flesh until the wretched sufferer was left with only the stump of a hand or a leg. It was literally a living death."

Guzik on **leprosy** - The Jews thought two things about a leper: (1) you are the walking dead and (2) you deserve this because this is the punishment of God against you. Jewish custom said that you should not even greet a leper. Custom said you had to stay six feet (two meters) from a leper. If the wind blew toward a person from a leper, they had to keep 150 feet (45 meters) away. One Rabbi bragged that he would not even buy an egg on a street where he saw a leper, and another boasted that he threw rocks at lepers to keep them far from him. One other Rabbi didn't even allow a leper to wash his face. The only thing more defiling than contact with a leper was contact with a dead body. For these reasons leprosy was considered a picture of sin and its effects. It was a contagious, debilitating disease that corrupts its victim and makes him essentially dead while alive. Therefore society and religious people scorned lepers. Rabbis especially despised them (Enduring Word Bible Commentary)

And when he saw Jesus, he fell on his face and implored (deomai) **Him** - Clearly the leper recognized Jesus. Picture this man for a moment. Rejected by everyone, and in desperation he falls before Jesus. Matthew has "**bowed down** (proskuneo - can be translated "worshiped") **before Him**" (Mt 8:2+) and Mark has "**beseeching** (parakaleo in the present tense - continually beseeching) **Him and falling on his knees**" (Mk 1:40+). The verb for fell is **pipto** which is related to the verb Luke had just used to describe Peter when he saw the miraculous catch of fish and "he **fell down** (**prospipto**) at Jesus' feet, saying, "Go away from me **Lord** (kurios - same word used by the leper), for I am a sinful man!" (Lk 5:8+).

> **THOUGHT** - So here the leper's physical position was undoubtedly also but a reflection of his heart position before Jesus - broken and humble, just the kind of heart God is looking for as David writes in Ps 51:16-

17+ declaring "You do not delight in sacrifice, otherwise I would give it; You are not pleased with burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; A broken and a **contrite** (Lxx = tapeinoo) heart, O God, You will not despise." Notice in the Septuagint (Lxx) the word for **contrite** is tapeinoo which means low, not high, not rising far from the ground. And so it speaks of one who is literally, physically low (like both Peter and the leper on the ground before the Lord) but also speaks figuratively of one who is low down in their own estimate, one who is humble, a perfect picture of both Peter and the leper! And we know from James 4:6+ that "God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble." The **leper** had placed himself in the perfect position literally and figuratively to be the recipient of Jesus' gift of "grace upon grace." (Jn 1:16+)

Spurgeon says while there was "not much faith there....faith even as a grain of mustard seed will serve; and therefore Christ did not refuse the poor leper's plea. This was splendid faith. Here was adoration of the noblest kind; no angel before the throne of God could render the Son of God more honour than this poor leprous man did. (Luke - exposition)

Saying, "Lord" (kurios) - He did not doubt Jesus could but rather if He would. It was not a question of Jesus capability but willingness. Either way he lays himself at the feet of the Lord, the One with sovereign power and authority. As Spurgeon says "He believed in Christ's power at once to rid him of that otherwise incurable disease: "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean."

If You are willing (thelo) - The leper knew Jesus could cleanse, but his question was would He cleanse? He felt that the difficulty lay in the will of Christ, not in His power. No other teacher would have looked at such a man. Everybody shrank from him, for he scattered defilement wherever he moved. A leper was a being from whom all kept clear, so this one was afraid that the great Teacher was not willing to cure him. "If thou wilt," said he, "thou canst," 'I know that thou canst make me clean.'

Utley - This man obviously had heard of Jesus' power, but was uncertain of His willingness. This is an example of a THIRD CLASS CONDITIONAL SENTENCE which means potential action, contingent on other actions.

Charles Ryrie - The way the leper approached the Lord gives indication of his great faith in the power of Christ. "**If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean**." It was the love of Christ that motivated His action in this instance as in all His work, but it was love related to power. I might love to give each reader a million dollars but I am not able to do so. The Lord of glory not only loved this man and us but He was and is able to do something about his and our miserable condition. Salvation is not only related to the truth that "**He loved the world**" but also to the truth that "**He is able**." However, love and power are not enough; there must be **willingness**, and **the form in which the leper's question was cast shows that he recognized this fact. The question was not, Could He do it? but, Would He do it?** "There might be the ability without the will, or the will without the ability, but his hope was that in Christ there would be the combination of both, and all that was needed for that, in his estimation, was the will" (William M. Taylor, The Miracles of Our Saviour, p. 114). Thus **powerful and willing love** resulted in **active love**, and the Savior touched the leper. **The act of touching the defiled man, which normally would also have defiled the one who touched him, illustrates the deep mystery involved in the Savior's identifying Himself with sin**. Who can fathom all that may be involved in the fact that He was made sin for us (2 Cor 5:21+)? And yet this touching of the leper may illustrate something of that mystery. (Dr Ryrie's Articles)

You can (dunamai) **make me clean** (katharizo) - The leper had undoubtedly heard of those **with various diseases** and how Jesus **was healing them** (Lk 4:40+, cf Lk 6:19+ "healing them all"). And as **Wiersbe** says "This man not only needed to be changed, but he wanted to be changed. Lepers were required to keep their distance, but he was so determined that he broke the Law and approached the Lord Jesus personally. Throughout his Gospel, Luke makes it clear that Jesus was the Friend of the outcast, and they could come to Him for help. The man humbled himself before the Lord and asked for mercy." (Borrow the Bible Exposition Commentary)

William Barclay on healing versus cleansing quoting Dr. A. B. MacDonald, who was in charge of a leper colony in Itu: "The leper is sick in mind as well as body. For some reason there is an attitude to leprosy different from the attitude to any other disfiguring disease. It is associated with shame and horror, and carries, in some mysterious way, a sense of guilt…shunned and despised, frequently do lepers consider taking their own lives and some do."

Mattoon - This word "**clean**" is a strong word in the Greek. It is the word katharizo {kath-ar-id'-zo} which forms our English words "cauterize, Kathy, Katherine, Katie, Katelyn." Katharizo has the idea of purity. It means "to make clean, to purify physically and also spiritually." He had absolute confidence in the ability of Jesus Christ to cure him physically and also spiritually. (Mattoon - Treasures from the Scriptures)

Behold - This should get our attention -- a man totally covered by leprosy approaching Jesus! Can you imagine the shocked reaction of the accompanying crowds (a crowd is not mentioned specifically but surely many were with Him after all His other miracles, cf Lk 5:19). **Behold** (2400)(**idou**) is the second person singular aorist middle imperative of eidon which means to see, perceive, look at. In the NT **idou** is used as a demonstrative particle that draws attention to what follows. **Idou** in the middle

voice means "you yourself look, see, perceive!" The aorist imperative is a command emphasizing "Do it now! Don't delay!" **Spurgeon** reminds us that "**Behold** is a word of wonder; it is intended to excite admiration. Wherever you see it hung out in Scripture, it is like an ancient sign-board, signifying that there are rich wares within, or like the hands which solid readers have observed in the margin of the older Puritanic books, drawing attention to something particularly worthy of observation." I would add, **behold** is like a divine highlighter, a divine underlining of an especially striking or important text. It says in effect "Listen up, all ye who would be wise in the ways of Jehovah!"

> **Idou in Luke and Acts** - Lk. 1:20; Lk. 1:31; Lk. 1:36; Lk. 1:38; Lk. 1:44; Lk. 1:48; Lk. 2:10; Lk. 2:34; Lk. 2:48; Lk. 5:12; Lk. 6:23; Lk. 7:27; Lk. 7:34; Lk. 9:30; Lk. 10:3; Lk. 10:19; Lk. 11:31; Lk. 11:32; Lk. 11:41; Lk. 13:7; Lk. 13:16; Lk. 13:30; Lk. 13:32; Lk. 13:35; Lk. 14:2; Lk. 15:29; Lk. 17:21; Lk. 17:23; Lk. 18:28; Lk. 18:31; Lk. 19:8; Lk. 19:20; Lk. 22:10; Lk. 22:21; Lk. 22:31; Lk. 22:38; Lk. 22:47; Lk. 23:14; Lk. 23:15; Lk. 23:29; Lk. 24:4; Lk. 24:13; Lk. 24:49; Acts 1:10; Acts 2:7; Acts 5:9; Acts 5:28; Acts 7:56; Acts 8:36; Acts 9:10; Acts 10:17; Acts 10:19; Acts 10:21; Acts 10:30; Acts 11:11; Acts 12:7; Acts 13:11; Acts 13:25; Acts 13:46; Acts 20:22; Acts 20:25; Acts 27:24;

Covered (abounding, full) (4134)(**pleres**) from **pleos** = full, **pletho** = to fill) means filled up as opposed to empty (as of a hollow vessel - Mt 14:20, 15:37, Mk 6:43). Of a surface, covering every part (leprosy in Lk 5:12). Figuratively, of one full of, filled with, abounding in, thoroughly endowed with (Lk 4:1 full of the Holy Spirit, Acts 9:36 abounding in deeds, Stephen full of grace and power Acts 6:8). How interesting that a word so frequently describing the filling of the Holy Spirit (Lk 4:1, Acts 6:3, 5, 7:55, 11:24) here describes one "filled" with leprosy! This could reflect that he was in the "end stages" of this disease. One can only imagine the response such a man received from the Jews!

> **Pleres** -16v - abounding(1), covered(1), filled(1), full(12), mature(1). Matt. 14:20; Matt. 15:37; Mk. 4:28; Mk. 8:19; Lk. 4:1; Lk. 5:12; Jn. 1:14; Acts 6:3; Acts 6:5; Acts 6:8; Acts 7:55; Acts 9:36; Acts 11:24; Acts 13:10; Acts 19:28; 2 Jn. 1:8

Leprosy (3014)(**lepra** from **lepis** = a scale) is used only 4x in the NT (Matt. 8:3; Mk. 1:42; Lk. 5:12; Lk. 5:13) and always means leprosy. Friberg - as a disease leprosy; probably used in reference to any of a group of infectious and inflammatory skin diseases, such as Hansen's disease (modern leprosy), ringworm, yaws, scabies, lupus, etc.(Borrow Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament)

> **Lepra** - 39x in 36v in the Septuagint (Lxx) - Lev. 13:2; 3; 8; 9; 11; 12; 13; 15; 20; 22; 25; 27; 29; 30; 42; 43; 47; 49; 51, 52; 57; 59; Lev. 14:3; 7; 32; 34; 44; 54; 55; L57; Deut. 24:8; 2 Ki. 5:3; 5:6; 7; 27; 2 Chr. 26:19. **Bock** adds that "lepra appears to be a broad term for a whole series of skin diseases, rather than referring just to Hansen's Disease (Mycobacterium leprae pix), as it came to be known in the nineteenth century."

Implored (beseeched, requested) (1189)(**deomai** from **deo** = to bind) means to ask for something with the sense of pleading, beseeching or begging with a sense of urgency and a presumed need. **Deomai** is a strong way to ask for something - the Gadarene demoniac (Lk 8:28+), a father's desperate plea to Jesus to cast a demon out of his son (Lk 9:38+), and here it describes a leper desperate to be healed! **Bock** adds that the OT the priests were not expected to provide healing for a leper. Thus, for this man to approach Jesus was not only brave, it put the leper's entire self-esteem at risk (ED: I DOUBT HE HAD MUCH "SELF-ESTEEM!"). Whatever hope that he might have about a return to normal life was wrapped up in Jesus' power (ED: AND WHAT DOES THIS IMPLY? AN ELEMENT OF FAITH OR TRUST). The leper must have heard that Jesus was healing those in need. (Ibid)

> **Deomai** - 22v - Matt. 9:38; Lk. 5:12; Lk. 8:28; Lk. 8:38; Lk. 9:38; Lk. 9:40; Lk. 10:2; Lk. 21:36; Lk. 22:32; Acts 4:31; Acts 8:22; Acts 8:24; Acts 8:34; Acts 10:2; Acts 21:39; Acts 26:3; Rom. 1:10; 2 Co. 5:20; 2 Co. 8:4; 2 Co. 10:2; Gal. 4:12; 1 Thess. 3:10

Willing (2309)(**thelo** see study of derivative **thelema**; see synonyms **boule** and **boulomai**) is a very common NT verb (208x) which primarily refers to exercising of one's will with the underlying sense of to be willing, to desire, to want or to wish (in Jn 15:7 in context of prayer). To apply oneself to something (or to will). Thelo "expresses not simply a desire, but a determined and constant exercise of the will." (W E Vine)

> **Luke's uses of thelo in the Gospel and in Acts** - Lk. 1:62; Lk. 4:6; Lk. 5:12; Lk. 5:13; Lk. 5:39; Lk. 6:31; Lk. 8:20; Lk. 9:23; Lk. 9:24; Lk. 9:54; Lk. 10:24; Lk. 10:29; Lk. 12:49; Lk. 13:31; Lk. 13:34; Lk. 14:28; Lk. 15:28; Lk. 16:26; Lk. 18:4; Lk. 18:13; Lk. 18:41; Lk. 19:14; Lk. 19:27; Lk. 20:46; Lk. 22:9; Lk. 23:8; Lk. 23:20; Acts 2:12; Acts 7:28; Acts 7:39; Acts 10:10; Acts 14:13; Acts 16:3; Acts 17:18; Acts 17:20; Acts 18:21; Acts 19:33; Acts 24:6; Acts 24:27; Acts 25:9; Acts 26:5

Can (present tense = continuously able) (1410)(**dunamai** conveys the basic meaning of that which has the inherent ability to do something or accomplish some end. Thus **dunamai** means to be able to, to be capable of, to be strong enough to do or to have

power to do something. See related topic - GOD IS ABLE

> **Luke's uses of Dunamai** - Lk. 1:20; Lk. 1:22; Lk. 3:8; Lk. 5:12; Lk. 5:21; Lk. 5:34; Lk. 6:39; Lk. 6:42; Lk. 8:19; Lk. 9:40; Lk. 11:7; Lk. 12:25; Lk. 12:26; Lk. 13:11; Lk. 14:20; Lk. 14:26; Lk. 14:27; Lk. 14:33; Lk. 16:2; Lk. 16:13; Lk. 16:26; Lk. 18:26; Lk. 19:3; Lk. 20:36; Lk. 21:15; Acts 4:16; Acts 4:20; Acts 5:39; Acts 8:31; Acts 10:47; Acts 13:39; Acts 15:1; Acts 17:19; Acts 19:40; Acts 20:32; Acts 21:34; Acts 24:8; Acts 24:11; Acts 24:13; Acts 25:11; Acts 26:32; Acts 27:12; Acts 27:15; Acts 27:31; Acts 27:39; Acts 27:43;

Make...clean (2511)(**katharizo** from **katharos** = pure, clean, without stain or spot; English words - catharsis = emotional or physical purging, cathartic = substance used to induce a purging, Cathar = member of a medieval sect which sought the purging of evil from its members) means to make clean by taking away an undesirable part. To cleanse from filth or impurity. **Click here** (and here) for more background on the important Biblical concept of **clean** and **cleansing**. Figuratively **katharizo** referred to cleansing from ritual contamination or impurity as in (Acts 10:15). In a similar sense katharizo is used of cleansing lepers from ceremonial uncleanness (Mt 8:2-3, et al)

> Katharizo - 30v - Matt. 8:2; Matt. 8:3; Matt. 10:8; Matt. 11:5; Matt. 23:25; Matt. 23:26; Mk. 1:40; Mk. 1:41; Mk. 1:42; Mk. 7:19; Lk. 4:27; Lk. 5:12; Lk. 5:13; Lk. 7:22; Lk. 11:39; Lk. 17:14; Lk. 17:17; Acts 10:15; Acts 11:9; Acts 15:9; 2 Co. 7:1; Eph. 5:26; Tit. 2:14; Heb. 9:14; Heb. 9:22; Heb. 9:23; Heb. 10:2; Jas. 4:8; 1 Jn. 1:7; 1 Jn. 1:9

Holman Bible Commentary note on **Leprosy** - A generic term applied to **a variety of skin disorders** from psoriasis to true leprosy. Its symptoms ranged from white patches on the skin to running sores to the loss of digits on the fingers and toes. For the Hebrews it was a dreaded malady which rendered its victims ceremonially unclean—that is, unfit to worship God (Leviticus 13:3). Anyone who came in contact with a leper was also considered unclean. Therefore, lepers were isolated from the rest of the community so that the members of the community could maintain their status as worshipers. Other physical disorders or the flow of certain bodily fluids also rendered one unclean (see Leviticus 12:1-14:32; Leviticus 15:1-33). Even houses and garments could have “leprosy” and, thus, be unclean (Leviticus 14:33-57). Jesus did not consider this distinction between clean and unclean valid. A person's outward condition did not make one unclean; rather that which proceeds from the heart determines one's standing before God (Mark 7:1-23; compare Acts 10:9-16). Therefore, Jesus did not hesitate about touching lepers (Mark 1:40-45) and even commanded His disciples to cleanse lepers (Matthew 10:8). Jesus even made a leper the hero of one of His parables (Luke 16:19-31). (Leprosy)

Related Resources:

- Medical Article - Biblical Leprosy- A Suggested Interpretation (In depth - 25 page article)
- Why is leprosy talked about so much in the Bible?
- Torrey Topical Textbook Leprosy
- Easton's Bible Dictionary Leprosy
- Fausset Bible Dictionary Leprosy
- Holman Bible Dictionary
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible Leprosy
- Hastings' Dictionary of the NT Leprosy
- Smith Bible Dictionary Leper, Leprosy
- Vines' Expository Dictionary Leprosy
- 1911 Encyclopedia Britannica Leprosy
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia Leper; Leprosy
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopedia Leprosy
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia Leprosy
- The Jewish Encyclopedia Leprosy
- WHO - Leprosy
- Leprosy - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia
- Leprosy- Medline Plus Medical Encyclopedia
- Hansen's Disease (Leprosy) - CDC

Fruchtenbaum expounds on the significance of **leprosy** in the Jewish community - This is the account of the healing of a Jewish leper. How do we know he was Jewish? Because Jesus ordered him to go the the priests and observe the offerings that Moses commanded. Jesus had performed a number of miracles up until this time, but this is the FIRST instance of a Jew being healed of leprosy. **We need to realize that this sign was very special and unique. From the time of the giving of the Mosaic Covenant there is no record of any Jew being healed of leprosy.** The case of Miriam was before the completion of the giving of the Law. In

the case of Naaman, he was Syrian, not Jewish. Leviticus 13-14 are devoted to dealing with leprosy, more than 100 verses. The priesthood was given detailed and specific instructions regarding leprosy. Only the priest had the authority to declare someone a leper. Once someone was declared a leper he would tear his garment. He would have to move out of his or her community and into a quarantined area for lepers. While this sounds cruel, notice how the Law protected society from the spread of disease before anyone understood the nature of microbes and germs. He would be excluded from Jewish society, and reviled. He would have to wear a face covering below the eyes. He would never be able to enter the Tabernacle or Temple compound. He had to announce himself "unclean, unclean," when encountering someone on the road. Anyone touching him would also become unclean. A person with leprosy was viewed as having been judged by God. (Life of Messiah)

Mattoon - A story is told by Margaret Fishback Powers, about a man who dreamed he was at the end of his life. He saw his life as if it were a walk along a beach with Jesus. As he looked back over his life, he saw two sets of footprints in the sand along most of the way—one set belonging to him, the other to Jesus. He noticed, though, that many times along the path of his life there was only one set of footprints in the sand. He also noticed that it happened at the very lowest and saddest times in his life. This really bothered the man, and he questioned the Lord about it. "Lord, you said that you would never leave me nor forsake me. You said that once I decided to follow you, you'd walk with me all the way. But I have noticed that during the most difficult times in my life, there was only one set of footprints. I don't understand why, when I needed you most, you would leave me." Jesus replied, "My son, I want you to know that I love you and that I would never leave you. Look again at those footprints. During your times of trouble and suffering, the footprints you saw were mine. I was carrying you."

Beloved, we can be certain that when we are going through the difficult times of life, God is always with us. Never doubt His presence, even though you can't feel Him or see Him at the time. He keeps His word: "I will never leave thee or forsake thee." So let me ask, "What kind of faith do you have in the Lord Jesus Christ? Have you put your faith in Him to take you to Heaven and cleanse you from sin? If so, are you living by faith daily?" If you want to be successful in God's eyes, then have a fierce faith and dependence upon Him. Live by faith. In so doing, you will please the Lord. Hebrews 11:6- And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him. (Mattoon - Treasures from the Scriptures)

R C Sproul on Cleansing Humanity - How many of us have made promises to ourselves to read through the Bible, only to get bogged down in Leviticus and give up? It is in Leviticus 13 and 14 that we find the laws dealing with leprosy. Leprosy in the Bible described a variety of infectious skin diseases besides the modern disease that goes by that name. The effects of these conditions could be horrible, and lepers had to remove themselves from ordinary society. They could not return to normal life until their leprosy had disappeared and they had been ceremonially cleansed. One of the first miracles Jesus performed was to cleanse a leper. In a sense, the leper stood for every man, for all of us are spiritual lepers in God's sight. None of us is acceptable in his society unless we are cleansed. Luke the physician tells us that this man was "covered" with leprosy. He had a severe case. He had suffered for a long time as an outcast, but when he saw Jesus, he had hopes that he could be restored. Notice this man's faith. He does not say, "If you are able," but, "If you are willing." He knew that Jesus was powerful enough to cure him. The only question was whether Jesus was willing to condescend to do so. Restoring leprous humanity was what Jesus had come to do. While he could have done so with a word the Lord demonstrated his compassion when he "reached out his hand and touched the man. 'I am willing,' he said. 'be clean!'" (Lk 5:13). Then Jesus commanded him not to tell anyone, again working to conceal his Messianic mission. Jesus instead ordered him to obey the commands of Leviticus 14 and "go, show yourself to the priest and offer the sacrifices that Moses commanded for your cleansing, as a testimony to them" (Lk 5:14). Jesus did want the priests to know about him and about his power and authority. As a result, "the news about him spread all the more, so that crowds of people came to hear him and to be healed of their sicknesses" (Lk 5:15). **Coram Deo** - Carefully read Leviticus 13-note and Leviticus 14-note. Much will be obscure, but as you read and meditate, ask how Leviticus 13 pictures the estate of fallen humanity, and ask what chapter 14 shows about the saving work of Christ. Then imitate the leper and beseech the Lord to grant you renewed cleansing, so that you can serve him in the world.

Luke 5:13 And He stretched out His hand and touched him, saying, "I am willing; be cleansed." And immediately the leprosy left him.

NET So he stretched out his hand and touched him, saying, "I am willing. Be clean!" And immediately the leprosy left him.

GNT κα κτε νας τ ν χε ρα ψατο α το λ γων, Θ λω, καθαρ σθητι· κα ε θ ως λ πρα π λθεν π α το .

NLT Jesus reached out and touched him. "I am willing," he said. "Be healed!" And instantly the leprosy disappeared.

KJV And he put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will: be thou clean. And immediately the leprosy departed from him.

ESV And Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him, saying, "I will; be clean." And immediately the leprosy left him.

NIV Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. "I am willing," he said. "Be clean!" And immediately the leprosy left him.

- **I am willing**: Ge 1:3,9 Ps 33:9 2Ki 5:10,14 Eze 36:25-27,29 Ho 14:4 Mt 9:29,30
- **immediately**: Lu 4:39 8:54,55 Joh 4:50-53
- J C Ryle's Comments on Luke 5 - clear, devout, and accurate
- Luke 5:12-15 A Lesson from a Leper - John MacArthur
- Luke 5:12-15 The Cleansing Power of Jesus - Steven Cole
- Luke 5 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

JUST A TOUCH
FROM JESUS

And He stretched out (ekteino) **His hand and touched** (hapto/haptomai) **him** - (Mt 8:3, Mk 1:41, cf Mt 14:31) Jesus would not have to touch the leper but He choose to do so. And in so doing Jesus broke the ceremonial law for it was forbidden to touch a leper. And imagine this leper who had probably felt a human touch for most of his life, and here the one touching Him is the Source of all life! Mark 1:41 adds that Jesus was "**Moved with compassion**." Here is the One who **stretched out the heavens** (Isa 45:12, 51:13, Jer 10:12, 51:15) in creation, now stretching out His omnipotent hand in healing. This reminds me of Moses who **stretched out his hand over the sea** in Ex 14:21 assuring Israel's deliverance from bondage to the Egyptians. In Jeremiah 1:9 "**the LORD stretched out His hand and touched**" Jeremiah's mouth putting His words in his mouth. Israel did not sense her great need and that she was "covered with leprosy from head to toe" (figuratively, cf Isa 1:5-6+)

JESUS TOUCHES
THE UNTOUCHABLE!

He...touched (hapto/haptomai) **him** - Jesus touched an untouchable! The Clean One becomes ceremonially unclean! It is a poignant picture of how Jesus was made sin for us, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." (2 Cor 5:21+) Amazing grace indeed! He could have simply spoken the word, but the touch emphasizes Jesus' great compassion for all who feel ostracized and isolated. We are never too defiled or too far from His healing touch! Dr Luke often mentions touch (Lk 7:14; 13:13; 18:15; 22:51). Jesus is always approachable!

Utley on **touched him** -This would technically have made Jesus ceremonially unclean. Jesus' life showed the priority of people over Jewish rules and ceremonial cleanliness

Wiersbe - By the grace and power of God, this man was changed! In fact, Jesus even touched the man, which meant that He became unclean Himself. This is a beautiful picture of what Jesus has done for lost sinners: He became sin for us that we might be made clean (2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Peter 2:24). Jesus is not only **willing** to save (1 Tim. 2:4; 2 Peter 3:9), but He is also **able** to save (Heb. 7:25); and He can do it **now** (2 Cor. 6:2). (**Ed**: This begs the question "Are you still covered from head to toe with the "leprosy" of sin?" Jesus is waiting to touch you and cleanse you by grace through faith.) (Borrow the Bible Exposition Commentary)

Mattoon - He touches the untouchable man and heals him. This word "touch" is very interesting. It indicates that when Jesus touched the man, He did not barely touch him with His pinky. No, no, no, this is not what happened. This word "touch" is much stronger. It is from the word haptomai {hap'-tom-ahee} which means "to fasten one's self to or to cling to." Jesus did not show any hesitation at all to help this man. He was demonstrating to this leper His willingness and compassion. Remember, this man has probably not been touched by anyone for a long time because of his disease. One of the great needs he had was for someone to love him, touch him, and demonstrate concern. Jesus met this need by firmly touching him or embracing him. The touch of the Master's hand said to this leper, "I am with you, I understand you, and I love you." He is saying this to us, too. The touch is also an illustration of the imputation of Jesus Christ. The word "impute" means "to credit to a person or cause." Christ touched this filthy leper, cleansed him, and gave him purity. This is what He does for the sinner that puts his or her faith in Jesus Christ. Christ forgives and cleanses us, and we receive His purity or righteousness. In God the Father's eyes, we are justified or declared to be righteous, because the Father sees the righteousness of Christ when He views us. 2 Corinthians 5:21- He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. (Mattoon - Treasures from the Scriptures)

William Barclay - Jesus touched the untouchable. His hand went out to the man from whom everyone else would have shrunk away. Two things emerge. First, when we despise ourselves, when our hearts are filled with bitter shame, let us remember, that, in spite of all, Christ's hand is still stretched out. Mark Rutherford wished to add a new beatitude, "Blessed are those who heal us of our self-despisings." That is what Jesus did and does. Second, it is of the very essence of Christianity to touch the untouchable, to love the unlovable, to forgive the unforgivable. Jesus did—and so must we.

Saying, "I am willing (thelo); **be cleansed** (katharizo)**"** - **Willing** is in present tense = continually. Indeed Jesus is ever willing and able to heal any humble soul who has been crippled by Adam's fall.Jesus commanded the leper to be cleansed. Now ponder that a moment. Could the leper obey this in his own power? Of course not. He did not have the power. This command was evidence of supernatural power, which the leper gladly received. Jesus' command to the leper's leprosy reminds us of His commands to other natural phenomena such as the great storm of wind (Mk 4:37KJV) which immediately ceased when He commanded "**Hush, be still**" (Mk 4:39+) or when "He rebuked the fever and it left" Peter's mother-in-law (Lk 4:39+).

Other passages suggest healing power went out of Jesus with His touch (Mark 5:30; Luke 8:46), but since the text is silent on this healing, we too must be silent.

Spurgeon on Jesus' wonderful words "**Be cleansed**" - Primeval darkness heard the Almighty fiat, "light be," (Genesis 1:3) and straightway light was, and the word of the Lord Jesus is equal in majesty to that ancient word of power. Redemption like Creation has its word of might. Jesus speaks and it is done. Leprosy yielded to no human remedies, but it fled at once at the Lord's "**I will.**" The disease exhibited no hopeful signs or tokens of recovery, nature contributed nothing to its own healing, but the unaided word effected the entire work on the spot and forever. **The sinner is in a plight more miserable than the leper; let him imitate his example and go to Jesus, "beseeching him and kneeling down to him." Let him exercise what little faith he has, even though it should go no further than "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean"; and there need be no doubt as to the result of the application. Jesus heals all who come, and casts out none. In reading the narrative in which our morning's text occurs, it is worthy of devout notice that Jesus touched the leper.** This unclean person had broken through the regulations of the ceremonial law and pressed into the house, but Jesus so far from chiding him broke through the law Himself in order to meet him. He made an interchange with the leper, for while He cleansed him, he contracted by that touch a Levitical defilement. Even so Jesus Christ was made sin for us, although in himself he knew no sin , that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him (2 Cor 5:21+, Heb 4:15+). O that poor sinners would go to Jesus, believing in the power of His blessed substitutionary work, and they would soon learn the power of His gracious touch. That **HAND** which multiplied the loaves, which saved sinking Peter, which upholds afflicted saints, which crowns believers, that same hand will touch every seeking sinner, and in a moment make him clean. The love of Jesus is the source of salvation. He loves, He looks, He touches us, WE LIVE.

IMMEDIATE HEALING

And immediately (eutheos) **the leprosy** (lepra) **left** (aperchomai) **him** - Mark 1:42 says "Immediately the leprosy left him **and he was cleansed** (**katharizo**)." Matthew 8:3 has "And immediately his leprosy **was cleansed**." The words "**leprosy left him**" does not suggest there was a demonic component such as some have postulated stating that when the demon left him the leprosy left him.

The leprosy **left** the leper and the leper **left** a changed man. You cannot come to Jesus, bow at His feet and receive His "touch" without being forever changed! Have you come to Him to receive His healing touch for your sin sick soul? Jesus would say to you ""Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest." (Mt 11:28+)**Hendriksen** adds that "The healings brought about by Jesus were complete and instantaneous. Peter's mother-in-law does not have to wait until the following day to be cured of her fever (Luke 4:38, 39). The paralytic immediately begins to walk away, carrying his little bed (Lk 5:17–26). The withered hand is restored at once (Lk 6:6–11). The demoniac, wild a moment earlier, all at once is fully cured (Lk 8:26–39). The same holds with respect to the woman who touched Christ's garment (Lk 8:43–48). Even the dead daughter of Jairus is in one moment restored to life, so that she arises and is given something to eat (Lk 8:40–42, 49–56). Let the healers of today imitate this! Let them cure every illness immediately. Yes, let them even raise the dead (Lk 7:11–17), for if their claim to be able to do what Jesus did and what he commanded his apostles to do is valid, they should certainly also raise the dead (Matt. 10:8). So far, however, they have not succeeded in doing this. In fact, they have not even succeeded in getting rid of death by denying its existence." (Borrow Baker NT Commentary: Luke)

Spurgeon - This is just what Christ can do also in the spiritual realm. If a man be full of sin, let him but fall down on his face before Jesus, and say, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean," and the Lord will put out his hand, and touch him, and he will be clean in a moment. "Immediately "not needing the lapse of a single hour,—"**immediately the leprosy departed from him**." (Luke - exposition)

Bill Gaither wrote the words of the famous song He touched Me in 1963 being inspired by Jesus' touch healing the leper in Mark's Gospel.

He touched Me

Shackled by a heavy burden
'Neath a load of guilt and shame
Then the hand of Jesus touched me
And now I am no longer the same.

He touched, oh, he touched me
And oh the joy that floods my soul!
Something happened, and now I know
He touched me, and made me whole.

Since i've met this blessed savior
Since he's cleansed and made me whole
I will never cease to praise him
I'll shout it while eternity rolls.

Oh! he touched me! Oh! he touched me!
He touched me! And Oh the joy that floods my soul!
Something happened, and now I know
He touched me, and made me whole.

Spurgeon - This was a wonderful instance of condescending love on the part of the Lord Jesus; and touching the leper did not defile him. On the contrary, Christ removed the defilement from the leper: “He touched him,” The perfectly pure One touched the leprous man without himself becoming contaminated. In any other house, the man who touched a leper would have been defiled; but, when Christ comes into contact with impurity, he is not defiled, but he removes it. This is what the gospel is meant to do to the world. We are to go and seek the good of the most fallen and abandoned of men and those who do so, ought to have so much of the spirit of Jesus Christ in them, and so much vitality in their piety, that they will not be tempted by the sin upon which they look, but, on the contrary, will overcome that sin, and impart spiritual health instead of receiving infection. May we be in such a state of health as Jesus was! Then shall we be able to touch the leper, and not be defiled. Jesus touched him, — Ask him to touch thee also, poor leprous soul; thou who art full of sin, thou who art deeply conscious that the deadly disease of sin is upon thee incurably. Ask him but to touch thee, for the touch of his finger shall make thee clean in a moment. Christ’s cures are often instantaneous. He, who could speak a world into being with a word, can also speak a man into perfect spiritual sanity with a word. It was the will of Christ that wrought the miracle, that secret movement of the heart of Christ, that silent omnipotent going forth of divine energy that accomplished the leper’s cure. Christ can heal sin in the same way that he cured this leper. If he touches the worst man in this place, he can make sin to depart from him the moment he touches him. It does not require years in order to perfect the work of salvation, it can be done in a moment. Such is the wonder working power of Christ: “immediately the leprosy departed from him.” (Luke - exposition)

Stretched (1614)(**ekteino** from **ek** = out + **teino** = to stretch) means stretch out literally, as a gesture with one's hand stretched out. Jesus' stretched His hands out "toward His disciples" (Mt 12:49), to Peter drowning (Mt 14:31), to the leper (Mk 1:41, Mt 8:3, Lk 5:13, cf healing in Acts 4:30). **Ekteino** is used of the stretching out of Paul's hand as he prepared to offer his verbal defense (Acts 26:1). **Ekteino** refers to Jesus telling the lame man to stretch out his hand (Mt 12:13, Mk 3:5, Lk 6:10).**Ekteino** can mean stretching out one's hands with a hostile intent to lay hands on or arrest (Lk 22.53). As a euphemistic figure of speech referring to one's hands stretched out in crucifixion (Jn 21.18). In Mt 26:51 when they came to arrest Jesus Peter "extending his hand, drew out his sword, and struck." In Acts 27:30 **ekteino** refers to the sailors pretending to "to lay out (stretch out the) anchors from the bow, (Act 27:30). In the Septuagint in Exodus 7:5 **ekteino** is used of God stretching out His hand over Egypt and deliver Israel (cf Ps 138:7) frequently of Moses telling Aaron to stretch out his hand and staff (Ex. 7:19; 8:5-6,16-17), and of Moses stretching out his hand to bring plagues (Ex 9:22-23; 10:12,21-22) Paul alludes to the Lord stretching out His hand to the nation of Israel - But as for Israel He says, "ALL THE DAY LONG **I HAVE STRETCHED OUT MY HANDS** TO A DISOBEDIENT AND OBSTINATE PEOPLE." (Ro 10:21-note)

> **Ekteino** - 121x in 116v in the Septuagint - Ge. 3:22; 8:9; 14:22; 19:10; 22:10; 48:14; Ex. 4:4; 6:8; 7:5,19; 8:5-6,16-17; 9:22-23; 10:12,21-22; 14:16,21,26-27; Ex 15:12; 25:20; 36:34; 40:19; Nu. 14:30; Dt. 25:11; Jos. 8:18-19; Jdg. 3:21; 5:26; 6:21; 9:33,44; 15:15; 20:37; 1 Sam. 1:16; 14:27; 17:49; 2 Sam. 6:6; 15:5; 24:16; 1 Ki. 13:4; 2 Ki. 6:7; 21:13; 1 Chr. 13:9-10; 21:16; Ezr. 6:12; Neh. 9:15; 13:21; Est. 4:11; 8:4; Job 26:7; 28:9; 30:12; 36:30; Ps. 55:20; 60:8; 80:11; 104:2; 108:9; 125:3; 138:7; Prov. 1:17,24;

23:20,32; 30:32; 31:19-20; Isa. 1:15; 44:24; Jer. 1:9; 6:12; 10:12; 15:6; 21:5; 49:22; 51:15,25; Lam. 2:8; Ezek. 1:11,22-23; 2:9; 6:14; 8:3; 10:7; 13:9; 14:9,13; 16:27; 17:6; 25:7,13,16; 30:25; 32:4; 35:3; 37:6; Hos. 5:1; 7:5; 11:4; Zeph. 1:4; 2:13; Zech. 1:16; 12:1

Touched (681)(**hapto/haptomai** where **haptomai** is the middle voice which constitutes the majority of uses) means to grasp, to lay hold of with the basic meaning of touching for the purpose of manipulating. **Hapto** conveys the sense handling of an object as to exert a modifying influence upon it or upon oneself. The majority of the 39 uses are in the Gospels and are associated with Jesus touching someone (or someone touching Him) usually with a beneficial effect.

Left (565)(aperchomai from **apo** = from, separation + **erchomai** -) means go away, go (Mt 8:21, 33; 19:22; Mk 1:35; 5:17; Ro 15:28); leave (Mk 1:42); pass away (Rev 21:1, 4); go out and spread (Mt 4:24) follow Mk 1:20; go in search of Jude 1:7; draw back Jm 6:66; 18:6.

> **Friberg** - (1) go away, depart (Jas 1.24); figuratively, of disease leave (Mk 1.42); (2) with eis and indication of place go (away) (to) (Mk 1.35); (3) of discipleship go after, follow, go with (Mk 1.20); idiomatically, of following wrong sexual practices (aperchesthai opioo sarkos heteras) - literally go after strange flesh, i.e. take part in unnatural sexual intercourse, practice homosexuality (Jude 1:7); (4) of a report spread, go out (Mt 4.24) (Borrow Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament)
>
> Zodhiates -
>
> (I) Generally to go away, depart (Matt. 8:21; 13:25, 28; 16:4; 18:30; Mark 5:20, 24; 6:27); followed by apó (Mark 5:17; Luke 1:38; 2:15; 8:37; Sept.: Gen. 15:15; 19:2; 21:14). Metaphorically spoken of things, such as leprosy (Mark 1:42; Luke 5:13); fruits (Rev. 18:14); the earth (Rev. 21:1 [TR]); woe (Rev. 9:12, "is past," is over; 11:14).
>
> (II) To go away to a place, depart for, set off, journey, with ekeí <G1563>, there, yonder (Matt. 2:22); with hópou <G3699>, wheresoever or where (Matt. 8:19); followed by eís <G1519>, unto (Matt. 8:32, 33; 10:5; 14:15; 25:46); by prós <G4314>, toward (Matt. 14:25; Mark 3:13; Rev. 10:9); spoken of a passage by water (Matt. 8:18; Mark 6:32; John 6:1, 22); metaphorically of rumor, to go forth, spread abroad (Matt. 4:24; 9:26, exélthen instead of apélthen). In Luke 23:33 with epí <G1909>, upon, at, when they arrived at the place; Sept.: Gen. 42:21.
>
> (III) To go after someone, to follow as companions or disciples (Luke 17:23); with opísō <G3694>, after or following (Mark 1:20; John 12:19; in Jude 1:7, having become devotees of other flesh, i.e., fornication). See Judg. 2:12; 1 Sam. 6:12 where the Sept. has poreúomai <G4198>, to go, opísō, after. Similarly with prós <G4314>, unto, followed by the acc. (John 6:68).
>
> (IV) To withdraw, go apart (Matt. 26:36; Acts 4:15).
>
> (V) Spoken of those who turn or go back, return, followed by eís <G1519>, unto (Matt. 9:7; Luke 1:23; John 4:3; Sept.: Gen. 3:19; 31:13; Josh. 1:15; 6:14; Job 1:21); by eis ta opísō (tá <G3588>, the, pl. neut. art.; opísō <G3694>, backward), to turn back, return (John 6:66; 18:6). (Borrow The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament)
>
> 117v - came(1), depart(1), departed(3), drew(1), go(20), go away(6), go over(1), going away(1), going back(1), gone(2), gone away(4), leave(5), left(8), passed away(2), past(2), spread(1), went(16), went their way(1), went along(1), went away(37), went back(1), went off(3), withdrew*(1). Matt. 2:22; Matt. 4:24; Matt. 5:30; Matt. 8:18; Matt. 8:19; Matt. 8:21; Matt. 8:32; Matt. 8:33; Matt. 9:7; Matt. 10:5; Matt. 13:25; Matt. 13:28; Matt. 13:46; Matt. 14:15; Matt. 14:16; Matt. 16:4; Matt. 16:21; Matt. 18:30; Matt. 19:22; Matt. 20:4; Matt. 21:29; Matt. 21:30; Matt. 22:5; Matt. 22:22; Matt. 25:10; Matt. 25:18; Matt. 25:25; Matt. 25:46; Matt. 26:36; Matt. 26:42; Matt. 26:44; Matt. 27:5; Matt. 27:60; Matt. 28:8; Matt. 28:10; Mk. 1:20; Mk. 1:35; Mk. 1:42; Mk. 3:13; Mk. 5:17; Mk. 5:20; Mk. 5:24; Mk. 6:27; Mk. 6:32; Mk. 6:36; Mk. 6:37; Mk. 6:46; Mk. 7:24; Mk. 7:30; Mk. 8:13; Mk. 9:43; Mk. 10:22; Mk. 11:4; Mk. 12:12; Mk. 14:10; Mk. 14:12; Mk. 14:39; Mk. 16:13; Lk. 1:23; Lk. 1:38; Lk. 2:15; Lk. 5:13; Lk. 5:14; Lk. 5:25; Lk. 7:24; Lk. 8:31; Lk. 8:37; Lk. 8:39; Lk. 9:57; Lk. 9:59; Lk. 9:60; Lk. 10:30; Lk. 17:23; Lk. 19:32; Lk. 22:4; Lk. 22:13; Lk. 24:12; Lk. 24:24; Jn. 4:3; Jn. 4:8; Jn. 4:28; Jn. 4:47; Jn. 5:15; Jn. 6:1; Jn. 6:22; Jn. 6:66; Jn. 6:68; Jn. 9:7; Jn. 9:11; Jn. 10:40; Jn. 11:28; Jn. 11:46; Jn. 11:54; Jn. 12:19; Jn. 12:36; Jn. 16:7; Jn. 18:6; Jn. 20:10; Acts 4:15; Acts 5:26; Acts 9:17; Acts 10:7; Acts 16:39; Acts 23:32; Acts 28:29; Rom. 15:28; Gal. 1:17; Jas. 1:24; Jude 1:7; Rev. 9:12; Rev. 10:9; Rev. 11:14; Rev. 12:17; Rev. 16:2; Rev. 18:14; Rev. 21:1; Rev. 21:4

Septuagint - Gen. 3:19; Gen. 14:11; Gen. 15:15; Gen. 18:33; Gen. 19:2; Gen. 21:14; Gen. 21:16; Gen. 24:54; Gen. 24:55; Gen. 24:56; Gen. 24:61; Gen. 26:16; Gen. 26:17; Gen. 29:7; Gen. 30:25; Gen. 30:26; Gen. 31:13; Gen. 31:18; Gen. 31:30; Gen. 31:55; Gen. 32:1; Gen. 34:17; Gen. 38:11; Gen. 38:19; Gen. 42:26; Gen.

42:33; Gen. 45:17; Exod. 3:21; Exod. 4:19; Exod. 4:26; Exod. 5:4; Exod. 8:29; Exod. 10:28; Exod. 12:21; Exod. 12:28; Exod. 18:27; Exod. 19:13; Exod. 21:2; Exod. 21:7; Lev. 25:10; Lev. 25:27; Lev. 25:28; Lev. 25:41; Num. 11:30; Num. 12:9; Num. 22:26; Num. 24:25; Deut. 16:7; Deut. 24:2; Deut. 28:41; Jos. 1:15; Jos. 2:16; Jos. 6:11; Jos. 6:14; Jos. 10:29; Jos. 10:31; Jos. 10:34; Jos. 10:36; Jos. 22:4; Jos. 22:8; Jos. 22:9; Jos. 24:33; Jdg. 4:6; Jdg. 18:21; Jdg. 19:2; Jdg. 19:10; Jdg. 19:28; Jdg. 20:8; 1 Sam. 2:11; 1 Sam. 2:20; 1 Sam. 6:6; 1 Sam. 6:8; 1 Sam. 10:2; 1 Sam. 10:3; 1 Sam. 10:9; 1 Sam. 10:25; 1 Sam. 10:26; 1 Sam. 13:15; 1 Sam. 14:46; 1 Sam. 15:6; 1 Sam. 15:27; 1 Sam. 15:34; 1 Sam. 16:13; 1 Sam. 19:12; 1 Sam. 20:13; 1 Sam. 20:42; 1 Sam. 22:1; 1 Sam. 22:3; 1 Sam. 23:18; 1 Sam. 24:22; 1 Sam. 25:5; 1 Sam. 26:11; 1 Sam. 26:12; 1 Sam. 26:25; 1 Sam. 28:25; 1 Sam. 29:11; 1 Sam. 30:2; 2 Sam. 2:29; 2 Sam. 3:22; 2 Sam. 3:23; 2 Sam. 3:24; 2 Sam. 4:7; 2 Sam. 5:6; 2 Sam. 6:19; 2 Sam. 12:15; 2 Sam. 16:17; 2 Sam. 17:21; 2 Sam. 17:23; 2 Sam. 19:24; 2 Sam. 20:21; 1 Ki. 1:49; 1 Ki. 1:50; 1 Ki. 8:66; 1 Ki. 11:22; 1 Ki. 12:5; 1 Ki. 12:16; 1 Ki. 12:24; 1 Ki. 13:10; 1 Ki. 13:24; 1 Ki. 18:12; 1 Ki. 18:29; 1 Ki. 19:3; 1 Ki. 19:19; 1 Ki. 20:36; 1 Ki. 20:43; 2 Ki. 4:5; 2 Ki. 5:11; 2 Ki. 5:12; 2 Ki. 5:19; 2 Ki. 6:22; 2 Ki. 6:23; 2 Ki. 8:14; 2 Chr. 10:5; 2 Chr. 16:3; 2 Chr. 24:25; 2 Chr. 25:10; Ezr. 6:5; Neh. 5:9; Neh. 8:12; Job 1:21; Job 7:21; Job 21:33; Job 27:21; Job 34:15; Ps. 34:1; Ps. 39:13; Eccl. 5:16; Cant. 2:11; Cant. 6:1; Isa. 23:6; Isa. 23:12; Isa. 37:37; Isa. 38:12; Jer. 3:1; Jer. 5:23; Jer. 9:2; Jer. 21:2; Jer. 37:9; Jer. 51:9; Dan. 2:17;

Immediately (cf Mt 8:3. Mk 1:42)(2112)(**eutheos** from **euthus** = straight, immediate) is an adverb which means at once, right away, forthwith, straightaway, without an interval of time or a point of time subsequent to a previous point of time. **Eutheos** is a "time sensitive" word (see **expression of time**) and should prompt questions like "To what time does it refer?" or "What happens in this time?" In the present context the question is how long did it take for the skin disease to improve? Answer: It improved immediately! When Jesus heals, His healing is 100% and immediate. Watch out for charlatans who claim to have a gift of healing and are unable to heal immediately like Jesus.

Mattoon - In 1818, Ignaz Phillip Semmelweis was born into a world of dying women. The finest hospitals lost one out of six young mothers to the scourge of "childbed fever." A doctor's daily routine began in the dissecting room where he performed autopsies. From there he made his way to the hospital to examine expectant mothers without ever pausing to wash his hands. Dr. Semmelweis was the first man in history to associate such examinations with the resultant infection and death. His own practice was to wash with a chlorine solution, and after eleven years and the delivery of 8,537 babies, he lost only 184 mothers--about one in fifty. He spent the vigor of his life lecturing and debating with his colleagues. Once he argued, "Puerperal fever is caused by decomposed material, conveyed to a wound. I have shown how it can be prevented. I have proved all that I have said. But while we talk, talk, talk, gentlemen, women are dying. I am not asking anything world shaking. I am asking you only to wash... For goodness sake, wash your hands." But virtually no one believed him. Doctors and midwives had been delivering babies for thousands of years without washing, and no outspoken Hungarian was going to change them now! Semmelweis died insane at the age of 47, his wash basins discarded, his colleagues laughing in his face, and the death rattle of a thousand women ringing in his ears because his fellow doctors were not clean.

This same dilemma describes the spiritual condition of any person who does not know Christ as their Savior. The filth of their unforgiven sin will lead to spiritual death in Hell. "Wash me! Cleanse me!" was the anguished prayer of King David when he scarred his life by wicked living. It was the plea of this leper here. He wanted to be cleansed of his filth. The leper said, "Lord if you are willing, I know you can cleanse me." (Mattoon - Treasures from the Scriptures)

Just a Touch

Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. Matthew 8:3

Kiley leaped at the chance to go to a remote area of East Africa to assist a medical mission, yet she felt uneasy. She didn't have any medical experience. Still, she could provide basic care.

While there, she met a woman with a horrible but treatable disease. The woman's distorted leg repulsed her, but Kiley knew she had to do something. As she cleaned and bandaged the leg, her patient began crying. Concerned, Kiley asked if she was hurting her. "No," she replied. "It's the first time anyone has touched me in nine years."

Leprosy is another disease that can render its victims repulsive to others, and ancient Jewish culture had strict guidelines to prevent its spread: "They must live alone," the law declared. "They must live outside the camp" (Lev. 13:46).

That's why it's so remarkable that a leper approached Jesus to say, "Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean" (Matt. 8:2). "Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. 'I am willing,' he said. 'Be clean!' " (v. 3).

In touching a lonely woman's diseased leg, Kiley began to show the fearless, bridge-building love of Jesus. A single touch made a difference.

By: Tim Gustafson

Lord, we want to show the fearless love You showed when You walked this earth.

What difference might we make if we overcome our fears and trust God to use us? (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

Power of Touch

Dr. Paul Brand, twentieth-century pioneer medical missionary to India, saw firsthand the stigma associated with leprosy. During an appointment, he touched a patient to reassure him treatment was possible. Tears began to stream down the man's face. An attendant explained the tears to Dr. Brand, saying, "You touched him and no one has done that for years. They are tears of joy."

Early in His ministry, Jesus was approached by a man with leprosy, an ancient label for all types of infectious skin diseases. Because of his disease the man was required by the Old Testament law to live outside his community. If the sick man accidentally found himself in close proximity to healthy people, he had to call out, "Unclean! Unclean!" so they could avoid him (Leviticus 13:45–46). As a result, the man may have gone months or years without human contact.

Filled with compassion, Jesus reached out His hand and touched the man. Jesus had the power and authority to heal people with just a word (Mark 2:11–12). But as Jesus encountered a man whose physical illness left him feeling isolated and rejected, His touch assured the man that he was not alone but accepted.

As God gives us opportunities, we can extend grace and show compassion with a gentle touch that conveys dignity and value. The simple, healing power of human touch goes a long way to remind hurting people of our care and concern. By: Lisa M. Samra (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

Lord Jesus, thank You for the personal way You reached out to care for hurting people. Help me to follow Your example and extend compassion in my actions.

Caring for others may include a compassionate touch.

Global Prayer Digest - The Dalits of India are the modern day equivalent of this untouchable leper (another article on the Dalits). Snippets related to the Dalits

> To be **untouchable**, according to Indian-Hindu tradition, is to be undesirable, or unworthy of any sort of consideration or provision by society. This translates into frequent joblessness, lack of education and lifelong poverty.
>
> The Hindu caste system is very rigid, and there is no hope of ever escaping the caste into which one is born.
>
> In India, the dalits are approximately 300 million people who are deemed "untouchable" and comprise the lowest rung of the Hindu caste system. Since the origin of this system 3,000 years ago, the Dalits have lived in bondage to the code of caste. They have been unable to escape their fate and are deprived of even the most basic liberties and privileges, including the freedom to decide where to live, work and worship.
>
> Omika finished her street sweeping early so she could begin her date with destiny. She joined three other scheduled caste women in a protest. As "untouchable" **Dalits**, the Haddi people are banned from Hindu temples. How can they worship their gods? How can they "gain favor" to reincarnate to a higher status? If they cannot appease the gods, their spirits are doomed to remain untouchable forever. So these four untouchable women trooped into a Hindu temple in a village of Orissa. When the upper caste villagers saw their offense, they joined with Hindu priests to beat the women. The priests shouted filthy language at them. The temple council demanded 1,000 rupees to purify the temple. That money, about $20 US, equals a full month's income for these Haddi families.
>
> Christianity has been and still is seen by most Indians as the religion of the poor, and the "untouchable"**Dalits**. That's because when missionaries from William Carey's day came in contact with the outcastes, and they felt the love and the care of the missionaries, they were the first people to respond.
>
> Evangelists and church planters working in all parts of the world have discovered a common factor in reaching the unreached people in their target areas: usually those most receptive to the gospel are those who are the poorest. In all provinces in India the **dalits** (the "untouchable" communities) have been the most responsive people group when they hear the good news. For those who have nothing to lose, it's easy to see that change is probably going to be a good thing. They know that they are needy.

Someone to Touch

Read: Luke 5:12–16

Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. Luke 5:13

Commuters on a Canadian Metro train witnessed a heart-moving conclusion to a tense moment. They watched as a 70-year old woman gently reached out and offered her hand to a young man whose loud voice and disturbing words were scaring other passengers. The lady's kindness calmed the man who sank to the floor of the train with tears in his eyes. He said, "Thanks, Grandma," stood up, and walked away. The woman later admitted to being afraid. But she said, "I'm a mother and he needed someone to touch." While better judgment might ha e given her reason to keep her distance, she took a risk of love.

Jesus understands such compassion. He didn't side with the fears of unnerved onlookers when a desperate man, full of leprosy, showed up begging to be healed. Neither was He helpless as other religious leaders were—men who could only have condemned the man for bringing his leprosy into the village (Lev. 13:45–46). Instead, Jesus reached out to someone who probably hadn't been touched by anyone for years, and healed him.

Please help us to see ourselves in the merciful eyes of Your Son.

Thankfully, for that man and for us, Jesus came to offer what no law could ever offer—the touch of His hand and heart.

Father in heaven, please help us to see ourselves and one another in that desperate man—and in the merciful eyes of Your Son who reached out and touched him. By Mart DeHaan (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

No one is too troubled or unclean to be touched by Jesus.

INSIGHT: The healing of this leper would have had great significance to the people. Leprosy was a major problem in first-century Israel, with clear processes outlined for diagnosis and response to the disease (Lev. 13:38–39). It would be reasonable to ask: Why did the person go to the priest instead of going to a doctor? To the people of Israel, leprosy was not simply a fatal physical illness. Leprosy was seen as divine judgment for sin—a physical disease with spiritual roots. Since the cause of the disease was considered spiritual, the priest diagnosed the illness and, if the person was stricken with leprosy, prescribed the appropriate verdict: Isolation from family, home, community, and the corporate religious life of the nation. Not only did the Rabbi from Nazareth cleanse the man of his disease, but also by touching him He welcomed him back into the community.

Jesus still welcomes outcasts today. Whom can you welcome in today?

Seeing Upside Down

Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. —Matthew 9:12

Today's Scripture & Insight: Matthew 8:1-4; 9:9-12

In India I worshiped among leprosy patients. Most of the medical advances in the treatment of leprosy came about as a result of missionary doctors, who were willing to live among patients and risk exposure to the dreaded disease. As a result, churches thrive in most major leprosy centers. In Myanmar I visited homes for AIDS orphans, where Christian volunteers try to replace parental affection the disease has stolen away. The most rousing church services I have attended took place in Chile and Peru, in the bowels of a federal prison. Among the lowly, the wretched, the downtrodden—the rejected of this world—God's kingdom takes root.

Taking God's assignment seriously means that we must learn to look at the world upside down, as Jesus did. Instead of seeking out people with resources who can do us favors, we look for people with few resources. Instead of the strong, we find the weak; instead of the healthy, the sick. Instead of the spiritual, the sinful. Is not this how God reconciles the world to Himself? "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. . . . I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners" (Matt. 9:12-13 niv). By: Philip Yancey (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

To gain a new perspective, look at the world upside down as Jesus did.

We know, Jesus, that You sought the lowly ones who were rejected by others. We want to be like You. Open our eyes and show us how. We long to be used by You to bless others.

Do you see a needy world through the eyes of Jesus?

Okello's Story, Our Story

Read: Luke 5:12-16

[Jesus] put out His hand and touched [the leper]. —Luke 5:13

My friend Roxanne has had some impressive jobs in her life. She has covered the Olympics as a reporter. She has worked in Washington, DC, for noted people and companies. For years, she has written articles about top Christian athletes. But none of those jobs can compare with what she is doing now: giving the love of Jesus to children in Uganda.

What are her days like? Consider the rainy Thursday when she walked the muddy pathway to a cancer ward. Once inside, she scooped up little Okello, whose arms bore sores from poor IV care and whose body raged with a high fever. She carried him to the office of the only cancer doctor in the building and stayed with him until he got help and his condition stabilized.

Jesus, our example, spent His entire ministry among the suffering, healing them and bringing them the good news of God's love (Luke 7:21-22).

How significant are the jobs we do? Sure, it's vital to make a living to support ourselves and our families. But is there something we can do to help relieve the suffering in our world of pain? We may not be able to move to Uganda like Roxanne, but we can all find ways to assist someone. In whose life will you make a difference? By Dave Branon (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

God uses us to show His love
To people caught in life's despair;
Our deeds of kindness open doors
To talk of God and His great care. —Sper

One measure of our likeness to Christ is our sensitivity to the suffering of others.

The Untouchables

Jesus, moved with compassion, stretched out His hand and touched him. — Mark 1:41

Today's Scripture:Mark 1:40-45

Of all diseases, leprosy is the only one singled out by the law of Moses and linked with sin. It's not that having leprosy was sinful, nor was it the result of sin. Rather, the disease was seen as a graphic symbol of sin. If we could see sin, it would look something like leprosy.

In Mark 1 we read about a leper who fell on his knees before Jesus and made his request: "If You are willing, You can make me clean" (v.40). It's the first instance in the Gospels of a plain request for healing—touching and profound in its simplicity.

Jesus was "moved with compassion" (v.41). People normally felt sympathy for the sick and troubled, but not for lepers. Because they were considered in those days as "unclean" both ceremonially and physically (Leviticus 13:45; 22:4), they were repulsive in every way to most people, who stayed as far away from them as possible. Nevertheless, Jesus was "willing" to reach out to this desperate, disease-ridden man and actually touch him! At that very moment the leprosy left him and he was cleansed.

Why did Jesus touch this man? He could have healed him just by saying, "Be cleansed." But His touch illustrated His great compassion.

Jesus loves sinners. Do we? By: David H. Roper (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

Reflect & Pray

Jesus taught when He lived on this earth
How to show love to the lost;
So don't be afraid to give a kind touch,
No matter how much it may cost. —Carbaugh

To love sinners is to be like Jesus.

F B Meyer - He stretched forth his hand,and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean.

This leper, as the physician-evangelist remarks, was full of leprosy. It was a very aggravated case. He lay in the dust before Jesus. What a contrast! Loathsomeness and Divine beauty; disease and health; humanity at its worst and best; sinner and Savior; one of Satan's most miserable victims, and the Almighty Deliverer. So, my reader, if thou art conscious of a heart and life which are full of sin, I would have thee meet thy Savior now. There is no if about his power — even the leper recognized that. The only doubt was

about the Savior's will: there is, however, no doubt on this score now, since He has healed myriads, and promises healing to all who come. Throw thyself, then, at his feet, and ask for cleansing. **"He stretched forth his hand, and touched him."** No one else would have dared to do as much. To touch that flesh, according to the Levitical code, would induce uncleanness. But Jesus shrank not. On the one hand, He knew that the ceremonial restrictions were abolished in Himself: on the other, He desired to teach that sin cannot defile the Divine holiness of the Savior. Whatever be the stories of sin that are breathed into his ear; whatever the open bruises and putrefying sores which are opened to his touch; whatever the sights and scenes with which He has to cope — none of these can leave a taint of evil in his sinless heart. It would be as impossible for sin to soil Christ as for a plague to contaminate flame. And He will heal thee. Dare to claim it.

"Break up the heavens, O Lord, and far
Through all yon starlight keen
Draw me, thy bride — a glittering star
In raiment white and clean."

Luke 5:14 And He ordered him to tell no one, "But go and show yourself to the priest and make an offering for your cleansing, just as Moses commanded, as a testimony to them."

> NET Then he ordered the man to tell no one, but commanded him, "Go and show yourself to a priest, and bring the offering for your cleansing, as Moses commanded, as a testimony to them."
>
> GNT κα α τ ς παρ γγειλεν α τ μηδεν ε πε ν, λλ πελθ ν δε ξον σεαυτ ν τ ερε κα προσ νεγκε περ το καθαρισμο σου καθ ς προσ ταξεν Μωϋσ ς, ε ς μαρτ ριον α το ς.
>
> NLT Then Jesus instructed him not to tell anyone what had happened. He said, "Go to the priest and let him examine you. Take along the offering required in the law of Moses for those who have been healed of leprosy. This will be a public testimony that you have been cleansed."
>
> KJV And he charged him to tell no man: but go, and shew thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing, according as Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.
>
> ESV And he charged him to tell no one, but "go and show yourself to the priest, and make an offering for your cleansing, as Moses commanded, for a proof to them."
>
> NIV Then Jesus ordered him, "Don't tell anyone, but go, show yourself to the priest and offer the sacrifices that Moses commanded for your cleansing, as a testimony to them."

- **he ordered**: Mt 8:4 9:30 12:16
- **go and show**: Lu 17:14 Lev 13:2
- **and make an offering:** Lev 14:4,10,21,22
- **as a testimony to them**: Lu 9:5 Mt 10:18 Mk 1:44 6:11
- J C Ryle's Comments on Luke 5 - clear, devout, and accurate
- Luke 5:12-15 A Lesson from a Leper - John MacArthur
- Luke 5:12-15 The Cleansing Power of Jesus - Steven Cole
- Luke 5 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

GO AND SHOW AS WITNESS TO PRIESTS

Parallel Passages:

> Matthew 8:4+ And Jesus said to him, "See that you tell no one; but **go**, **show** yourself to the priest and present the offering that Moses commanded, as a testimony to them."
>
> Mark 1:44-45+ and He said to him, "See that you **say nothing to anyone**; but go, show yourself to the priest and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded, as a testimony to them." **But he went out and began to proclaim it freely and to spread the news** around, to such an extent that Jesus could no longer publicly enter a city, but stayed out in unpopulated areas; and they were coming to Him from everywhere.
>
> Luke 5:14+ And He ordered him to tell no one, "But go and show yourself to the priest and make an offering for your cleansing, just as Moses commanded, as a testimony to them."

He ordered (paraggello) **him to tell no one** - Jesus exerts His rightful authority in issuing this order actually stippling 3 things for the cleansed leper - (1) tell no one (2) show himself to the priest and (3) make an offering. Mark 1:43+ has "And He sternly warned (embrimaomai - admonish strictly) him" and then Mark records his disobedience "But he went out and began to proclaim it freely and to spread the news around, to such an extent that Jesus could no longer publicly enter a city, but stayed out in unpopulated areas; and they were coming to Him from everywhere." (Mark 1:45+)

As **Bruner** wrote “Jesus will not storm Israel with his messianic claim”; instead he will “knock quietly at its door, leper by leper, little by little." (Matthew: A Commentary. The Christbook)

Utley - This is much like the Messianic secret of Mark’s Gospel (cf. Mark 1:43). Jesus did not want to be known as a healer only. The gospel was not yet complete. Jesus was offering more, far more, than physical healing. From Mark 1:45 we learn this man disobeyed.

Wiersbe comments on the irony of Jesus telling him to tell no one and now telling us to tell everyone and we tell no one! (Mt 28:19+) - Jesus instructed the man not to reveal who had healed him, but the cleansed leper became an enthusiastic witness for the Lord. (Jesus commands us to tell everybody, and we keep quiet!) Because of this witness, great multitudes came to Jesus for help, and He graciously ministered to them. But Jesus was not impressed by these great crowds, for He knew that most of the people wanted only His healing power and not His salvation. He often left the crowds and slipped away into a quiet place to pray and seek the Father’s help. That’s a good example for all of God’s servants to follow. (Borrow the Bible Exposition Commentary)

Darrell Bock lists 6 reasons that have been suggested for Jesus’ command of silence (Plummer 1896: 149–50):

> 1. Jesus wants him to be silent until he is officially declared to be clean (Schürmann 1969: 277; Marshall 1978: 209; Wiefel 1988: 117).
>
> 2. Jesus wishes to prevent the leper from becoming proud. However, there is no hint of such a concern in the account.
>
> 3. Jesus wishes to prevent the priests from hearing about the healing early and thus stopping the leper’s return to society. However, up to this point in Luke’s Gospel, there is no hint of official opposition.
>
> 4. Jesus wishes to prevent excessive popular excitement as a result of his healing ministry (so Marshall 1978: 209, with view 1). This point is quite possible, as the following verse suggests.
>
> 5. It shows Jesus’ humility. This idea is not developed in relationship to miracles anywhere else.
>
> 6. Jesus wants to avoid having to offer himself to be ritually cleansed for touching a leper. This motive, too, seems unlikely. When Jesus did not follow tradition, he did not hide his actions. It is also probable that since Jesus is a prophet he has the freedom to touch these people, as the Elisha example suggests.The most likely explanations are that the silence was appropriate until the leper went to the priest (view 1) and that such silence also would prevent undue popular excitement over Jesus’ miraculous work (view 4). The account vividly shows how Jesus downplays his miraculous work. Often he tries to restrict the spreading of a message about miracles (Luke 4:35, 41; 8:56; Matt. 9:30; 12:16; Mark 1:34; 3:12; 5:43; 7:36; 8:26; Plummer 1896: 150 (Baker Expository Commentary NT - Luke)
>
> See more discussion on what some have referred to as "The Messianic Secret"

But go and show (deiknuo) **yourself to the priest** (hiereus) - **Go** (aperchomai) and **show** are both aorist imperative = "Just do it!" Jesus by giving this order is showing that He is does not lightly regard the law. The priests must formally testify the leper is clean before he would be received by the people. The problem was that there was no cure for leprosy in those days, so as far as we know these laws were never implemented. Naaman was miraculously healed (2 Kings 5:1-19), but he was not an Israelite, so did not follow the prescribed procedures for cleansing (see Who was Naaman?). So far as the record goes, this incident in all 3 synoptic Gospels is the first time that a cleansed leper would have gone to the priest in the manner prescribed by Moses, with the one possible exception of Miriam (Nu 12:10-15). Imagine the shock of the priests! If that would not shake them out of their spiritual lethargy, even a dead man rising for the dead would not awaken their consciences and pierce their hearts (cf Lk 16:31+). Jesus full of mercy would give the priests another chance and this time would send not one healed leper but ten cleansed lepers to the priests (Read Lk 17:12-19+) Surely this would break through their hardness of heart! But it was not to be!

Utley - This refers to regulations found in Lev. 14:1–32. Jesus wanted (1) to witness to the priest as well as (2) to show that He did recognize and fulfill the Mosaic law. Luke records another leper who was told to do the same thing in Lk 17:14+.

Arnold Fruchtenbaum writes that "Although the priesthood had all these detailed instructions as to how they were to respond in the case of a healed leper, they never had the opportunity to put these instructions into effect, because from the time the Mosaic Law

was given, no Jew was ever healed of leprosy. As a result, it was taught by the rabbis that only the Messiah would be able to heal a Jewish leper." (Read this fascinating article The Three Messianic Miracles) Indeed, to the rabbis the cure of a leper was as difficult as raising a person from the dead.

And make an offering for your cleansing (katharismos)**, just as Moses commanded** - **MacArthur** explains that "The process by which a cleansed leper was readmitted to society involved going to the temple for an examination by a priest, shaving, bathing, washing his clothes, offering multiple animal sacrifices, along with an offering of grain and oil (Lev. 14:1–20). The entire procedure lasted for eight days (Lev. 14:10)." Here is what **Moses commanded**...

> Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 2 "**This shall be the law of the leper in the day of his cleansing** (Lxx = katharizo) Now he shall be brought to the priest, 3 and the priest shall go out to the outside of the camp. Thus the priest shall look, and if the infection of leprosy has been healed in the leper, 4 then the priest shall give orders to take two live clean birds and cedar wood and a scarlet string and hyssop for the one who is to be cleansed. 5 "The priest shall also give orders to slay the one bird in an earthenware vessel over running water. 6 "As for the live bird, he shall take it together with the cedar wood and the scarlet string and the hyssop, and shall dip them and the live bird in the blood of the bird that was slain over the running water. 7 "He shall then sprinkle seven times the one who is to be cleansed from the leprosy and shall pronounce him clean, and shall let the live bird go free over the open field. (Lev 14:1-7+).
>
> **Warren Wiersbe** - This ceremony is described in Leviticus 14 and is another beautiful picture of Christ's work for sinners. The bird slain pictures the death of Christ; the bird released pictures His resurrection. Putting the bird into the jar pictures the Incarnation, when Christ took a human body that He might die for us. The application of the blood to the ear, thumb, and toe illustrates the need for personal faith in His death. The oil on the blood reminds us of the Spirit of God, who enters the person when he trusts the Saviour. (Borrow the Bible Exposition Commentary)

As a testimony (marturion/martyrion) **to them**: **Guzik** makes an interesting point that "The elements used in the Levitical ceremony for the cleansing of a leper (cedar wood, hyssop, and scarlet) are the same elements used in cleansing someone who was defiled by a dead body (Numbers 19:6, 19:13, 19:18 and Leviticus 14:4-7). Since lepers were never healed, these priests had never conducted this ceremony. When they had to look up the procedure for this ceremony and had to carry it out for the first time, it would be a strong witness that the Messiah was among them."

MacArthur adds that "If he obeyed and went to recount to the priests how Jesus had healed him, it would be a powerful testimony to them that Jesus was indeed the Messiah and Son of God. This testimony would be either convincing to the priests so that they would acknowledge the claims of Christ, or if they rejected Him self-indicting, since they had personally examined the miraculously healed leper." (Luke Commentary)

Notice also that **priest** above is singular, but here Jesus says **them** which is plural, which most think refers to the other religious leaders in the Temple, that is the Jewish priests. Imagine their shock at seeing a healed leper! Each of these miracles was like a divine sign like a giant blinking neon sign on the highway intended to point the witnesses (whether they be the Jewish crowds or the religious leaders) to Jesus as the divine One, the Redeemer, Whose desire was for them to be spiritually healed. No wonder, in view of the hypocritical unbelief so prevalent in the priesthood, that Jesus said this would be "**for a testimony to them**." What a WITNESS this would present to the RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY. In view of the rejection of Jesus as Messiah by most of the religious leaders (Nicodemus was an exception, et al Jn 3:1ff+) given such a startlingly bright divine light, we can begin to grasp the depth of their hatred of God and hardness of heart. Religion can be a deadly thing and take you straight to the Lake of fire! God desires relationship grounded on humility, not religion founded on hubris. As David says Ps 51:17+ "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, you will not despise." In Isaiah we read "For thus says the high and exalted One Who lives forever, whose name is Holy, "I dwell on a high and holy place, And also with the contrite and lowly of spirit In order to revive the spirit of the lowly And to revive the heart of the contrite." (Isa 57:15)

Spurgeon - Our blessed Master did not court fame; he did not wish to make himself notorious, the crowds that flocked around him were inconvenient to him, so he did not wish to have them increased. There was danger in such crowding, and Jesus was wise in his generation, so he charged the healed leper to tell no man, but to show himself to the priest, and to present the offering enjoined under the law. As long as the ceremonial law was in force, Christ very diligently obeyed it, and bade others do the same. That law is now abolished, and the Jewish priesthood has also ceased to be. But mark the modesty of our Saviour. As a man, he sought no fame or honour, but, as far as he could do so, he suppressed the voices that would have brought him notoriety; yet grateful tongues could not all be silenced, even at his bidding. (Luke - exposition)

Ordered (commanded) (3853)(**paraggello** from **para** = beside, alongside, near by, at the side of +**aggelos** = messenger,

angello/aggello = to announce) means to hand on or pass on an announcement from one to another who is at one's side, such as to what must be done, usually with the idea of a command or charge. **Paraggello** often was used in the context of a military command and demanded that the subordinate obey the order from the superior (2Ti 4:1-note) and required unhesitating and unqualified obedience. (cp Lk 5:14, 8:29, Lk 9:21KJV, Acts 1:4, 4:18; 5:28KJV; Acts 15:5KJV; 1Th 4:11). It is like a mandate (an authoritative command) or a call to obedience from one in authority. **Paraggello** is used frequently by Luke (Lk. 5:14; 8:29,56; 9:21; Acts 1:4; 4:18; 5:28,40; 10:42; 15:5; 16:18,23; 23:22,30)

Show (1166) (**deiknuo**) means to show and has the sense of to draw attention to or exhibit something, in this case primarily by visual means so that the priest could apprehend with their senses what had occurred. The idea of this verb was to show so as to prove something is true or to make clear by evidence. In short the leper's skin free of the ugly spots was to be a visual demonstration of a dramatic miracle!

Priest (2409)(**hiereus** from **hieros** = consecrated to God and as a noun = temple) is consecrated person who serves God and in Jesus' day, were the Jewish men who offered Temple sacrifices and carried out other sacred rites associated with the Temple (cp Heb 8:4).

- Torrey Topical Textbook Priests
- Easton's Bible Dictionary Priest
- Fausset Bible Dictionary Priest
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible Priest
- Hastings' Dictionary of the NT Priest
- The Jewish Encyclopedia Priest

Cleansing (purification)(2512)(**katharismos**) describes the process of making clean, cleansing, purifying, freeing from filth. Although the cleansing could refer to literal cleansing from physical stain or contamination, all NT uses refer to cleansing either from the "stain" of sin, an "inward contamination" (Heb 1:3, 2Pe 1:9) or as in the present context the ritual cleansing as prescribed in the law of Moses (Mk 1:44+, Lk 2:22+, Lk 5:14+) or by Jewish customs (Jn 2:6+).

> **Katharismos** - 7v - cleansing(2), purification(5) - Mk. 1:44; Lk. 2:22; Lk. 5:14; Jn. 2:6; Jn. 3:25; Heb. 1:3; 2 Pet. 1:9

Testimony (3142)(**marturion/martyrion** source of English "martyr") means the healed leper would be walking living proof that a miracle had been performed. And for the leper it was to be a declaration of facts which confirmed he was now clean, sort of like an emancipation proclamation for this man who had been enslaved (so to speak), bound by his leprosy undoubtedly for many years. The cleansed leper showing himself would be a visual testimony that he had no more skin spots and was cleansed. Did the priests ask who performed this miracle? The Gospel writers do not say but based on their asking about who healed the blind man in John 9:1-7, (see Jn 9:13-15), it is almost a given that they asked who performed this miracle. So the blind man knew it was "the Man who is called Jesus' (Jn 9:11), just as did the leper who addressed Jesus as "Lord."

Believer's Study Bible refers to Jesus' order to not tell anyone as the **"Messianic Secret"**
On several occasions in the Gospel of Mark Jesus tells someone not to tell, either Who He is, or what they have seen that would demonstrate Who He is. This is called the **Messianic Secret**. Why did Jesus want to keep his identity as Messiah a secret?

1. **To avoid being considered just a "miracle worker."** Note that many of these commands follow miracles. Jesus did not want people to follow Him just to see Him do tricks. He came as the Son of God to ring salvation and forgiveness from sin, not just physical healing and miracles.
2. **To avoid undue publicity which would hinder His mobility and ministry to His disciples.**Note the result of the leper's disobedience in 1:45.
3. **To avoid the mistaken notion of the type of Messiah He came to be.**He came to suffer and serve and sacrifice Himself, not simply to display His power (cf. 10:45).
4. **To avoid the premature death that increased popularity could bring**

NOTE: Following His transfiguration, which displayed His glory to the disciples, Jesus tells them not to speak of this event "till the Son of Man had risen from the dead" (Mk 9:9). Following His resurrection and vindication, the identity of Messiah and the character of His mission is properly understood in its full scope. **After the resurrection, all believers are sent into the world "to tell"** (cf. Matthew 28:7, 8, 18–20; Mark 16:7; Luke 24:9, 44–47).

Question - What is the Messianic Secret?

Answer: The Messianic Secret is a theme of biblical criticism developed in 1901 by a German Lutheran theologian named Wilhelm Wrede. The Messianic Secret involves Wrede's explanation for Jesus wanting to hide His identity from His enemies by commanding the disciples to keep silent about His mission on earth and the miracles He performed. Wrede claimed that Jesus did not ever think He was the Messiah and that Mark (and the rest of the New Testament authors) sensationalized Jesus and made Him into the Messiah. Wrede claims Mark added the Messianic Secret in an attempt to give a reason for why Jesus was not accepted by many as Messiah until after His death. Wrede's theory enjoyed some popularity during the 1920s but faded soon thereafter.

Is there any biblical basis for Wrede's theory? It is undeniable that Jesus told His disciples on several occasions to keep what He had done secret. Each of those incidents, however, has a much more plausible explanation than the one put forth by Wilhelm Wrede. Further, each is consistent with the other Gospel accounts, and not an invention by Mark.

In Mark 1:43–45 Christ commanded the leper He had healed, "'See that you say nothing to anyone; but go, show yourself to the priest, and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded, as a testimony to them.' But he went out and began to proclaim it freely, and to spread the word, so that Jesus could no longer go into a town openly, but stayed out in the country; and people came to him from every quarter." Jesus knew the publicity about the healing would hinder His ability to minister in the area, which is exactly what happened when the leper disobeyed, and worse, the sensationalism caused by miraculous healings would hamper the spreading of His message. Because of the leper's disobedience, Jesus could no longer enter a city without being mobbed by those seeking healing, causing Him to abandon His ministry in the city and keep to relatively uninhabited areas. The healing of the leper is also found in Matthew 8:1–4 and Luke 5:12–16, with Luke reiterating the reason for the command for secrecy in Lk 5:15–16.

Further "evidence" for Wrede's theory of secrecy involves the explanation for Jesus speaking in parables in Mark 4:11 where He tells His disciples that the knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of God had been given to them, but to others He spoke in parables so that, "though seeing, they may not see; though hearing, they may not understand." This is not, however, a plea for secrecy. Rather, it is an explanation of divine revelation in the hearts of true believers, revelation that is unavailable for those who, like the Pharisees, continued to reject the truth. The "mysteries of the kingdom" are revealed to those who have "ears to hear" but not to those whose hearts are darkened. As the Messiah, the Son of God, Jesus would have been able to distinguish between those two groups. Again, this is not an invention of Mark, as it is reiterated in Matthew 13:11–17.

Mark 8:27–30 is another example of a statement that has led to misunderstanding about the secrecy Jesus required. When Peter, speaking for the rest of the disciples, declared Jesus to be "the Christ," which means "Messiah," Jesus "strictly warned them that they should tell no one about Him." Far from denying His identity as the Messiah, Jesus was aware that the people, and even the disciples, did not yet understand that He came to die on the cross for sin. They were awaiting the appearance of the Messiah as the conqueror who would free the Jews from Roman oppression. If the crowds attempted to press Him into service in such a way, His mission and message would be compromised. As further proof, Jesus immediately began to teach His disciples about His true mission (Mark 8:31–33).

The Messianic Secret theory is just that—a theory, and one that has been disproved and universally rejected among theologians. The truth is that Jesus commanded secrecy about His identity from certain people at certain times during His ministry, but for perfectly good and logical reasons. There can be no doubt, however, that by the time His ministry came to an end, His disciples knew exactly who He was and is—God in flesh who came to save His people from their sins. (Source: GotQuestions.org)

Related Resource:

- Daniel Akin on the "Messianic Secret" - why Jesus was prohibiting speaking
- Why Did Jesus Forbid People from Making Him Known? - John MacArthur
- Why did Jesus command people to not tell others of the miracles He performed?

Arnold Fruchtenbaum has an interesting note on leprosy in his article entitled "The Three Messianic Miracles"....

> Some time prior to the coming of Yeshua (Jesus), the ancient rabbis separated miracles into two categories. First were those miracles anyone would be able to perform if they were empowered by the Spirit of God to do so. The second category of miracles were called "messianic miracles," which were miracles only the Messiah would be able to perform. Yeshua did miracles in both categories: general miracles and also messianic miracles. So because of the rabbinic teaching that certain miracles would be reserved only for the Messiah to do, whenever He performed a messianic miracle it created a different type of reaction than when He performed other types of miracles.
>
> **The first messianic miracle was the healing of a leper....From the time the Mosaic Law was completed, there was no record of any Jew who had been healed of leprosy. While Miriam was healed of leprosy,**

this was before the completion of the Law. Naaman was healed of leprosy, but he was a Syrian Gentile, not a Jew. From the time the Mosaic Law was completed, there was never a case of any Jew being healed of leprosy.

Leprosy was the one disease that was left out of rabbinic cures; there was no cure for leprosy whatsoever. Yet Leviticus 13-14 gave the Levitical Priesthood detailed instructions as to what they were to do in case a leper was healed. On the day that a leper approached the priesthood and said, "I was a leper but now I have been healed," the priesthood was to give an initial offering of two birds. For the next seven days, they were to investigate intensively the situation to determine three things. First, was the person really a leper? Second, if he was a real leper, was he really cured of his leprosy? Third, if he was truly cured of his leprosy, what were the circumstances of the healing? If after seven days of investigation they were firmly convinced that the man had been a leper, had been healed of his leprosy, and the circumstances were proper, then, on the eighth day there would be a lengthy series of offerings. All together, there were four different offerings. First, there was a trespass-offering; second, a sin-offering; third, a burnt-offering; and fourth, a meal-offering. Then came the application of the blood of the trespass-offering upon the healed leper followed by the application of the blood of the sin-offering upon the healed leper. The ceremony would then end with the anointing of oil upon the healed leper. (The Three Messianic Miracles)

Charles Ryrie on Leprosy and the Law of Moses - “Those things which Moses commanded” are recorded in Leviticus 14. Briefly, the ritual of cleansing was as follows: two clean living birds, a cedar rod, scarlet, and hyssop were taken; one bird was then killed in an earthen vessel over running water; the hyssop was then tied to the rod with the scarlet band and it and the living bird were dipped in the blood of the dead bird; next the blood on the rod was sprinkled over the leper seven times, and the living bird was loosed. At this point the leper was pronounced clean, but more was still required of him. He had to wash his clothes, shave, bathe, stay away from his house for seven days, repeat the ablutions and shaving, and finally on the eighth day offer at the temple a sin offering, a trespass offering, a meal offering, and a burnt offering. It is evident that the law was very detailed about this procedure, and doubtless, because it had seldom if ever been used, there would have been a lot of scratching of priestly heads had the leper obeyed the Lord and gone to them. Instead, he chose to disobey and publish his miracle abroad so that it actually hindered his benefactor’s ministry.

The power of the law. Certain important doctrinal facts about the relation of the Savior, the sinner, and the Mosaic law are illustrated in this miracle. The first is that **the Mosaic law was powerless to cleanse.** It could after a length of time pronounce as true the fact that a man was cleansed, but it could not perform the cleansing itself. The nature of the law has not changed; it still cannot cleanse the sinner no matter how admirably he may try to keep its commands. “Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justffied in his sight” (Rom 3:20). It was never given as a means of spiritual salvation, and great is the error of those who so use it today.

The purpose of the law. The Lord’s reason for commanding this leper to go to the priests was that the Mosaic law might be used as a testimony to them. In the process of performing the ritual of the law they might have been led to the Savior. Such is a legitimate purpose of the preaching of the law today. It may be used to lead a man to Christ. It is for the unrighteous (1 Ti1:9), to shut him up to faith in Christ (Gal 3:23–24). Our Lord used it this way (Luke 10:25–37) and so may we.

Although the law may be used to show a sinner his hopeless condition, only Christ can save. What then is the place of the law in the life of the redeemed? Being saved does not exempt one from lawful living, but the law involved is no longer the law of Moses but the law of Christ. So it was for the cleansed leper (Mark 1:44), and so it is for the cleansed sinner in this age (1 Cor 9:21). He is no longer under any part of the Mosaic law (including the Ten Commandments, 2 Cor 3:7–11), but he is to live by the commandments of Christ under grace. But, someone will say, Are not many of the requirements of the law (and especially the principles of the Ten Commandments) repeated substantially in the teachings of grace? The answer is obviously yes. Then, one will say, Why insist that the Christian is not under the Mosaic law (including the Ten Commandments)? We insist on it for the evident reason that the Scripture says so (2 Cor 3:7–11; Rom 10:4; Heb 7:11–12), and for the very practical reason that even though some of the standards may be similar under law and grace, no one will ever possibly reach any of those standards in his life if he tries to do so by keeping the law. The law can only motivate to sin (Rom 7) and never to sanctification. Legalism is the greatest enemy of sanctification; thus to connect the believer’s sanctification with the law is to defeat him before he starts. Love is the only workable motive for sanctification, but love does not mean license. No doubt, the leper was so overpowered with love for his deliverance and his deliverer that he thought he was doing right by telling everyone else of Jesus. But that was not real love, for if he had had genuine. thoughtful love he would have obeyed. The law of Christ is tailor-made and perfect in every detail. The love of Christ brings perfect obedience to each and all of those details. May, the lessons of this miracle be practiced in a life of obedience motivated by the love of the one who loved us and gave Himself for us. (Dr Ryrie's Articles)

Luke 5:15 But the news about Him was spreading even farther, and large crowds were gathering to hear Him and to be healed of their sicknesses.

- **But**: Pr 15:33 1Ti 5:25
- **Was spreading**: Mt 4:23-25 9:26 Mk 1:28,45
- **large:** Lu 12:1 14:25 Mt 4:25 15:30,31 Mk 2:1,2 3:7 John 6:2
- J C Ryle's Comments on Luke 5 - clear, devout, and accurate
- Luke 5:12-15 A Lesson from a Leper - John MacArthur
- Luke 5:12-15 The Cleansing Power of Jesus - Steven Cole
- Luke 5 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

GREAT NEWS BRINGS EVEN GREATER CROWDS

But the news (logos) **about Him was spreading** (dierchomai) **even farther** - **Was spreading** is in the imperfect tense which vividly pictures of the progressive spread of the news so His fame kept on growing. Why was the news spreading through the "public grapevine" and what was the effect on Jesus' ministry? As noted in Mark 1:45+ the leper disobeyed Jesus' prohibition to speak about his cleansing and instead "**he went out and began to proclaim it freely and to spread the news around, to such an extent that Jesus could no longer publicly enter a city, but stayed out in unpopulated areas; and they were coming to Him from everywhere**" See also the note by Fruchtenbaum which may have prompted the religious leaders to come.

> **Robertson** on Mark 1:45+ - One of the best ways to spread a thing is to tell people not to tell. It was certainly so in this case. Soon Jesus had to avoid cities and betake himself to desert places to avoid the crowds and even then people kept coming to Jesus (ērchonto, imperfect tense). Some preachers are not so disturbed by the onrush of crowds.
>
> **Spurgeon** - Fame is like fire. If you heap anything on it to prevent it from spreading, it often acts as fuel to the flame; so, the very effort to hide the light of Christ's power, made it spread all the more widely. Some fires burn the more fiercely for being damped, and such was the fame of Christ; it was not to be kept under. The more he bade men be quiet, "so much the more went there a fame abroad of him." There was a double attraction about the Lord Jesus, —his sweet, instructive speech, and his gracious, healing hand. There is a somewhat similar attraction still in every true gospel ministry, not the attraction of the mere words of human eloquence, but in the truth which every faithful minister preaches, and in that matchless soul-healing power which goes with the Word wherever it is believingly heard. (Luke - exposition)

Large crowds were gathering - As Mk 1:45+ says "**they were coming to Him from everywhere**." **Were gathering** is in the imperfect tense which presents a dramatic picture of the crowds progressively swelling, growing bigger and bigger by the moment! Can you envision the scene? Recall the population of Galilee in Jesus' day has been estimated at about 3 million.

Darroll Bock writes that "the news about Jesus extends ever wider in Luke's portrayal (first to Galilee and Capernaum in Lk 4:14–15, 37, and then to Judea and Jerusalem in Lk 5:15, 17). The mission of Lk 4:44 is being fulfilled. The crowd comes to hear the message and to be healed. In such simple terms, Luke summarizes the expanding influence and response to Jesus' work (other summaries are Lk 4:14–15, 40; 6:18; 7:21). Mark notes that the crush of people trying to see Jesus is so great that Jesus can no longer enter the city. He must minister in the country (Mark 1:45)." (See Luke Baker Exegetical Commentary)

To hear Him and to be healed (therapeuo) **of their sicknesses** - Notice that Luke gives the proper priority to **hearing** before **healing**! The message is clear that we should speak the Word of God before we seek miracles by God. In fact, His Word brings healing, healing of the internal kind, the kind our soul needs as described by the psalmist "Then they cried out to the LORD in their trouble; He saved them out of their distresses. **He sent His word and healed them,** And delivered them from their destructions. Let them give thanks to the LORD for His lovingkindness, And for His wonders to the sons of men!" (Ps 107:19-21)

As **Utley** rightly says "Fallen, sick, lonely humanity will go anywhere for help and hope."

Spurgeon on to **hear Him and to be healed** - I wish that all congregations would come together from the same motives, to **hear** and to **be healed** by Christ. What is thy disease, my hearer? What ails thy soul? What is the mischief in thy spirit? What is the malady in thy heart? Jesus can heal thee. Oh, that thou wouldst at once seek to be healed by him! Two words that I long to see linked together in this house: "to hear, and to be healed by him." You come to hear; can you not also come "to be healed by him of your infirmities"? (Spurgeon is speaking of course not of temporal physical healing but the more eternal healing of one's sin sick soul!) (Luke - exposition)

In another note **Spurgeon** writes "But so much the more went there a fame abroad of him: and great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by him of their infirmities. Oh, that sinners would come to Christ in this spirit now, — “to hear, and to be healed by him of their infirmities!” Some of you have come to hear, but have you come to Christ to be healed? Have you really come for that purpose? Alas! Some come even to God’s house only to see, or to be seen; how can such people expect to receive a blessing? Yet my Master is so gracious that, often, he is found of them that sought him not. So may it be with any careless ones who are with us now!" (Luke - exposition)

Spreading (1330) **dierchomai** from **dia** = through + **erchomai** = come, go) means to go through, to pass through, to move through an area. Friberg - (1) go through, pass through a place (Acts 13.6); of a sword pierce, penetrate (figuratively in Lk 2.35); (2) of travel from place to place go about, travel throughout (Lk 9.6); (3) of death extend to, come to (Ro 5.12); (4) figuratively, of a report spread, be told everywhere (Lk 5.15)

> **Uses of dierchomai in Luke and Acts** - Lk. 2:15; Lk. 2:35; Lk. 4:30; Lk. 5:15; Lk. 8:22; Lk. 9:6; Lk. 11:24; Lk. 17:11; Lk. 19:1; Lk. 19:4; Acts 8:4; Acts 8:40; Acts 9:32; Acts 9:38; Acts 10:38; Acts 11:19; Acts 12:10; Acts 13:6; Acts 13:14; Acts 14:24; Acts 15:3; Acts 15:41; Acts 16:6; Acts 17:23; Acts 18:23; Acts 18:27; Acts 19:1; Acts 19:21; Acts 20:2; Acts 20:25;

Healed (cured)(2323)(**therapeuo** from **therapon** = an attendant, servant) means primarily to care for, to wait upon, minister to. It has two main senses in the NT, one speaking of rendering service (Acts 17:25) and the more common use as in the present context describing healing of the ill (cf Mk 1:34, Mt. 4:24; Mt 12:10; Luke 6:7; Lk 10:9). **Therapeúō** means to heal miraculously in Matt. 4:23, 24; 10:1, 8; Acts 4:14. Providing care to improve a situation.

> **Luke's uses of therapeuo** -Lk. 4:23; Lk. 4:40; Lk. 5:15; Lk. 6:7; Lk. 6:18; Lk. 7:21; Lk. 8:2; Lk. 8:43; Lk. 9:1; Lk. 9:6; Lk. 10:9; Lk. 13:14; Lk. 14:3; Acts 4:14; Acts 5:16; Acts 8:7; Acts 17:25; Acts 28:9;

Luke 5:16 But Jesus Himself would often slip away to the wilderness and pray.

- Lu 6:12 Mt 14:23 Mk 1:35,36 6:46 Joh 6:15
- J C Ryle's Comments on Luke 5 - clear, devout, and accurate
- Luke 5 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

> **ESV** But he would withdraw to desolate places and pray.

FREQUENT SOLITARY PRAYER

But Jesus Himself would *often* **slip away** (hupochoreo in present tense - continually) **to the wilderness** (eremos) - How often we don't know for certain, but undoubtedly as often as He could find solitude to be with His Father.

Constable makes a good point, observing that Jesus "response (to the large crowds reflecting growing popularity) was not to rest on popular approval but to renew His dependence on His Father by praying in a solitary place." A good pattern to emulate.

And pray (proseuchomai in present tense - continually) - No crowds, no miracles, just communing with the Father. This is a good lesson for all of us in full time ministry (and beloved the truth is we are ALL in "full time ministry"). We are all called "to walk in the same manner as He walked." (1 Jn 2:6+) It follows that we should **often slip away to** some quiet place to pray. It seems so much easier to be diligent in doing rather than pausing and praying! If Jesus had to "re-fuel" than so do we! **Bock** comments that "The large gatherings did not prevent Jesus from withdrawing habitually and finding time to commune with God or his disciples (Luke 4:42; also Matt. 14:13; Mark 1:35, 45; John 11:54). Luke regularly notes Jesus’ praying (Luke 3:21; 6:12; 9:18, 28–29; 11:1; 23:46)....Jesus’ prayers tend to come at key times, and this summary is no exception. Jesus was headed for a series of conflicts in the events that followed. Luke makes clear that before Jesus got into trouble, he was spending time with God.

Utley - Jesus, God’s Son Incarnate, set the example for our prayer life (cf. Luke 3:21; 5:16; 6:12; 9:18, 28). If Jesus needed to get away and pray to face life, how much more do we!

Marshall adds that "the mainspring of his life was his communion with God, and in such communion he found both strength and guidance to avoid submitting to temptation.” And one temptation in context would be to yield to the affirmation by the crowds, the "idol" of popularity. Recall that Luke 4:22-note had recorded that "**all were speaking well of Him.**" (See The Gospel of Luke)

Spurgeon - The tense of the verb implies that he often did this; it was his habit to withdraw himself for private prayer even in his busiest times, and when he could occupy every minute with great advantage to the people. Thus he gathered new strength from above for each day's work; and when there was most to be done, then he took most time to pray. It is an evil economy that tries to take time for other things that should be spent in prayer, for the shortening of prayer will be the weakening of our power. (Luke - exposition)

Spurgeon - Just when there were such grand opportunities of doing good, just when everybody sought him, does be get right away from them into the wilderness to pray? Yes, because he felt what we ought to feel but often do not, that he needed fresh power, that as the servant of God he must wait upon God for fresh power for his great life-work: "He withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed." No doubt it was the constant habit of Christ to pray, but there were certain special times when he retired into lonely places, and his prayer was peculiarly fervent and prolonged. That is just what you and I would probably not have done under such circumstances. We should have said, "We must seize this golden opportunity of publishing our message. There is a tide in the affairs of men which, taken at the flood, leads on to plenitude of blessing; and we must take advantage of it." But our Saviour did not wish for fame, he cared nothing about excitement and popularity; so "he withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed" for more of that real power which touches the hearts of men so as to save them, caring nothing for that power which merely attracts a crowd, and excites momentary attention. O servant of God, when thou art succeeding best in thy service, imitate thy Lord, withdraw thyself and pray! (Luke - exposition)

The wilderness (eremos) **and pray** (proseuchomai in present tense - continually) - To me this is somewhat of a paradoxical statement. Jesus may have been physically in a "**wilderness**" but He was spiritually in Heaven, in the Throne Room of His Father, in intimate communion with Him, which makes any **wilderness** a place of worship! Indeed, Jesus' gives us a clear example showing that we can talk with our Father anytime, anywhere. This begs the question, what "wilderness" are you in or going through or just coming out of? It matters not how "desolate" humanly speaking, for in fact when distractions are decreased, we can focus more fully on our Father's love for us!

Slip away (5298)(**hupochoreo** from **hupo** = under + **choreo** = to have place) means to give place secretly, to withdraw without noise or notice. The present tense indicates this was Jesus practice to continually slip away to pray.

Wilderness (2048) (**eremos**) means lonesome, solitary, wilderness = uninhabited, lonely, uncultivated region translated "wilderness" 32x in the KJV.

Pray (4336)(**proseuchomai** from **pros** = toward, facing, before [emphasizing the direct approach of the one who prays in seeking God's face] + **euchomai** = originally to speak out, utter aloud, express a wish, then to pray or to vow. Greek technical term for invoking a deity) in the NT is always used of prayer addressed to God (to Him as the object of faith and the One who will answer one's prayer) and means to speak consciously (with or without vocalization) to Him, with a definite aim (See study of noun **proseuche**). **Proseuchomai** is in the present tense indicating Jesus made a habit of frequently communing in solitude with His Father and so should we.

> **Uses of Proseuchomai in Luke and Acts** - Lk. 1:10; Lk. 3:21; Lk. 5:16; Lk. 6:12; Lk. 6:28; Lk. 9:18; Lk. 9:28; Lk. 9:29; Lk. 11:1; Lk. 11:2; Lk. 18:1; Lk. 18:10; Lk. 18:11; Lk. 20:47; Lk. 22:40; Lk. 22:41; Lk. 22:44; Lk. 22:46; Acts 1:24; Acts 6:6; Acts 8:15; Acts 9:11; Acts 9:40; Acts 10:9; Acts 10:30; Acts 11:5; Acts 12:12; Acts 13:3; Acts 14:23; Acts 16:25; Acts 20:36; Acts 21:5; Acts 22:17; Acts 28:8

Mattoon - Every Christian needs to withdraw himself from the hustle and bustle of the affairs of this life and get alone with God in prayer and time in His Word. If you feel you don't have time to do this, then make time. Everyone of us has 24 hours in day. You choose what you want to do. Make time for the Lord. The strength you receive from Him today may help you to endure life's trials tomorrow.

When Howard Rutledge's plane was shot down over Vietnam, he parachuted into a little village and was immediately attacked, stripped naked, and imprisoned. For the next seven years, he endured brutal treatment. His food was little more than a bowl of rotting soup with a glob of pig fat—skin, hair, and all. Rats, the size of cats and spiders as big as fists, scurried around him. He was frequently cold, alone, and often tortured. He was sometimes shackled in excruciating positions and left for days in his own waste with carnivorous insects boring through his oozing sores. How did he keep his sanity? Here is what he said: It took prison to show me how empty life is without God, and so I had to go back in my memory to those Sunday school days in Tulsa, Oklahoma. If I couldn't have a Bible and hymnbook, I would try to rebuild them in my mind. I tried desperately to recall snatches of Scripture, sermons, gospel choruses from childhood, and hymns we sang in church. How I struggled to recall those Scriptures and hymns! I had spent my first eighteen years in Sunday school, and I was amazed at how much I could recall; regrettably, I had not seen then the importance of memorizing verses from the Bible. Now, when I needed them, it was too late. I never dreamed that I would spend almost seven years in a prison in North Vietnam or that thinking about one memorized verse could have made the whole day

bearable. One portion of a verse I did remember was, "Thy word have I hid in my heart." How often I wished I had really worked to hide God's Word in my heart....Beloved, spend time with God and develop a fierce faith in Him! (Mattoon - Treasures from the Scriptures)

Sledding And Praying

Read: Mark 14:32-42 | Luke 5:16

> Now it came to pass in those days that [Jesus] went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. —Luke 6:12

When the snow flies in Michigan, I like to get my grandkids, grab our plastic sleds, and go slipping and sliding down our backyard. We zoom down the hill for about 10 seconds, and then climb back up for more.

When I travel to Alaska with a bunch of teenagers, we also go sledding. We are hauled by bus nearly to the top of a mountain. We jump on our sleds and, for the next 10 to 20 minutes (depending on levels of bravery), we slide at breakneck speeds down the mountain, holding on for dear life.

Ten seconds in my backyard or 10 minutes down an Alaskan mountain. They're both called sledding, but there is clearly a difference.

I've been thinking about this in regard to prayer. Sometimes we do the "10 seconds in the backyard" kind of praying—a quick, spur-of-the-moment prayer or a short thanks before eating. At other times, we're drawn to "down the mountain" praying—extended, intense times that require concentration and passion in our relationship with Him. Both have their place and are vital to our lives.

Jesus prayed often, and sometimes for a long time (Luke 6:12; Mark 14:32-42). Either way, let us bring the desires of our heart to the God of the backyards and the mountains of our lives. By Dave Branon (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

Lord, please challenge us to pray constantly—both in short sessions and long. As we face the valleys, hills, and mountains of our lives, may we lift our hearts and minds to You in constant communication.

The heart of prayer is prayer from the heart.

INSIGHT: Prayer was the essence of Jesus' relationship with the Father. He often withdrew to a solitary place to pray (Mark 1:35; Luke 5:16; 9:18). Sometimes He spent long hours communicating with His Father (Luke 6:12; John 17) and other times He prayed short, quick prayers (Matt. 14:19; Luke 23:34,46; John 12:27).

Max Lucado - A Cleared Calendar

Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.LUKE 5:16 NIV

How long has it been since you let God have you?

I mean really have you? How long since you gave him a portion of undiluted, uninterrupted time listening for his voice? Apparently, Jesus did. He made a deliberate effort to spend time with God.

Spend much time reading about the listening life of Jesus and a distinct pattern emerges. He spent regular time with God, praying and listening. Mark says, "Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed" (Mark 1:35 NIV)….

Let me ask the obvious. If Jesus, the Son of God, the sinless Savior of humankind, thought it worthwhile to clear his calendar to pray, wouldn't we be wise to do the same?

Henry Blackaby - Jesus' Secret to His Success

> But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.Luke 5:16

People were always trying to figure out where Jesus' power came from. Some attributed it to the work of Satan. Others explained his miracles as simply illusions. Jesus made no secret about where his power came from. It came from his Father. That's why it was vital that Jesus spend lots of time in prayer, seeking his Father's will.

Many of us have difficulty establishing a daily habit of spending time with God. The problem is cramming one more thing into our

already packed days. We lead busy lives, and there are a lot of demands on our time. It's not always easy finding a private place either, especially if we live with other people, or we have young children. And then there's the phone. . . .

Let's take a closer look at Jesus' life. It wasn't as though he had lots of extra time on his hands. Jesus was an extremely busy man! The more news spread that he could heal the sick and feed the hungry, the less privacy he had. Everywhere he went, there were crowds. People who were afraid to be seen with him would search him out late at night for private conferences. Jesus had to work hard just to be alone. In order to spend time with his Father, he had to get up unusually early and sneak away from the crowds to find a quiet place. If Jesus, the Son of God, needed time with his Father in order to live the victorious Christian life, why would we ever think we could do it alone?

Something I Should Know?

Read: Matthew 14:22–36 | Luke 5:16

> He went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. Matthew 14:23

During a concert, singer-songwriter David Wilcox responded to a question from the audience about how he composes songs. He said there are three aspects to his process: a quiet room, an empty page, and the question, "Is there something I should know?" It struck me as a wonderful approach for followers of Jesus as we seek the Lord's plan for our lives each day.

Throughout Jesus's public ministry, He took time to be alone in prayer. After feeding 5,000 people with five loaves of bread and two fish, He sent His disciples to cross the Sea of Galilee by boat while He dismissed the crowd (Matt. 14:22). "After [Jesus] had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. Later that night, he was there alone" (v. 23).

Lord, speak to me by Your Spirit and Your written Word

If the Lord Jesus saw the need to be alone with His Father, how much more do we need a daily time of solitude to pour out our hearts to God, ponder His Word, and prepare to follow His directions. A quiet room—anywhere we can focus on the Lord without distractions. An empty page—a receptive mind, a blank sheet of paper, a willingness to listen. Is there something I should know? "Lord, speak to me by Your Spirit, Your written Word, and the assurance of Your direction."

From that quiet hillside, Jesus descended into a violent storm, knowing exactly what His Father wanted Him to do (vv. 24–27). By David McCasland (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

Taking time to be with God is the best place to find strength.

INSIGHT: Prayer was the essence of Jesus's relationship with the Father. He often withdrew to a solitary place to pray (Mark 1:35; Luke 5:16; 9:18). Sometimes He spent long hours communicating with His Father (Luke 6:12; John 17) and other times He prayed short, quick prayers (Matt. 14:19; Luke 23:34,46; John 12:27).

Becoming Useful

Read: John 5:19-23 | Luke 5:15-16

> The Son can do nothing of Himself. —John 5:19

Jesus was fully God, yet He was fully man. As a man, His power, wisdom, and grace flowed not from His divine nature but from His utter dependence on God. "The Son can do nothing of Himself," He said (John 5:19). How much did Jesus do apart from God? Nothing!

Jesus always depended on His Father. Luke reports that as news of Jesus' ministry spread, "Great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by Him of their infirmities. So He Himself often withdrew into the wilderness and prayed" (Luke 5:15-16). He knew He needed those quiet times to restore His soul.

What's done in secret is what matters. It's during those quiet times that we, like Jesus, are shaped and molded and made into people that God can put to His intended use.

"But," you say, "I'm in a place where I can't be useful." Perhaps you feel that circumstances limit you drastically. Illness, financial problems, a difficult boss or co-worker, or an uncooperative family member seem to conspire against you. Whatever your situation, use it to grow closer to the Savior.

Learn to have utter dependence on the Father, just as Jesus did. Leave it up to God to make you useful in whatever way He sees fit.

By David Roper (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

O that my life may useful be
As I serve Jesus faithfully;
And may the world see Christ in me—
This is my earnest prayer. —Hess

The measure of your usefulness is the measure of your faithfulness.

Solitude and Service - Luke 5:16

Read: Luke 9:1-2,10-17

He welcomed them and spoke to them about the kingdom of God, and healed those who needed healing. Luke 9:11

Comedian Fred Allen said, "A celebrity is a person who works hard all his life to become well-known, then wears dark glasses to avoid being recognized." Fame often brings loss of privacy along with a relentless frenzy of attention.

When Jesus began His public ministry of teaching and healing, He was catapulted into the public eye and thronged by people seeking help. Crowds followed Him wherever He went. But Jesus knew that having regular time alone with God was essential to maintaining strength and perspective.

Jesus balanced service and solitude by taking time for rest and prayer with His Father.

After Jesus' twelve disciples returned from their successful mission "to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal the sick," He took them to a quiet place to rest (Luke 9:2,10). Soon, however, crowds of people found them and Jesus welcomed them. He "spoke to them about the kingdom of God, and healed those who needed healing" (v. 11). Instead of sending them away to find food, the Lord provided an outdoor picnic for 5,000! (Lk 9:12-17).

Jesus was not immune to the pressure of curious and hurting people, but He maintained the balance of public service and private solitude by taking time for rest and for prayer alone with His Father (Luke 5:16).

May we follow our Lord's example as we serve others in His name.

Dear Father, as Jesus Your Son and our Savior honored You in solitude and service to others, may we follow His example in our lives.

Turning down the volume of life allows you to listen to God.

INSIGHT:The miracle of the feeding of the multitude is recorded in all four gospels (see Matt. 14:13–21; Mark 6:30–44; Luke 9:10–17; John 6:1–15). Each account provides specific details to help complete the story. Matthew tells us that the crowd numbered 5,000 men plus women and children. Mark tells us that the people sat in groups of 50 and 100. Luke informs us that this event is connected to the disciples' report of their outreach trip. John's account tells us that the food came from a young boy's lunch.

By David McCasland (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

Jesus' Prayer Patterns

Read: Luke 5:12-16

He Himself often withdrew into the wilderness and prayed. —Luke 5:16

Communication is vital to any relationship: parent and child, husband and wife, employer and employee, coach and athlete. And most important—God and those who love Him.

During His time on earth, Jesus showed us the importance of communication. The Gospels tell us of nearly 20 occasions when He prayed to His heavenly Father. He prayed in different circumstances: at His baptism (Lk. 3:21), during brief rests from ministry (Lk. 6:12), before raising Lazarus (Jn. 11:41). And He prayed for different things: for guidance (Lk. 6:12-13), to express His desire to do His Father's will (Mt. 26:39), to give thanks for food (Jn. 6:11).

Jesus was a prayer warrior. Here was God Himself in the person of the Son—the One in whom all the power of the universe dwelt. Yet He turned to God the Father in prayer. As hard as that may be to understand, its lesson for us is easy to grasp: If Jesus needed to communicate with God to accomplish His mission, how much more do we need to pray!

Think of what you have to face today. If it is your habit to ask, “What would Jesus do?” you can be sure from His example that He would pray first. Let’s make that our pattern too. By Dave Branon (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

As we attempt to live like Christ
In action, word, and deed,
We'll follow His design for life
And pray for every need. —JDB

Pray first!

“Seeing Strange Things” Luke 5:16–26
INTRODUCTION:

1. Jesus had just given a great lesson in soul winning—Luke 5:4–11
2. Later in one city He heals a man full of leprosy—Luke 5:12–14
3. Jesus withdraws to prayer—Luke 5:16

THREE STRANGE THINGS HAPPENED THAT DAY:

I. IT WAS STRANGE TO SEE THE EDUCATED SEEK THE UNEDUCATED—Luke 5:17

1. Jesus was in Capernaum in His own house—Matt. 9:1–8 (his own city) Mk. 2:1—“in the house” (at home)
2. Jesus had no formal education—Jn. 7:15; Matt. 13:54–58; Mk. 6:2–3
3. But the power of God was upon Him—Luke 5:17; Isa. 61:1–3

II. IT WAS STRANGE TO SEE FOUR MEN SO CONCERNED—Luke 5:18–20

1. They believed Jesus could help the man—Luke 5:19–20
2. They did not let others stop them—Luke 5:19
3. They spared no cost to get the man to Jesus—Luke 5:19

III. IT WAS STRANGE TO SEE A MAN READING OTHER’S MINDS—Luke 5:21–26

1. Jesus knew the thinking of their hearts—Luke 5:21–22; Ps. 139:1–6
2. Jesus confused their thinking—Luke 5:23–24. Which is easier? Thy sins be forgiven—Rise up and walk—
3. Jesus heals the man and tells him to go home—Luke 5:24 (Golden Nuggets)

A Strange Meeting By: Sherman Harper Luke 5:17–26
I. THE PREACHING WAS STRANGE—Mark 2:2
He (Christ) preached the Word.

1. Personal
2. Pointed
3. Prophetic

II. THE POWER WAS STRANGE—Luke 5:17

1. Miraculous
2. Manifested
3. Marvelous

III. THE PERSONAL WORK WAS STRANGE—Luke 5:18–19

1. Difficult
2. Dangerous
3. Determinate

IV. THE PARDON WAS STRANGE—Luke 5:20

1. The curse removed
2. The cure perfected
3. The crime forgiven

V. THE PARALYTIC HEALING WAS STRANGE—Luke 5:24–26

1. Came in a sinner; went out saved
2. Came in on a bed; went out with bed on him
3. Came shaking; went out shouting

Luke 5:17 One day He was teaching; and there were some Pharisees and teachers of the law sitting there, who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem; and the power of the Lord was present for Him to perform healing.

KJV And it came to pass on a certain day, as he was teaching, that there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, which were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judaea, and Jerusalem: and the power of the Lord was present to heal them.

YLT And it came to pass, on one of the days, that he was teaching, and there were sitting by Pharisees and teachers of the Law, who were come out of every village of Galilee, and Judea, and Jerusalem, and the power of the Lord was -- to heal them.

NET Now on one of those days, while he was teaching, there were Pharisees and teachers of the law sitting nearby (who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem), and the power of the Lord was with him to heal.

- **there were some Pharisees and teachers of the law**: Lu 5:21,30 7:30 11:52-54 15:2 Joh 3:21
- **from Jerusalem**: Mt 15:1 Mk 3:22 7:1
- **the power of the Lord was present** Lu 6:19 Lk 8:46 Mt 11:5 Mk 16:18 Ac 4:30 Acts 19:11
- J C Ryle's Comments on Luke 5 - clear, devout, and accurate
- Luke 5:17-26 The Return to Capernaum - Concerning the Forgiveness of Sins - the Healing of the Paralyzed - Alfred Edersheim
- Luke 5:17-20 A Saving Faith in a Paralyzed Man - John MacArthur
- Luke 5:17-26 - Helping Our Friends Find Forgiveness - Steven Cole
- Multiple Sermons - older
- Luke 5 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Matthew 9:1-8+ Getting into a boat, Jesus crossed over the sea and came to His own city. 2 And they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed. **Seeing their faith, Jesus said to the paralytic, "Take courage, son; your sins are forgiven."** 3 And some of the scribes said to themselves, "This fellow blasphemes." 4 And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, "Why are you thinking evil in your hearts? 5 "Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up, and walk'? 6 "But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"–then He said to the paralytic, "Get up, pick up your bed and go home." 7 And he got up and went home. 8 But when the crowds saw this, they were awestruck, and glorified God, who had given such authority to men.

Mark 2:1-12+ When He had come back to Capernaum several days afterward, it was heard that He was at home. 2 And many were gathered together, so that there was no longer room, not even near the door; and **He was speaking** (imperfect tense - over and over) **the word** (logos) **to them**. 3 And they came, bringing to Him a paralytic, carried by four men. 4 Being unable to get to Him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above Him; and when they had dug an opening, they let down the pallet on which the paralytic was lying. 5 And **Jesus seeing their faith said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven."** 6 But some of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts, 7 "Why does this man speak that way? He is blaspheming; who can forgive sins but God alone?" (GREAT QUESTION - SADLY THEY MISSED THE CORRECT ANSWER THAT JESUS WAS GOD!) 8 Immediately (NOTE THIS TIME PHRASE!) Jesus, aware in His spirit that they were reasoning that way within themselves (JESUS "READ" THEIR MINDS!), said to them, "Why are you reasoning about these things in your hearts? 9 "Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven'; or to say, 'Get up, and pick up your pallet and walk'? 10 "But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"(BY IMPLICATION JESUS IS SHOWING THAT HE IS INDEED GOD)–He said to the paralytic, 11 "I say to you, get up, pick up your pallet and go home." 12 And he got up and immediately (NOTE THIS TIME PHRASE - JESUS HEALING IS IMMEDIATE!) picked up the pallet and went out in the sight of everyone (INCLUDING THE PHARISEES AND TEACHERS), so that they were all amazed and were glorifying God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this."

Click Aerial View of Capernaum Note Labels

JESUS TEACHES AND GIVES OBJECT LESSON

Hendriksen sums up this section - We have distributed the material contained in Luke 5:17–26 under the following five subheadings: a battle is brewing (between Jesus and his opponents), a challenge is flung (by Jesus, before his opponents), an attack is made (by the opponents), a victory is won (by Jesus), and a triumph is celebrated (by the onlookers). We believe that such a treatment is true to the meaning and purpose of the account, and preserves its unity. (Borrow Baker NT Commentary: Luke)

Barclay commenting on Lk 5:16,17 - THERE are only two verses here; but as we read them we must pause, for this indeed is a milestone. The scribes and the Pharisees had arrived on the scene. The opposition which would never be satisfied until it had killed Jesus had emerged into the open. (Luke 5)

One day He was teaching - Literally "And it happened on one day." Most translations omit "**and it happened"** (kai egeneto), which is a common introductory phrase in Luke's writings frequently introducing a new event. **Kai egeneto** is found in Lk. 1:23,41,59,65; 2:15,46; 4:36; 5:12,17; 6:49; 7:11; 8:1,24; 9:18,29,33; 11:1; 13:19; 14:1; 17:11,14; 19:15,29; 20:1; 22:44; 24:4,15,30,51; Acts 2:2; 5:5,11; 7:29; 10:13; 21:30). Mark 2:1 tells us the place of this event is **Capernaum** (see picture above) and some think it was Peter's house which is likely but this is not stated definitively.

Was teaching (didasko in imperfect tense - over and over) (Mk 2:2+ has "He was speaking the word to them") Mark says "**speaking the word**" clearly the Word of God! This was Jesus' focus - to teach with others seated around. Note the irony! The Master Teacher teaching the religious teachers, the **Pharisees and teachers of the law sitting**. Can you imagine what they were thinking as those Spirit empowered (cf Lk 4:14, 15-note) gracious words fell from Jesus' lips! **Vincent** on **he was teaching** - The pronoun has a slightly emphatic force: ***he*** as distinguished from the Pharisees and teachers of the law.

There were some Pharisees and teachers of the law (nomodidaskalos **-** KJV = "doctors of the law") **sitting there** - This is Luke's first mention of the **Pharisees**, indicating that organized religion was beginning to take note of this person named "Jesus!" These "religious" attendees are not mentioned in the parallel accounts in Matthew or Mark (see above). Where is **there**? He had returned by boat (Mt 9:1) to "Capernaum ("**His own city**" - Mt 9:1) several days afterward (after healing the leper - Mk 1:40-45+, Lk 5:12-16), it was heard that He was at home." (Mk 2:1+) So Jesus is back at "home base" and presumably the home was that of Peter. His popularity was at a fever pitch, so to speak!

Hendriksen says the **Pharisees** "separated themselves not only from ceremonial impurity, from the heathen, publicans and "sinners," but even in a sense from the indifferent Jewish multitudes, whom they derisively dubbed "the people who do not know the law" (John 7:49)." (Borrow Baker NT Commentary: Luke)

Who had come from every village - This refers to these religious leaders. The news about Jesus had spread to such an extent that it was causing concern with the Pharisees and scribes all over Palestine! And all that "viral spread" without Facebook post or a youtube video of His miracles! Lk 5:15 said "the news about Him was spreading even farther" and the mention of Galilee, Judea and Jerusalem means that by now Jesus was "national news," even without the news media!

The **Scribes** are frequently mentioned in Luke with the Pharisees (Lk 5:21, 30; 6:7; 11:53; 15:2) or the chief priests (Lk 9:22; 19:47; 20:1, 19; 22:2, 66; 23:10).

Who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem - Jesus was in the Galilee (Capernaum) but WORD HAD SPREAD far and wide and they were even coming from Jerusalem to check Him out!

Vincent - The Rabbinical writers divided Judea proper into three parts—mountain, sea-shore, and valley—Jerusalem being regarded as a separate district. "Only one intimately acquainted with the state of matters at the time, would, with the Rabbis, have distinguished Jerusalem as a district separate from all the rest of Judea, as Luke markedly does on several occasions (Acts 1:8; 10:39)"

MacArthur notes that Jesus' "first act in His Judean ministry had been to disrupt the Sadducees' temple business operations by driving out the money changers and merchants (John 2:14–16). They, along with the Pharisees, had watched in growing alarm (and jealousy; cf. Matt. 27:18) as His ministry of teaching and healing had drawn huge crowds, both in Judea and in Galilee (cf. Lk 5:15). Now they dogged His steps, looking for something for which they could indict Him. The incident that was about to unfold would provide these hostile visitors with an unforgettable, undeniable (cf. John 11:47) experience—and a formidable challenge to their aberrant theology.(See Commentary)

JESUS AND THE POWER TO PERFORM HEALING

The power (dunamis) **of the Lord** (kurios) **was present for Him to perform healing** (iaomai) - Jesus was continually filled with the Spirit, so supernatural power was continually available to Him (cf Acts 10:38+). So why make this statement if His power was always available? Note who was sitting there - **Pharisees and teachers**. The **power** was there but faith was not necessarily present. As Matthew said (speaking of Jesus' return to His hometown of Nazareth which saw Him perform no miracles or at least a paucity of miracles) "He did not do many miracles there because of their **unbelief**." (Mt 13:58, cf Lk 4:25-29+) The reason He did not do many miracles in Nazareth was not a **paucity of power** but a **paucity of faith**!

John MacArthur on **the power of the Lord was present** - In his sermon the The Messiah's Divine Confirmation, Part 1, **John MacArthur** reminds of an important truth about Jesus' earthly life that many saints often overlook - "One of the amazing elements of the life of Christ was that when He became incarnate and came into the world and started His ministry, He set aside,the independent use of His divine attributes. He didn't cease to be God, He didn't stop being what He was, He just set aside any independent use of His own attributes and **He yielded Himself to the power of the Holy Spirit.**" In Part 2 MacArthur goes into greater detail about the incredible working of the Holy Spirit in the life of the God-Man Jesus - see excerpt below.

Robertson on **power...present...to perform healing** - What Luke means is that Jesus had **the power of the Lord** God to heal. He does not mean that this power was intermittent. He simply calls attention to its presence with Jesus on this occasion.

Robert Stein - This comment clearly reveals Luke's theological emphasis of the Spirit's coming upon Jesus (cf. Lk 3:21–22; 4:1, 14, 18–21, 36). It prepares the reader for the miracle of healing that is to follow. (See Luke: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition)

Darrell Bock on **power...present...to perform healing** - What Jesus is about to do is in conjunction with God's power working through him (Luke 4:14, 36; 6:19; 8:46; Acts 10:38; Grundmann, TDNT 2:301; Danker 1988: 120; Plummer 1896: 152). It may be one teacher versus several religious authorities, but God is working through the teacher, who is also a healer. Jesus is teaching. The Pharisees are present. Jesus is ready to heal and make great claims in the process. (See Luke : 2 Volumes (Baker Exegetical Commentary)

- **For more on Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit see the commentary on** Luke 4:1-note and Luke 4:14-note.

MacArthur on **the power...present** - Luke's note that **the power of the Lord was present** for Jesus to perform healing reminds his readers of a truth that he had mentioned earlier. In His incarnation, when He "emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant" (Phil. 2:7), Jesus set aside the independent use of His divine power. He ministered in submission to the Father, and in the power of the Holy Spirit...A way to understand this empowerment is to consider that the Son "emptied Himself" (Phil. 2:7) of the personal prerogative in the use of His divine attributes and allowed Himself to submit to the will of the Father and the power of the Spirit. In effect, the Spirit mediated between our Lord's divine and human natures. Beginning with His miraculous conception (Luke 1:35; cf. Matt. 1:18, 20), the Spirit was involved in every aspect of Christ's life (cf. Luke 4:1, 14; 10:21; Matt. 4:1; 12:28; Acts 10:38; Heb. 9:14). (See Luke Commentary)

Spurgeon - These were the least hopeful patients that the great Physician ever had; for to heal these doctors of divinity, and to bring these proud learned Pharisees down to accept the gospel, needed an omnipotent display of divine power. Penitent sinners are readily brought to Christ; but, often, the self-righteous, who think they are rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing, are not to be persuaded to accept the fine gold which Christ presents to all who ask him for it. The Lord grant that, if any such people be here, the power of the Lord may be here to heal them! (Luke - exposition)

If the Son of God depended on the Spirit of God during his earthly ministry, how much more do we need to depend upon the Spirit?

Kent Hughes - That **power** was unleashed by the love, conviction, and faith of the paralytic's four friends. We must love those around us so much that we will tear through roofs for their sake. We must have the conviction that Jesus is the only way. We must believe that he can and will heal those who come to him. To those longing to be healed, do you believe Jesus is the only way? Do you believe he can and will heal you? (ED: THE HEALING HUGHES IS REFERRING TO IS NOT PHYSICAL BUT SPIRITUAL FOR

THAT IS OUR GREATEST NEED!) If so, hear Jesus' words now: "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me" (John 14:6). (See Luke: That You May Know the Truth)

Spurgeon on **the power of the Lord was present for Him to perform healing** - Not the Pharisees and doctors of the law; they do not often get healed by Christ, but "**the power of the Lord was present** to heal the multitude." The only people for whom there seems to be no power to heal are these Pharisees and doctors, as will appear by the following narrative. (Luke - exposition)

Spurgeon on the Lk 5:17KJV translation **to heal them** - The word "***them***" scarcely gives the right sense of the original; it should be, "**the power of the Lord was present to heal.**" Jesus did not heal the Pharisees and doctors of the law, but he healed many of the congregation. Now, how do you account for this power present to heal? Why, by that wilderness prayer: "He withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed," (Lk 5:16) and afterward, in a very high and remarkable manner, "the power of the Lord was present to heal." And when the power to heal was present, the patient to be healed was very soon present, too. (Luke - exposition)(**Ed**: While I dare not disagree with Spurgeon, I do think the power was always available to Jesus because of His continual filling with the Holy Spirit, the Source of power - cf Acts 10:38, Acts 1:8, et al).

Regarding the **them** in Lk 5:17KJV most modern manuscripts have the pronoun (autos - last word in this Greek sentence) as masculine singular which would refer to Jesus (translated "for Him to heal") whereas the Greek manuscript used for the KJV has the pronoun autos as masculine plural which would refer to the pharisees and teachers.

Pharisees (5330)(**pharisaios**) is transliterated from the Hebrew **parash** (06567 - to separate) from Aramaic word **peras** (06537) ("Peres" in Da 5:28-note), signifying to separate, owing to a different manner of life from that of the general public. After the resettling of the Jewish people in Judea on their return from the Babylonian captivity, there were two religious groups among them. One party contented themselves with following only what was written in the Law of Moses. These were called **Zadikim**, the righteous. The other group added the constitutions and traditions of the elders, as well as other rigorous observances, to the Law and voluntarily complied with them. They were called **Chasidim** or the pious. From the Zadikim the sects of the Sadducees and Karaites were derived. From the Chasidim were derived the Pharisees and the Essenes. In I Mac2:42, among the persons who joined Mattathias against Antiochus IV (Epiphanes), about 167 b.c., are named the Asideans (Asidaíoi), who are described as voluntarily devoted to the law. The Asideans are mentioned also in I Mac 7:13; II Mac14:6. In the time of our Lord, the Pharisees were the separatists of their day, as well as the principal sect among the Jews. The Pharisees considered themselves much holier than the common people (Lu 18:11, 12). They wore special garments to distinguish themselves from others. PRINCIPLE TENETS OF PHARISEES: In opposition to those of the Sadducees, and the former group maintained the existence of angels and spirits and the doctrine of the resurrection (Acts 23:8), which the latter party denied (Mt 22:23; Mk 12:18; Lu 20:27). The Pharisees made everything dependent upon God and fate (Josephus, The Jewish Wars, ii.8.14). However, they did not deny the role of the human will in affecting events (Josephus, Antiquities, xviii.1.3). ZEAL FOR TRADITION: The Pharisees distinguished themselves with their zeal for the traditions of the elders, which they taught was derived from the same fountain as the written Word itself, claiming both to have been delivered to Moses on Mount Sinai (Mt 15:1-6; Mk 7:3-5). See also parádosis (3862), tradition, and éntalma (1778), a religious precept versus entole (1785), commandment. (See more detailed notes from William Barclay)

> **Robert Stein** - The Pharisees were the most influential of the three major Jewish sects (the other two being theSadducees and the Essenes). We first read of them in the second century B.C. (seeJosephus Antiquities 13.10.5–6 [13.288–98]). In contrast to the Sadducees, the Pharisees believed in the resurrection, the existence of angels and demons (Lk 20:27; Acts 23:6–9), predestination as well as free will, and the validity of both the written and the oral law. Politically they were more conservative than the Sadducees, but religiously they were more liberal due to their acceptance of the oral law. (New American Commentary)
>
> **ESV Study Bible** on **pharisees** - A relatively small but highly influential group of Jews who emphasized meticulous observance of God's law (as understood both from the OT laws and from their accumulated extrabiblical traditions) as the means by which one attains righteousness before God and retains his favor. Many Pharisees opposed Jesus (see Mt. 23:1–36, where Jesus condemns their hypocrisy), but some followed him (John 3:1–5; 7:50; 19:38–40; cf. Acts 23:6; Phil. 3:5)....A laymen's fellowship, popular with the common people and connected to local synagogues, chiefly characterized by adherence to extensive extra-biblical traditions, which they rigorously obeyed as a means of applying the law to daily life.
>
> **John MacArthur** - The **Pharisees** originated during the intertestamental period, likely as an offshoot of the Hasidim (the "pious ones," who opposed the Hellenizing of Jewish culture under the notoriously evil Seleucid king Antiochus Epiphanes). Unlike the Sadducees, who tended to be wealthy priests or Levites, the Pharisees generally came from the middle class. Therefore, although few in number (there were about 6,000 at the time of Herod the Great, according to the first-century Jewish historian Josephus [**Ed**: Josephus, Ant. 17.2.4]), their theology and tradition had great influence with the common people (who, ironically, the Pharisees often viewed with proud, self-righteous contempt [cf. John 7:49]). Despite being the minority party in the Sanhedrin, their popularity with the people gave them significant influence (cf. Acts 5:34–40). With the disappearance of the Sadducees after the destruction of the temple in A.D. 70 and the Zealots after the Bar Kochba revolt (A.D. 132–35) was

crushed, the Pharisees became the dominant force in Judaism. With the completion of the Mishnah (the written compilation of the oral law, rituals, and traditions) in about A.D. 200, and the Talmud (the combination of the Mishnah and the Gemara [three centuries of the rabbis' commentary on the Mishnah]) in about A.D. 500, the Pharisees' teaching became virtually synonymous with Judaism. The Pharisees' theology was in many respects faithful to the teaching of Scripture. They believed in the resurrection (Acts 23:6–8), angels (Acts 23:8), demons, predestination, and human responsibility. They looked for Messiah to come and establish an earthly kingdom, and were devoted to protecting and teaching the law of God. **Ironically, it was their zeal for the law that caused the Pharisees to become focused on rituals and externally keeping the law. They abandoned true religion of the heart for mere outward behavior modification and ritual** (cf. Mt. 15:3–6), leading Jesus to scathingly denounce their pseudospirituality: "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cummin, and have neglected the weightier provisions of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness; but these are the things you should have done without neglecting the others" (Mt. 23:23; cf. 6:1–5; 9:14; 12:2; Luke 11:38–39). Even worse, the wide gap between their teaching and their practice led to gross hypocrisy, which both Jesus (e.g., Mt. 23:2–3) and, surprisingly, the Talmud (which lists seven classes of Pharisees, six of which are hypocritical) denounced. Despite their zeal for God's law, they were "**blind guides of the blind**" (Mt. 15:14), who made their proselytes doubly worthy of the hell to which they themselves were headed (Mt. 23:15). The complex set of man-made rules and regulations was a crushing, unbearable burden (Mt. 23:4; Acts 15:10). In any case, keeping the law could never save anyone, "because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified" (Ro 3:20; cf. 3:28; Gal. 2:16; 3:11, 24; 5:4)—a truth that the zealous Pharisee Saul of Tarsus eventually realized (Phil 3:4–11). (Luke Commentary)

NET Note on **Pharisees** - Pharisees were members of one of the most important and influential religious and political parties of Judaism in the time of Jesus. There were more Pharisees than Sadducees (according to Josephus, Ant. 17.2.4 there were more than 6,000 Pharisees at this time). Pharisees differed with Sadducees on certain doctrines and patterns of behavior. The Pharisees were strict and zealous adherents to the laws of the OT and to numerous additional traditions such as angels and bodily resurrection.

Bock on **Pharisees** - The **Pharisees** were one of four major religious groups in first-century Judaism—Sadducees, Essenes, and Zealots being the others. The **Pharisees** were a nonpriestly or lay separatist movement whose goal was to keep the nation faithful to Mosaic faith. In order to do this, they had a very developed tradition that gave rulings on how the law applied to a variety of possible situations not addressed directly by Scripture

> **Pharisaios** - 98x in 93v - Pharisaic(1), Pharisee(10), Pharisee's(2), Pharisees(86). Not found in the Septuagint. Matt. 3:7; 5:20; 9:11,14,34; 12:2,14,24,38; 15:1,12; 16:1,6,11-12; 19:3; 21:45; 22:15,34,41; 23:2,13,15,23,25-27,29; 27:62; Mk. 2:16,18,24; 3:6; 7:1,3,5; 8:11,15; 10:2; 12:13; Lk. 5:17,21,30,33; 6:2,7; 7:30,36-37,39; 11:37-39,42-43,53; 12:1; 13:31; 14:1,3; 15:2; 16:14; 17:20; 18:10-11; 19:39; Jn. 1:24; 3:1; 4:1; 7:32,45,47-48; 8:3,13; 9:13,15-16,40; 11:46-47,57; 12:19,42; 18:3; Acts 5:34; 15:5; 23:6-9; 26:5; Phil. 3:5

Related Resources:

- Who were the Sadducees and the Pharisees?
- What was the Sanhedrin?
- Pharisees in Wikipedia
- Who were the scribes that often argued with Jesus?
- Why did Jesus rebuke the scribes and Pharisees so harshly in Matthew 23:13–36?
- Nave Topical Bible Pharisees
- Bridgeway Bible Dictionary Pharisees
- Baker Evangelical Dictionary Pharisees
- Charles Buck Dictionary Pharisees
- CARM Theological Dictionary Pharisee
- Easton's Bible Dictionary Pharisees
- Fausset Bible Dictionary Pharisees
- Holman Bible Dictionary Pharisees
- Hitchcock Bible Names Pharisees
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible Pharisees
- Hastings' Dictionary of the NT Pharisees Pharisees (2)
- King James Dictionary Pharisee
- Morrish Bible Dictionary Pharisees
- Hawker's Poor Man's Dictionary Pharisee
- Vines' Expository Dictionary Pharisees

- Whyte's Bible Characters The pharisee
- Wilson's Bible Types Pharisee
- Webster Dictionary Phariseeism Pharisee
- Watson's Theological Dictionary Pharisees
- 1911 Encyclopedia Britannica Pharisees
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia Pharisees
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopedia Pharisees
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia Pharisee
- The Nuttall Encyclopedia Pharisees
- The Jewish Encyclopedia Pharisees

Teachers of the Law (3547)(**nomodidaskalos** from **nomos** = law + **didaskalos** = teacher) literally meant a teacher of the Jewish law. The nomodidaskalos is equal to **lawyers** (nomikós 3544), and **scribes** (grammateús), the very term Luke uses to describe these men in Lk 5:21 indicating they were interchangeable terms. Used 3 times in Scripture - Lk. 5:17; Acts 5:34 ("Gamaliel, a teacher of the Law"). Paul's use of **nomodidaskalos** in 1 Ti 1:7 describes men who were not concerned about truly learning the law, or knowing God but were corrupting the doctrine of the church by illegitimately using the Law of Moses. In other words they desired the kind of prestige accorded rabbis in Judaism, only they sought this prestige within the church. They were like the Pharisees denounced by Jesus, describing those who desired to be "called Rabbi by men."(Mt 23:7). Bock adds that "They functioned like religious parliamentarians for the sect and were Pharisees themselves. The Pharisees were a strict movement that had little popular appeal, but they held much influence in key places."

> **MacArthur** on **nomodidaskalos**, **teachers of the law.** - Also called lawyers (Lk 7:30; 10:25; 11:45, 46, 52; 14:3; Matt. 22:35) and most commonly scribes (sixty-three times in the New Testament), they were professional scholars specializing in the interpretation and application of the law. They were commonly, but not exclusively, Pharisees (though distinguished from them by being mentioned separately; Lk 5:21, 30; 6:7; 11:53; 15:2; Matt. 5:20; 12:38; 15:1; 23:2, 13, 14, 15, 23, 25, 27, 29; Mark 7:1, 5; John 8:3; Mark 2:16 refers to "the scribes of the Pharisees," and Acts 23:9 to "the scribes of the Pharisaic party"). Such scribes were also honored by being called rabbis ("great ones"), though others who taught the Word of God might also receive that title (cf. John 1:38, 49; 3:2; 6:25, where it is given to Jesus). (Ibid)

Power (1411)(dunamis) means inherent power to accomplish a task and in NT often supernatural power as is clearly the case in this passage because it is specified as the power of the Lord (cf Mt 22:29, Mk 12:24 = "power of God," Lk 4:14 = "power of the Spirit" = "power from on high." in Lk 24:49). A number of the uses of dunamis in the Gospels are translated as miracles - Mt 11:20, 21, 23, 13:54, 13:58, 14:2, Mk 6:2, 5, 14, 9:39, Lk 10:13. In the previous chapter people were saying "with authority and power He commands the unclean spirits, and they come out." (Lk 4:36-note). It is surprising that dunamis is not found in the Gospel of John!

> **Dunamis in Luke and Acts** - Lk. 1:17; Lk. 1:35; Lk. 4:14; Lk. 4:36; Lk. 5:17; Lk. 6:19; Lk. 8:46; Lk. 9:1; Lk. 10:13; Lk. 10:19; Lk. 19:37; Lk. 21:26; Lk. 21:27; Lk. 22:69; Lk. 24:49; Acts 1:8; Acts 2:22; Acts 3:12; Acts 4:7; Acts 4:33; Acts 6:8; Acts 8:10; Acts 8:13; Acts 10:38; Acts 19:11

Perform healing (cure) (2390)(**iaomai**) refers literally to deliverance from physical diseases and afflictions restoring to bodily health. Figuratively, iaomai was used to describe deliverance from sin and restoration to spiritual good health (see below). **Iaomai** refers primarily to physical healing in the NT (although clearly there is overlap because some of these instances involved demonic oppression - Lk 9:42), and less commonly to spiritual healing from the consequences of sin. When used in this latter sense iaomai has much the same meaning as **sozo**, to save, make whole, restore to spiritual health. Here are the uses of **iaomai** used with a spiritual meaning = Mt 13:15, John 12:40, Acts 28:27 - preceding quotes from Isa 6:10, 1Pe 2:24 = quote from Isa 53:5. Most of the NT uses in the Gospels refer to physical healing by Jesus and Luke the physician made frequent use of **iaomai** (15/26x = Lk. 5:17; 6:18-19; 7:7; 8:47; 9:2,11,42; 14:4; 17:15; 22:51 Acts 9:34; 10:38; 28:8,27). The related word **iatros** (Mt 9:12 Mk 2:17 5:26 Lk 4:23, 5:31, 8:43, Col 4:14) is derived from **iaomai** and is actually the word used for "medical doctor" in modern Greece (cf English "iatrogenic" illness or malady caused by or secondary to medical treatment)! In ancient Greece this word group was extended from it's medical use to convey a sense of restoration or to making good. The word **iatros** is also ascribed to several Grecian deities (Here is an interesting background article = **Healing deities, healing cults**).

John MacArthur - The Messiah's Divine Confirmation, Part 2 - Out of His humanity Jesus could not do divine works and He could not say divine words because that's not possible for flesh and blood, for humanity. Humanity, by definition, is natural. And so, Jesus, out of his deity, would not do these things because He had submitted Himself to the Father, because He had set aside the independent use of His divine attributes and out of His humanity He could not do those things (Php 2:6). The question then is: When Jesus did those things and said those things, who was doing it? It was the Holy Spirit acting on His humanity. That is a great distinction to make. It is the Holy Spirit acting on His humanity. Jesus willingly emptied Himself of the independent use of His divine

power to do only what the Father willed and only what the Spirit empowered.

Now that is not to say that Jesus is not God. He is fully God. He chose not to use His divine powers. And He couldn't do what He did, say what He said, from the human side because humanity is flesh and blood. If He would not use His divine power, if He could not use His human power, then by what did He accomplish these things? By the power of the Holy Spirit; this is the wonder of the *kenosis*. This is the wonder of the condescension. When Jesus came down He really did set aside His glory.

He really did. He really did humble Himself. And He operated with the Holy Spirit as a bridge between His deity and His humanity. He chose not as a man to draw on His own powers, but rather yielded to the Father's will and allowed the Holy Spirit to empower Him as a man. It wasn't that He wasn't God, He was. He just willingly chose not to use His deity. It's a wondrous thing to consider, but the life of Jesus was the life of a man who was fully God but who didn't use His divine power; but His human power, His human ability was energized, empowered, guided, controlled by the Holy Spirit.

This is true of His incarnation. It was the Holy Spirit who moved on Mary. I believe this was true of His early childhood when He grew in wisdom and stature and favor with God and man. I think the Holy Spirit was basically the power of His development. I think it was the Holy Spirit who was growing Jesus up. There was no area, I don't think, of the human nature of the divine Son which was not molded and developed and conditioned and guided by the Holy Spirit. It was the Father who sent the Son into the world. It was the Spirit who empowered the Son and assisted Him in every step of His development.

Now if that sounds like something I might have invented, I'm happy to quote John Owen, no less a theologian. And that great seventeenth century Puritan theologian wrote this. If you don't get this statement, don't worry about it, but somewhere on a tape somewhere someone will. John Owen said this, "The only singular, immediate act of the person of the Son on His human nature was the assumption of it into subsistence with Himself," end quote. Did you get it? What Owen was saying there is the only thing that the divine Son did with His human nature was bring it together with Himself, that's all He did. And what Owen is trying to say is after that, everything was the Holy Spirit.

Owen goes on, "The Holy Spirit is the immediate, peculiar, efficient cause of all external, divine operations and hence, He is the immediate operator of all divine acts of the Son Himself, even on His own human nature. Whatever the Son of God wrought in, by, or upon the human nature, He did it by the Holy Spirit." That's a great statement. Whatever the Son of God wrought in, by, or upon the human nature, He did it by the Holy Spirit. So you have the divine nature and He doesn't use it. You have the human nature here empowered by the Holy Spirit so that everything He does, the Spirit does. And, of course, the Spirit's in perfect agreement. I can't explain all the details. Taking you that far is as far as you probably ought to go. That's as far as theologians go.

But the point is this. From His birth...from His conception to His resurrection, everything that goes on in His life, everything, His development, His sinlessness, His triumph over temptation, His perfection, His preaching, teaching, healing, casting out demons, dying on a cross, and rising from the dead is all energized by the Holy Spirit. And I showed you that in Luke 4:1. **Full of the Holy Spirit** He goes into temptation with Satan and is victorious. In Luke 4:14 He goes back to Galilee**in the power of the Spirit**and He starts preaching and teaching. And further down in the fourth chapter He starts healing and casting out demons. **And it's all in the power of the Holy Spirit.....**Now Jesus then was conceived by the power of the Spirit. I believe He was indwelt, as it were, by the power of the Spirit in His mother's womb like John, and certainly He would be as important to John...as John is important to the kingdom and far more. I believe the childhood of Jesus was superintended by the Holy Spirit and that's why He grew in wisdom and favor with God and man. It wasn't that... He wasn't God pretending to be a little boy. He was a real little boy whose humanity was being informed by the Spirit of God who was bridging the deity to that humanity. I believe when Jesus began His ministry to be tempted, He was strengthened through that temptation by the Spirit of God. When He began to teach, He taught by the power of the Spirit. He was full of the Spirit and taught. He healed by the power of the Spirit. He cast out demons by the power of the Spirit. Everything He did was by the power of the Spirit. And if you said that it was by anything other than the power of the Spirit, you blasphemed. (Read the entire informative message which helps understand to some degree the mystery of mysteries - how Jesus could be fully God and also be fully Man = **The Messiah's Divine Confirmation, Part 2**)

Heavenly Healing Power - Richard Mayhue

Because Christ had temporarily and voluntarily set aside the independent exercise of His divine attributes, His healing power came from God the Father.

- Matthew 12:28—He cast out demons by the Spirit of God.
- Luke 5:17—“And the power of the Lord was present for Him to perform healing.”
- Luke 11:20—He cast out demons by the finger of God.
- John 5:19—“…, the Son can do nothing of Himself, …”
- Acts 2:22—“… signs which God performed through Him …”
- Acts 10:38—Christ healed because God was with Him.

Arnold Fruchtenbaum has an interesting note on the response to Jesus' healing of the leper --

> What we do not have here (Lk 5:17) is merely a few Jewish leaders from the town of Capernaum listening to Yeshua's teaching. Luke's account very clearly states that these were all of the Jewish leaders that have come together from all over the country: Galilee, Judea, and the Jerusalem environs. Why are all these Jewish leaders suddenly having a convention in Capernaum? **This was their response to the first messianic miracle. They knew that Jesus had healed a leper. According to their own teachings, only the Messiah would be able to heal a leper. If He healed the leper, it could very well mean that He was the Messiah. They all came together to investigate Him.**
>
> According to Sanhedrin law, if there was any kind of messianic movement, the Sanhedrin had to investigate the situation in two stages. The first stage was called the "**stage of observation**." A delegation was formed to investigate only by way of observation. They had to observe: what was being said; what was being done; and what was being taught. They were not permitted to ask any questions or raise any objections. After a period of observation, they were to return to Jerusalem, report to the Sanhedrin and give a verdict: was the movement significant or was the movement insignificant? If the movement was decreed to be insignificant, the matter would be dropped. But if the movement was declared to be significant, there would then be a second stage of investigation called the "**stage of interrogation**." In this stage, they would interrogate the individual or members of the movement. This time they would ask questions and raise objections to discover whether the claims should be accepted or rejected. This incident in Luke 5:17 records the first stage, the stage of observation. They were there to observe what Jesus was saying and doing. At this point, they were not allowed to raise objections or ask questions. So because a messianic miracle had been performed, all the leaders from all over the country had come to Capernaum to participate in the stage of observation, to observe what Yeshua was saying, doing and teaching....
>
> In response to the first messianic miracle of the healing of a leper, the intensive investigation of His messianic claims began. The leaders observed Jesus claiming the right to forgive sins. Therefore, He was either a blasphemer or He was the Messianic Person. It is evident that the leadership of Israel would return to Jerusalem and decree the movement of Yeshua as significant. After this event, He began undergoing the second stage of the Sanhedrin investigation, the stage of interrogation. Between the performance of the first messianic miracle and the second messianic miracle, everywhere Jesus went, a Pharisee was sure to follow. This time, they were no longer silent. Everywhere He went, a Pharisee was always there asking questions or raising objections. They were trying to find a basis for rejecting or accepting His messianic claims. (The Three Messianic Miracles)

Barclay on Pharisees

Barclay explains why Lk 5:17 is so critical in the ministry of Jesus- If we are to understand what happened to Jesus we must understand something about the Law, and the relationship of the scribes and the Pharisees to it. When the Jews returned from Babylon about 440 b.c. they knew well that, humanly speaking, their hopes of national greatness were gone. They therefore deliberately decided that they would find their greatness in being a people of the law. They would bend all their energies to knowing and keeping God's law.

The basis of the law was the Ten Commandments. These commandments are principles for life. They are not rules and regulations; they do not legislate for each event and for every circumstance. For a certain section of the Jews that was not enough. They desired not great principles but a rule to cover every conceivable situation. From the Ten Commandments they proceeded to develop and elaborate these rules.

Let us take an example. The commandment says, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy"; and then goes on to lay it down that on the Sabbath no work must be done (Exodus 20:8–11). But the Jews asked, "What is work?" and went on to define it under thirty-nine different heads which they called "Fathers of Work." Even that was not enough. Each of these heads was greatly sub-divided. Thousands of rules and regulations began to emerge. These were called the Oral Law, and they began to be set even above the Ten Commandments.

Again, let us take an actual example. One of the works forbidden on the Sabbath was carrying a burden. Jeremiah 17:21–24 says, "Take heed for the sake of your lives, and do not bear a burden on the Sabbath day." But, the legalists insisted, a burden must be defined. So definition was given. A burden is "food equal in weight to a dried fig, enough wine for mixing in a goblet, milk enough for

one swallow, oil enough to anoint a small member, water enough to moisten an eye-salve, paper enough to write a custom-house notice upon, ink enough to write two letters, reed enough to make a pen" … and so on endlessly. So for a tailor to leave a pin or needle in his robe on the Sabbath was to break the law and to sin; to pick up a stone big enough to fling at a bird on the Sabbath was to sin. Goodness became identified with these endless rules and regulations.

Let us take another example. To heal on the Sabbath was to work. It was laid down that only if life was in actual danger could healing be done; and then steps could be taken only to keep the sufferer from getting worse, not to improve his condition. A plain bandage could be put on a wound, but not any ointment; plain wadding could be put into a sore ear, but not medicated. It is easy to see that there was no limit to this.

The scribes were the experts in the law who knew all these rules and regulations, and who deduced them from the law. The name Pharisee means "The Separated One"; and the Pharisees were those who had separated themselves from ordinary people and ordinary life in order to keep these rules and regulations. Note two things. First, for the scribes and Pharisees these rules were a matter of life and death; to break one of them was deadly sin. Second, only people desperately in earnest would ever have tried to keep them, for they must have made life supremely uncomfortable. It was only the best people who would even make the attempt.

Jesus had no use for rules and regulations like that. For him, the cry of human need superseded all such things. But to the scribes and Pharisees he was a law-breaker, a bad man who broke the law and taught others to do the same. That is why they hated him and in the end killed him. The tragedy of the life of Jesus was that those who were most in earnest about their religion drove him to the Cross. It was the irony of things that the best people of the day ultimately crucified him.

From this time on there was to be no rest for him. Always he was to be under the scrutiny of hostile and critical eyes. The opposition had crystallized and there was but one end.

Jesus knew this and before he met the opposition he withdrew to pray. The love in the eyes of God compensated him for the hate in the eyes of men. The approval of God nerved him to meet the criticism of men. He drew strength for the battle of life from the peace of God—and it is enough for the disciple that he should be as his Lord.

Here is another description of the Pharisees by Barclay - In many ways the Pharisees were the best people in the whole country. There were never more than 6,000 of them; they were what was known as a chaburah, or brotherhood. They entered into this brotherhood by taking a pledge in front of three witnesses that they would spend all their lives observing every detail of the scribal law. What exactly did that mean? To the Jew the Law was the most sacred thing in all the world. The Law was the first five books of the Old Testament. They believed it to be the perfect word of God. To add one word to it or to take one word away from it was a deadly sin. Now if the Law is the perfect and complete word of God, that must mean that it contained everything a man need know for the living of a good life, if not explicitly, then implicitly. If it was not there is so many words, it must be possible to deduce it. The Law as it stood consisted of great, wide, noble principles which a man had to work out for himself. But for the later Jews that was not enough. They said: "The Law is complete; it contains everything necessary for the living of a good life; therefore in the Law there must be a regulation to govern every possible incident in every possible moment for every possible man." So they set out to extract from the great principles of the law an infinite number of rules and regulations to govern every conceivable situation in life. In other words they changed the law of the great principles into the legalism of by-laws and regulations. **The best example of what they did is to be seen in the Sabbath law.** In the Bible itself we are simply told that we must remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy and that on that day no work must be done, either by a man or by his servants or his animals. Not content with that, the later Jews spent hour after hour and generation after generation defining what work is and listing the things that may and may not be done on the Sabbath day. The **Mishnah** is the codified scribal law. The scribes spent their lives working out these rules and regulations. In the Mishnah the section on the Sabbath extends to no fewer than twenty-four chapters. The **Talmud** is the explanatory commentary on the Mishnah, and in the Jerusalem Talmud the section explaining the Sabbath law runs to sixty-four and a half columns; and in the Babylonian Talmud it runs to one hundred and fifty-six double folio pages. And we are told about a rabbi who spent two and a half years in studying one of the twenty-four chapters of the Mishnah. **The kind of thing they did was this.** To tie a knot on the Sabbath was to work; but a knot had to be defined. "The following are the knots the making of which renders a man guilty; the knot of camel drivers and that of sailors; and as one is guilty by reason of tying them, so also of untying them." On the other hand knots which could be tied or untied with one hand were quite legal. Further, "a woman may tie up a slit in her shift and the strings of her cap and those of her girdle, the straps of shoes or sandals, of skins of wine and oil." Now see what happened. Suppose a man wished to let down a bucket into a well to draw water on the Sabbath day. He could not tie a rope to it, for a knot on a rope was illegal on the Sabbath; but he could tie it to a woman's girdle and let it down, for a knot in a girdle was quite legal. That was the kind of thing which to the scribes and Pharisees was a matter of life and death; that was religion; that to them was pleasing and serving God. **Take the case of journeying on the Sabbath.** Ex 16:29 says: "Remain every man of you in his place; let no man go out of his place on the seventh day." A Sabbath day's journey was therefore limited to two thousand cubits, that is, one thousand yards. But, if a rope was tied across the end of a street, the whole street became one house and a man could go a thousand yards beyond the end of the street. Or, if a man deposited enough food for one meal on Friday evening at any given place, that place technically

became his house and he could go a thousand yards beyond it on the Sabbath day. The rules and regulations and the evasions piled up by the hundred and the thousand. **Take the case of carrying a burden.** Jeremiah 17:21–24 said: "Take heed for the sake of your lives and do not bear a burden on the Sabbath day." So a burden had to be defined. It was defined as "food equal in weight to a dried fig, enough wine for mixing in a goblet, milk enough for one swallow, honey enough to put upon a wound, oil enough to anoint a small member, water enough to moisten an eye-salve," and so on and on. It had then to be settled whether or not on the Sabbath a woman could wear a brooch, a man could wear a wooden leg or dentures; or would it be carrying a burden to do so? Could a chair or even a child be lifted? And so on and on the discussions and the regulations went.

It was the scribes who worked out these regulations; it was the Pharisees who dedicated their lives to keeping them. Obviously, however misguided a man might be, he must be desperately in earnest if he proposed to undertake obedience to every one of the thousands of rules. That is precisely what the Pharisees did. The name Pharisee means the Separated One; and the Pharisees were those who had separated themselves from all ordinary life in order to keep every detail of the law of the scribes. (Daily Study Bible)

Luke 5:18 And some men were carrying on a bed a man who was paralyzed; and they were trying to bring him in and to set him down in front of Him.

> NET Luke 5:18 Just then some men showed up, carrying a paralyzed man on a stretcher. They were trying to bring him in and place him before Jesus.
>
> GNT Luke 5:18 κα δο νδρες φ ροντες π κλ νης νθρωπον ς ν παραλελυμ νος κα ζ τουν α τ ν ε σενεγκε ν κα θε ναι [α τ ν] ν πιον α το .
>
> NLT Luke 5:18 Some men came carrying a paralyzed man on a sleeping mat. They tried to take him inside to Jesus,
>
> KJV Luke 5:18 And, behold, men brought in a bed a man which was taken with a palsy: and they sought means to bring him in, and to lay him before him.
>
> ESV Luke 5:18 And behold, some men were bringing on a bed a man who was paralyzed, and they were seeking to bring him in and lay him before Jesus,
>
> NIV Luke 5:18 Some men came carrying a paralytic on a mat and tried to take him into the house to lay him before Jesus.
>
> ASV Luke 5:18 And behold, men bring on a bed a man that was palsied: and they sought to bring him in, and to lay him before him.
>
> CSB Luke 5:18 Just then some men came, carrying on a mat a man who was paralyzed. They tried to bring him in and set him down before Him.

- Mt 9:2-8 Mk 2:3-12 Joh 5:5,6 Ac 9:33
- J C Ryle's Comments on Luke 5 - clear, devout, and accurate
- Luke 5:17-26 The Return to Capernaum - Concerning the Forgiveness of Sins - the Healing of the Paralyzed - Alfred Edersheim
- Luke 5:17-20 A Saving Faith in a Paralyzed Man - John MacArthur
- Luke 5:17-26 - Helping Our Friends Find Forgiveness - Steven Cole
- Multiple Sermons - older
- Luke 5 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Parallel Passages -

> Matthew 9:2-8 And they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed. Seeing their faith, Jesus said to the paralytic, "Take courage, son; your sins are forgiven." 3 And some of the scribes said to themselves, "This fellow blasphemes." 4 And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, "Why are you thinking evil in your hearts? 5 "Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up, and walk'? 6 "But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"–then He *said to the paralytic, "Get up, pick up your bed and go home." 7 And he got up and went home. 8But when the crowds saw this, they were awestruck, and glorified God, who had given such authority to men.

Mark 2:3-12 And they *came, bringing to Him a paralytic, carried by four men. 4 Being unable to get to Him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above Him; and when they had dug an opening, they let down the pallet on which the paralytic was lying. 5 And Jesus seeing their faith *said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven." 6 But some of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts, 7"Why does this man speak that way? He is blaspheming; who can forgive sins but God alone?" 8 Immediately Jesus, aware in His spirit that they were reasoning that way within themselves, *said to them, "Why are you reasoning about these things in your hearts? 9"Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven'; or to say, 'Get up, and pick up your pallet and walk'? 10"But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"–He *said to the paralytic, 11 "I say to you, get up, pick up your pallet and go home." 12 And he got up and immediately picked up the pallet and went out in the sight of everyone, so that they were all amazed and were glorifying God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this."

And some - The NAS leaves out the words "**and behold**" (ESV is correct) which is (**idou** - see note above) meaning see, perceive, look at. This was a sight worth seeing...a sight to behold!

And some men were carrying on a bed a man who was paralyzed (paraluo) - Mark 2:3+ tells us there were **four men**. They were motivated not by his spiritual need, but his physical need. **John MacArthur** makes a good point that "Unlike lepers, the paralyzed were not ostracized from society. They were stigmatized by their condition, however, since many would see all such disabilities as God's punishment for their sin (cf. John 9:2)."

They were trying to bring him in and to set him down in front of Him - They were trying (zeteo in imperfect tense) over and over, this way and that, but without success because it was too crowded as explained in Lk 5:19. Mk 2:2+ adds the detail there there was "no longer room, not even near the door." The closed door to the house would lead these 4 determined men to open the roof!

THOUGHT - If we apply this story, the point is that we should do all we can to help our "spiritually sick" friends come to Jesus to receive His forgiveness! Friends bring their friends to Jesus.

Spurgeon - THERE ARE CASES WHICH WILL NEED THE AID OF A LITTLE BAND OF WORKERS BEFORE THEY WILL BE FULLY SAVED. Yonder is a householder as yet unsaved: his wife has prayed for him long; her prayers are yet unanswered. Good wife, God has blessed thee with a son, who with thee rejoices in the fear of God. Hast thou not two Christian daughters also? O ye four, take each a corner of this sick man's couch, and bring your husband, bring your father, to the Saviour. A husband and a wife are here, both happily brought to Christ; you are praying for your children; never cease from that supplication: pray on. Perhaps one of your beloved family is unusually stubborn. Extra help is needed. Well, to you the Sabbath-school teacher will make a third; he will take one corner of the bed; and happy shall I be if I may join the blessed quaternion, and make the fourth. Perhaps, when home discipline, the school's teaching, and the minister's preaching shall go together, the Lord will look down in love and save your child. We now pass on to the second observation, that SOME CASES THUS TAKEN UP WILL NEED MUCH THOUGHT BEFORE THE DESIGN IS ACCOMPLISHED. They must get the sick man in somehow. To let him down through the roof was a device most strange and striking, but it only gives point to the remark which we have now to make here. If by any means we may save some, is our policy. Skin for skin, yea, all that we have is nothing comparable to a man's soul. When four true hearts are set upon the spiritual good of a sinner, their holy hunger will break through stone walls or house roofs. (Carried by Four)

Was paralyzed (3886)(paraluo from **pará** = from + **lúo** = to loose) means to loosen beside, to relax, to weaken, to disable, to undo, to cause to be feeble, to be paralyzed. It is used in NT only in the passive voice (action from without or outside of the recipient). Here **paraluo** is in the **perfect tense** which pictures a permanent state and thus the idea of paralyzed, enfeebled or taken with palsy. Luke's phrase is the technical medical term (Hippocrates, Galen, etc.) rather than Mark's vernacular word paralutikos.

Luke 5:19 But not finding any way to bring him in because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and let him down through the tiles with his stretcher, into the middle of the crowd, in front of Jesus.

NET Luke 5:19 But since they found no way to carry him in because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and let him down on the stretcher through the roof tiles right in front of Jesus.

GNT Luke 5:19 κα μ ε ρ ντες πο ας ε σεν γκωσιν α τ ν δι τ ν χλον, ναβ ντες π τ δ μα δι τ ν κερ μων καθ καν α τ ν σ ν τ κλινιδ ε ς τ μ σον μπροσθεν το ησο .

NLT Luke 5:19 but they couldn't reach him because of the crowd. So they went up to the roof and took off some tiles. Then they lowered the sick man on his mat down into the crowd, right in front of Jesus.

KJV Luke 5:19 And when they could not find by what way they might bring him in because of the multitude, they went upon the housetop, and let him down through the tiling with his couch into the midst before Jesus.

ESV Luke 5:19 but finding no way to bring him in, because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and let him down with his bed through the tiles into the midst before Jesus.

NIV Luke 5:19 When they could not find a way to do this because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and lowered him on his mat through the tiles into the middle of the crowd, right in front of Jesus.

ASV Luke 5:19 And not finding by what way they might bring him in because of the multitude, they went up to the housetop, and let him down through the tiles with his couch into the midst before Jesus.

CSB Luke 5:19 Since they could not find a way to bring him in because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and lowered him on the mat through the roof tiles into the middle of the crowd before Jesus.

- **they went up on the roof**: Mk 2:4
- **let him down through the tiles with his stretcher**: Dt 22:8 2Sa 11:2 Jer 19:13 Mt 10:27
- J C Ryle's Comments on Luke 5 - clear, devout, and accurate
- Luke 5:17-26 The Return to Capernaum - Concerning the Forgiveness of Sins - the Healing of the Paralyzed - Alfred Edersheim
- Luke 5:17-20 A Saving Faith in a Paralyzed Man - John MacArthur
- Luke 5:17-26 - Helping Our Friends Find Forgiveness - Steven Cole
- Multiple Sermons - older
- Luke 5 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Parallel Passage:

Mark 2:4+ - Being unable to get to Him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above Him; and when they had dug an opening, they let down the pallet on which the paralytic was lying

WHERE THERE IS A WILL
THERE IS A WAY!

But not finding any way to bring him in because of the crowd- **Determination** describes devotion of one's full strength and concentrated attention to a task, certainly an apt description of these four friends! These men were determined! Thankfully "A house in 1st century Palestine would have had a flat roof with stairs or a ladder going up. This access was often from the outside of the house." (Net) And from the description of all three synoptic accounts, this house appears to have been a wealthy person's home (PERHAPS PETER'S BUT WE CANNOT BE CERTAIN), built in the Greco-Roman style, with roof tiles which, when removed allowed one to dig throw the clay and straw and gave access to lower the man between the roof beams. The extreme measures they took to lay this man before Jesus indicates that the crowds following Him were very large.

Parallel Passage Mark 2:4+ gives us some added detail - "Being unable to get to Him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above Him; and when they had dug an opening, they let down the pallet on which the paralytic was lying."

> **Marvin Vincent's** comment on Mark 2:4 - Lit., scooped it out. Very graphic and true to fact. A modern roof would be untiled or unshingled; but an oriental roof would have to be dug to make such an opening as was required. A composition of mortar, tar, ashes, and sand is spread upon the roofs, and rolled hard, and grass grows in the crevices. On the houses of the poor in the country the grass grows more freely, and goats may be seen on the roofs cropping it. In some cases, as in this, stone slabs are laid across the joists. See Luke 5:19, where it is said they let him down through the tiles; so that they would be obliged, not only to dig through the grass and earth, but also to pry up the tiles. Compare Ps. 129:6.

Spurgeon - There does appear to have been, according to Mark, some breaking up of the material that formed the roof of the house where Christ was. It was not altogether such an easy matter as some have imagined to let this poor palsied man down into the presence of Jesus; and if some of the dust from the roof fell down upon the Pharisees and doctors of the law who were sitting by, it would only be what they were accustomed to throw into other people's eyes. (Luke - exposition)

They went up on the roof and let him down through the tiles with his stretcher(klinidion)**, into the middle of the crowd, in**

front of Jesus - As noted above, the house must have had an outside stairway to allow them to get the man on the roof. Imagine the scene. Jesus teaching and all of a sudden the rafters start shaking. Some probably thought it was another miracle, and in fact it was preparation for one. This miracle would be greater than the physical healing because it would result in soul healing, the greatest need of the paralyzed man and all other men spiritually paralyzed by THE FALL of Adam! As **Hendriksen** says "four “friends in need” who were proving to be “friends indeed.”

Barclay on a typical house in that day - The Palestinian house was flat-roofed. The roof had only the slightest tilt, sufficient to make the rain water run off. It was composed of beams laid from wall to wall and quite a short distance apart. The space between the beams was filled with close packed twigs, compacted together with mortar and then marled over. It was the easiest thing in the world to take out the packing between two beams. In fact coffins were very often taken in and out of a house via the roof.

NET Note on **tiles** (Greek = keramos - used only in Lk 5:19 and once in 2 Sa 17:28 for "pottery")- There is a translational problem at this point in the text. The term Luke uses is **keramos**. It can in certain contexts mean "clay," but usually this is in reference to pottery (see BDAG 540 s.v. 1). The most natural definition in this instance is "roof tile" (used in the translation above). However, tiles were generally not found in Galilee. Recent archaeological research has suggested that this house, which would have probably been typical for the area, could not have supported "a second story, nor could the original roof have been masonry; no doubt it was made from beams and branches of trees covered with a mixture of earth and straw" (J. F. Strange and H. Shanks, "Has the House Where Jesus Stayed in Capernaum Been Found?" BAR 8, no. 6 [Nov/Dec 1982]: 34). Luke may simply have spoken of building materials that would be familiar to his readers.

Whether the roof was tile or clay mixed with straw is of little note for the important point is that these four resourceful men found a way. Furthermore, they must have had complete faith that Jesus could heal the paralytic or they would have given up. They must have also really had compassion on this poor man, a quality God loves to see (Mt 9:13, 12:7 quoting Hos 6:6, cf Micah 6:8). This is surely an example (albeit somewhat of a literal rendering) of "bear one another's burdens and thereby fulfill the law of Christ" (Gal 6:2).

Into the middle of the crowd, in front of Jesus- Notice that Jesus does not complain or grumble about the falling dust and dirt, the noise and the interruption of His teaching! He is amazing!

> **THOUGHT -** O for us to be such compassionate and diligent friends that we would spare no effort to bring our sin paralyzed friends right in front of Jesus! How? There are many ways to set them in front of Jesus -- Offer to study the Gospel of John with them, pray for them without ceasing, perform acts of kindness and compassion, etc.

Stretcher (only here and Lk 5:24)(2826)(**klinidion** a diminutive of the more common **kline** - bed) a small bed, couch; for carrying a sick person mat, pallet, cot. It does not occur in the Septuagint. Another diminutive, klinarion is found in Acts 5:15. Moulton-Milligan cite evidence that these diminutives were used especially of devices for carrying or transporting the sick, a suggestion which may enhance the reputation of Luke as a physician, or at least as one with special knowledge of medical practices. In the parallel account in Mark 2:4,9,11 the word is krabattos and in Matthew 9:2,6 kline.

Luke 5:20 Seeing their faith, He said, "Friend, your sins are forgiven you."

NET Luke 5:20 When Jesus saw their faith he said, "Friend, your sins are forgiven."

GNT Luke 5:20 κα δ ν τ ν π στιν α τ ν ε πεν, νθρωπε, φ ωντα σοι α μαρτ αι σου.

NLT Luke 5:20 Seeing their faith, Jesus said to the man, "Young man, your sins are forgiven."

KJV Luke 5:20 And when he saw their faith, he said unto him, Man, thy sins are forgiven thee.

ESV Luke 5:20 And when he saw their faith, he said, "Man, your sins are forgiven you."

NIV Luke 5:20 When Jesus saw their faith, he said, "Friend, your sins are forgiven."

ASV Luke 5:20 And seeing their faith, he said, Man, thy sins are forgiven thee.

CSB Luke 5:20 Seeing their faith He said, "Friend, your sins are forgiven you."

- **Seeing their faith**: Ge 22:12 John 2:25 Ac 11:23 14:9 Jas 2:18
- **Friend**: Lu 7:48 Ps 90:7,8 107:17,18 Isa 38:17 Mt 9:2 Mk 2:5 Joh 5:14 2Co 2:10 Col 3:13 Jas 5:14,15
- J C Ryle's Comments on Luke 5 - clear, devout, and accurate

- Luke 5:17-26 The Return to Capernaum - Concerning the Forgiveness of Sins - the Healing of the Paralyzed - Alfred Edersheim
- Luke 5:17-20 A Saving Faith in a Paralyzed Man - John MacArthur
- Luke 5:17-26 - Helping Our Friends Find Forgiveness - Steven Cole
- Multiple Sermons - older
- Luke 5 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Parallel passages

> Mark 2:5+ has "And Jesus seeing their faith said to the paralytic, "**My son** (teknon = instead of Luke's "Friend"), your sins are forgiven."
>
> Mt 9:2+ has "And behold, they were bringing to Him a paralytic, lying on a bed; and Jesus seeing their faith said to the paralytic, "Take courage, My son, your sins are forgiven."

JESUS FORGIVES SINS

Seeing their faith (pistis) - Who is "**their**?" This seems to be all 5 men (Mark 2:3 says four men carried the paralyzed man). Not only does Jesus see their faith, but He sees the greater need! **Robertson** notes "The faith of the four men and of the man himself. There is no reason for excluding his faith. They all had confidence in the power and willingness of Jesus to heal this desperate case." **Hendriksen** adds that "though the five did not **talk**, they **trusted**! And that was what really mattered. The confidence of the five touched the very heart of Jesus, who now, in accents tender yet firm, said to the paralytic, "Man, your sins are forgiven you." It was definitely the faith of the five that caused these words to flow from the Savior's lips. For corroborating passages, showing how very important Jesus regarded faith to be, see Luke 7:9, 10; 8:48, 50; 17:19; 18:42; and see also Heb. 11:32 f.

> **THOUGHT** - THESE 4 HAD **VICARIOUS FAITH** (SEE ADDITIONAL NOTE) -- BUT WHAT IS VICARIOUS FAITH? - Obviously we as believers cannot take others to Heaven with us based solely on our faith. Each soul must express his or her own personal faith in Jesus? So what is vicarious faith as seen in these 4 men whose faith resulted in another man being brought to Jesus? Simply this -- they believed Jesus could heal their paralyzed friend if they could get him to Jesus. How is this vicarious faith manifested today? When we pray for others to believe in Jesus is that not vicarious faith. I prayed for my 2 youngest children for 20 years before they surrendered to Jesus! My father prayed for me for 20 years before I believed!

Here are thoughts from **A B Bruce** on Luke 5:18-26 (the parallel of Mark 2:1ff). He writes "We have here a distinct recognition of the value of intercessory prayer, or, if I may so express myself, of **vicarious faith**. God, we learn therefore, hears prayers of believing men offered up not for themselves but for others. (1) This doctrine is Scriptural. Abraham, Moses, &c. (2). This doctrine is reasonable. It can give a good account of itself before the bar of philosophy. It is a wise, God-worthy policy to encourage men to pray, live, and even die for one another, in the assurance that they pray not, live not, die not in vain. (3). The duty arising out of the foregoing doctrine is plain. It is without ceasing to desire and to pray for the well-being, spiritual and temporal, of all men, specially of those whose case Providence brings closest home to us.

G Campbell Morgan - "Jesus seeing their faith." That is the statement which first arrests attention on reading the story. Details are not given here, beyond that of the faith with which these men came. (Mark) tells us that they broke up the roof, and let the sick man down into the midst. The fact here standing out is, that "He saw their faith." There has been a good deal of speculation as to whose faith is referred to, but of one thing we may be perfectly sure, it was not only the faith of the men who brought him. "**Their faith**" demands some other interpretation; it demands the faith of the man, as well as the faith of the men who brought him, because Christ said to him, "Thy sins be forgiven thee." It would appear that our Lord saw that in his heart there was a desire for something deeper than physical healing; and that he was conscious that physical disability was the result of his own sin; and therefore with a great tenderness, in words thrilling with the music of the evangel He had come to create, He said to him, in effect: "Be of good cheer I am able to deal with the deepest matter; thy sins are forgiven." That word was a response to faith. And yet, while we believe there was faith in the heart of the man himself, **we must not miss the important fact here that there is such a thing as vicarious faith. It is possible to help a man's faith. "Jesus seeing their faith."**

Barclay on **seeing their faith** - When Jesus saw **their faith**—the eager faith of those who stopped at nothing to bring their friend to Jesus won his cure. It still happens. (i) There are those who are saved by the faith of their parents (**ED**: He means because the children were led to Jesus by their parents' faith, their examples of faithful living for Christ. The children were saved because they repented and believed in Jesus Christ - there is no other way to be saved!). Carlyle used to say that still across the years there came his mother's voice to him, "Trust in God and do the right." (**ED**: I would change that slightly to be more specific because of Acts 4:12+ - "Trust in **the Lord Jesus Christ** and do the right enabled by the Spirit of Christ.") When Augustine was living a reckless and

immoral life his devout mother came to ask the help of a Christian bishop. “It is impossible,” he said, “that the child of such prayers and tears should perish.” Many of us would gladly witness that we owe all that we are and ever will be to the faith of godly parents.

Robert Stein - The **faith** of the paralytic and the men was manifested by their “**works**,” i.e., their removal of the tiles to lower the paralytic. A favorite expression of Luke was “your faith has ‘saved’ you” (cf. Lk 7:50; 8:48; 17:19; 18:42). For the tie between faith and miracles, cf. Lk 7:9, 50; 8:25, 40, 50; 17:5, 6, 19; 18:42. (See Luke: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition)

Kent Hughes - Along with their love and conviction, **the four friends had great faith**. There is no way they would have gone to such outrageous extremes if they did not believe that Jesus could and would heal their friend. They all possessed faith’s dynamic certitude (cf. Hebrews 11:1). A wavering faith would have opted out when they began digging up the roof, if not sooner. “Ah, man, this is embarrassing. You’ll have to finish without me.” Determined to bring their friend to Jesus, confident he would help the invalid, the faithful quartet worked on. **Their faith was persistent.** Once they had their friend on the stretcher, there was no stopping them. None of them said, “The crowd is too big. I guess this isn’t the Lord’s will.” Instead, they started climbing! Jesus lauded such action when he said, “From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing, and forceful men lay hold of it” (Matthew 11:12). When the four tore through the roof, they took the kingdom with determined force. Such graced violence is the key for the church making the impact it should. **Their faith was creative.** Some who were standing idly by and saw the four’s success probably thought, “Why didn’t I think of that?” Perhaps they did not love as much or believe as passionately as the four friends. A faith that truly believes Christ is the only way will be inventive. This is the genius behind the Quito radio station HCJB, which sits directly on the equator at 10,000 feet and broadcasts the gospel to virtually the entire globe seven days a week, twenty-four hours a day. The almost legendary creativity of that ministry springs from the passionate, driving conviction that Christ is the only hope for the world. If you really love your neighbors, you will find a way to bring them to the love of Christ. **Their faith was sacrificial.** Someone would have to repair the roof, and that would require time, labor, and expense. A faith that brings Christ’s power to the world must always be willing to pay the price. Few Christians have influenced the church more in their time than did Francis and Edith Schaeffer. But there was a cost. Schaeffer wrote in The Church at the End of the 20th Century: *In about the first three years of L’Abri [Francis Schaeffer’s Christian fellowship group] all our wedding presents were wiped out. Our sheets were torn. Holes were burned in our rugs. Drugs came into our place. People vomited on our rugs.… Sure it is a danger to your family, and you must be careful. But have you ever risked it?* The Schaeffers risked it because they believed Christ was the only answer. So we see in the lives of the four stretcher-bearers how Christ’s power is unleashed in the world—through love, through conviction, and through faith. Do we truly love our families, our neighbors, our colleagues? Do we believe Christ is the only way? Where is our persistence, our creativity, our sacrifice? (See Luke: That You May Know the Truth)

Morris - It was not the faith of the palsied man, but the faith of His friends that prompted Jesus to heal the man. However, the man must have exercised repentance and faith as well, for Jesus to forgive his sins. Significantly, he was immediately "glorifying God" after his cure (Luke 5:25; see notes on Matthew 9:6).

> An OT example of God seeing faith "He said, “Do not stretch out your hand against the lad, and do nothing to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me.” (Genesis 22:12)
>
> A NT example of God's ability to see faith, sadly in this case defective (non-saving) faith "But Jesus, on His part, was not entrusting Himself to them, for He knew all men ("But Jesus didn't trust them, because he knew human nature." NLT), and because He did not need anyone to testify concerning man, for He Himself knew what was in man. (John 2:24-25)

Friend, your sins are forgiven you - Literally the Greek is "**Man** (anthropos) but used in this way was not derogatory in Jewish culture, for when it was used to address another person as in this case it conveyed the sense of "**friend**" (BDAG's lexicon).

The man had need for physical healing but Jesus saw his greater need for spiritual healing, the need of all men physically fit or lame! Jesus' statement was considered blasphemy, since it was clearly understood to be a claim of being equal with God. The application of this story for us today is clear - To help our friends find forgiveness, we must bring them to Jesus who has authority to forgive sins.

Jesus' statement could signify that this man's paralysis was a result of sin, but one cannot be dogmatic. Sin induced disease was a common thought among the Jews but John 9:1–3 shows in that case Jesus rejected this line of reasoning regarding every illness.

> John 9:1-3 As He passed by, He saw a man blind from birth. And His disciples asked Him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he would be born blind?” Jesus answered, “It was neither that this man sinned, nor his parents; but it was so that the works of God might be displayed in him.
>
> **Ryrie** adds in his note on Php 2:30 - Epaphroditus was dangerously ill from overwork. Sickness may also be due to specific sin (1 Cor 11:30) or to prevent sin (2 Cor 12:7) or to test (Job. 2:7) or to display the glory of

> God (John 9:2), and because of demons (Acts 5:16). Of course, sickness, for whatever reason, ultimately is related to our fallen humanity.

To be sure all sickness and paralysis (whether spiritual or physical) is ultimately the result of Adam's fall and the entrance of the corrupting influence of sin into the world (Ge 2:17).

Criswell writes that "Jesus demonstrates His concern for the well-being of the whole man, but it should be recognized that receiving forgiveness of sins (spiritual healing) is the more essential and primary miracle, while physical healing is secondary."

Your sins are forgiven (aphiemi) - Once and for all time - read how complete God's forgiveness is in these great descriptions - Ps 103:12; Isa 1:18; Isa 55:6, 7; Isa 38:17 Isa 43:25, Isa 44:22 Mic 7:18,19 Acts 3:19,20 Jer 31:34; Mic 7:18, 19. In the OT Nathan the prophet said to David "The LORD also has taken away your sin; you shall not die." (2 Sa 12:13). In contrast to Nathan who said Jehovah forgave his sins, Jesus personally forgives their sins! He is clearly saying indirectly that He in fact is Jehovah and that He was exerting divine authority!

And so here the **Son of Man,** God incarnate, in effect and in reality, ***sends away*** **the sins of the paralytic healing him spiritually**. And don't miss the fact that the verb **forgiven** is in the perfect tense which indicates the abiding state of the forgiveness, in essence the permanence of divine forgiveness! Once Jesus forgives a person of their sins, He does not take that declaration back and "un-forgive" a forgiven person. Once forgiven by Jesus, forever forgiven! And so **forgiven** in the perfect tense supports the truth of Eternal security, the assurance of your salvation. Once you are **truly** saved, you cannot lose salvation. Indeed Luke's use of the perfect tense gives an added degree of certainty to the popular phrase "**Once Saved, Always Saved.**" (which of course assumes that the person making this declaration is genuinely saved and not simply relying on a verbal **profession** they made many years earlier but instead have experienced a true **possession** of Christ (Col 1:27b+) and His Spirit (Ro 8:9+) ! **Are forgiven** is in the passive voice indicating that the power to forgive the sins of the paralytic came from without, ultimately from God (divine passive).

While the paralyzed man did not understand Jesus was God (and would procure forgiven with His death on the Cross), nevertheless he was forgiven, in a way similar to all saints who lived before the Cross. As **MacArthur** says "people were forgiven in the Old Testament by acknowledging that they were sinners, deserving of God's judgment and unable to save themselves, confessing and repenting of their sin, and throwing themselves on God's mercy." We see this pattern of forgiveness in Luke 18:10-14+

> "Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. "The Pharisee stood and was praying this to himself: 'God, I thank You that I am not like other people: swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. 'I fast twice a week; I pay tithes of all that I get.' (WORKS) "But the tax collector, standing some distance away, was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven, but was beating his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me, the sinner!' (FAITH MANIFESTED IN HIS DECLARATION) "I tell you, this man went to his house justified (DECLARED RIGHTEOUS = "SAVED") rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted."

As **MacArthur** says "After the cross and resurrection, there is no salvation apart from believing in the only object of saving faith—the Lord Jesus Christ (John 14:6; Acts 4:12; 17:30–31; 1 Tim. 2:5, cf Ro 10:9, 10+)." (See Luke Commentary)

Bock - The theme of forgiveness of sin or of accepting the spiritually needy is frequent in Luke and the emphasis is on who provides it, namely Jesus or God (5:29–32; 7:34, 36–50; 15:3–7, 11–32; 18:10–14; 19:8–10; 23:40–43). (Ibid)

MacArthur on **forgiveness** - **Forgiveness** is both mankind's greatest need, and God's most important gift—and the only means for blessing in this life and eternal life in heaven. Jesus Christ came into the world to "save His people from their sins" (Matt. 1:21; cf. 26:28), and "through His name everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins" (Acts 10:43; cf. 5:31; 26:18; Eph. 1:7; 4:32; Col. 1:14; 2:13–14; 3:13; 1 John 1:9; 2:12; Rev. 1:5). Forgiveness is the distinctive message of the Christian proclamation (Luke 24:47; Acts 2:38; 13:38). But forgiveness has always been the offer of redemption, so it is also the message of the Old Testament. After Adam and Eve sinned, "the Lord God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife, and clothed them" (Gen. 3:21). Killing animals to provide those garments pictured the ultimate sacrifice of Messiah, whose death would cover the shame and guilt of sin. The Lord described Himself to Moses as "the Lord, the Lord God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth; who keeps lovingkindness for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin" (Ex. 34:6–7; cf. Num. 14:18). Nehemiah 9:17 calls Him a "God of forgiveness." In Psalm 65:3 David wrote, "Iniquities prevail against me; as for our transgressions, You forgive them," while in 86:5, he declared, "For You, Lord, are good, and ready to forgive, and abundant in lovingkindness to all who call upon You." In Psalm 103:12, David depicted the extensiveness of God's forgiveness when he noted that "as far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us." In 130:3–4, the psalmist expressed his confidence in God's forgiveness: "If You, Lord, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand? But there is forgiveness with You, that You may be feared." Speaking of the promised forgiveness in the New covenant, God declared, "I will

forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more" (Jer. 31:34). Micah joyously exclaimed, "Who is a God like You, who pardons iniquity and passes over the rebellious act of the remnant of His possession?" (Mic. 7:18; cf. Isa. 55:7). The Old Testament likens God's forgiveness to His casting sins behind His back (Isa. 38:17), wiping them out (Isa. 43:25; cf. 1:18; 44:22), trampling them under His feet (Mic. 7:19), and burying them in the depths of the sea (Mic. 7:19). (Luke Commentary)

Spurgeon - Christ has eyes with which he can see faith. You and I cannot see it; but he can: "When he saw their faith, he said unto him, Man, thy sins be forgiven thee." This was going to the very root of his disease. Jesus knew what the man really ailed; he was palsied in spirit as well as in body, and Christ removed the root of his disease by forgiving his sin. (Luke - exposition)

Spurgeon - Laying the axe at the root; not healing the paralysis at first, but forgiving the sin which depressed the man's spirit, and so was, in a measure, the cause of the paralysis. By removing the sin, he raised the man's spirits, and with his renewed spirits, there same back strength. Note that it was when he saw their faith that he said unto the man, "Thy sins are forgiven thee."(Luke - exposition)

Spurgeon - Now we must pass on to an important truth. We may safely gather from the narrative THAT THE ROOT OF SPIRITUAL PARALYSIS GENERALLY LIES IN UNPARDONED SIN. Jesus intended to heal the paralysed man, but He did so by first of all saying, "Thy sins are forgiven thee." The bottom of this paralysis is sin upon the conscience, working death in them. They are sensible of their guilt, but powerless to believe that the crimson fountain can remove it; they are alive only to sorrow, despondency, and agony. Sin paralyses them with despair. I grant you that into this despair there enters largely the element of unbelief, which is sinful; but I hope there is also in it a measure of sincere repentance, which bears in it the hope of something better. Our poor, awakened paralytics sometimes hope that they may be forgiven, but they cannot believe it; they cannot rejoice; they cannot cast themselves on Jesus; they are utterly without strength. Now, the bottom of it, I say again, lies in unpardoned sin, and I earnestly entreat you who love the Saviour to be earnest in seeking the pardon of these paralysed persons. Let us proceed to notice that JESUS CAN REMOVE BOTH THE SIN AND THE PARALYSIS IN A SINGLE MOMENT. It was the business of the four bearers to bring the man to Christ; but there their power ended. It is our part to bring the guilty sinner to the Saviour; there our power ends. Thank God, when we end, Christ begins, and works right gloriously. (Carried by Four)

Steven Cole - Sometimes a severe problem—a health problem, an emotional problem, a family problem, a financial catastrophe—can be the best thing in the world for us. Later, this man would have looked back on his paralysis and thanked God for it, because if he had never been paralyzed, he never would have begged his friends to carry him to Jesus. He never would have heard those words, "Your sins are forgiven." With the psalmist, he could say, "Before I was afflicted, I went astray, but now I keep Your word" (Ps. 119:67). Jesus wasn't necessarily implying that the man's paralysis was the direct result of his sins. It may have been. In opposition to the rabbis of His day, Jesus taught that while all suffering is due to the fall of the human race into sin, not all suffering is due to specific sin on the part of the individual (Luke 13:1-5; John 9:1-3). But Jesus knew that the main need of every sinner is not to get our health or emotional or financial or whatever problems solved. Those problems should drive us to seek God. When we do that, it becomes clear that our main problem is our alienation from Him due to our sins. Thus forgiveness of sins is our main need. (Lesson 20: Helping Our Friends Find Forgiveness)

Faith (4102)(**pistis**) as it relates to God, is the conviction that God exists and is the Creator and Ruler of all things well as the Provider and Bestower of eternal salvation through Christ. As faith relates to Christ in this specific context it represents a strong conviction that Jesus could meet the needs of the paralytic, for similar healings had already occurred.

> This is the first mention of **pistis** in Luke's Gospel but it is used frequently thereafter and in Acts - Lk. 5:20; 7:9,50; 8:25,48; 17:5-6,19; 18:8,42; 22:32; Acts 3:16; 6:5,7; 11:24; 13:8; 14:9,22,27; 15:9; 16:5; 17:31; 20:21; 24:24; 26:18.
>
> The verb form **pisteuo** is used by Luke in - Lk. 1:20,45; 8:12-13,50; 16:11; 20:5; 22:66; 24:25; Acts 2:44; 4:4,32; 5:14; 8:12-13; 9:26,42; 10:43; 11:17,21; 13:12,39,41,48; 14:1,23; 15:5,7,11; 16:31,34; 17:12,34; 18:8,27; 19:2,4,18; 21:20,25; 22:19; 24:14; 26:27; 27:25.

Sins (266)(**hamartia**) literally conveys the idea of missing the mark as when hunting with a bow and arrow (in Homer some hundred times of a warrior hurling his spear but missing his foe). Later **hamartia** came to mean missing or falling short of any goal, standard, or purpose. **Hamartia** in the Bible signifies a departure from God's holy, perfect standard of what is right in word or deed (righteous). It pictures the idea of missing His appointed goal (His will) which results in a deviation from what is pleasing to Him. In short, sin is conceived as a missing the true end and scope of our lives, which is the Triune God Himself. As **Martin Luther** put it "*Sin is essentially a departure from God.*"

> **Hamartia** in Luke and Acts - Lk 1:77; 3:3; 5:20-21,23-24; 7:47-49; 11:4; 24:47; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 5:31; 7:60; 10:43; 13:38; 22:16; 26:18

Are forgiven (863)(**aphiemi** from **apo** = prefix implies separation + from **apo** = prefix implies separation + **hiemi** = send; cf **aphesis**) conveys the basic idea of an action which causes separation and means to send from one's self, to hurl away, to put away. **Aphiemi** conveys the basic idea of bringing about total detachment from a previous condition, a wonderful picture when we think of God forgiving our sins! In one secular writing we read "let the pot drop" (aphiemi) which gives us a vivid picture of what we are to do when we forgive others! Don't bury the pot with the handle showing! From this early literal use the word came to mean leave or let go. Recall that Luke has just used this verb with this literal meaning in Luke 5:11 writing "When they had brought their boats to land, they **left** (aphiemi) everything and followed Him." This shows how complete was their separation from their former life!

> Luke's uses **aphiemi** 28x in the Gospel and 3x in Acts - Lk. 4:39; Lk. 5:11; Lk. 5:20; Lk. 5:21; Lk. 5:23; Lk. 5:24; Lk. 6:42; Lk. 7:47; Lk. 7:48; Lk. 7:49; Lk. 8:51; Lk. 9:60; Lk. 10:30; Lk. 11:4; Lk. 12:10; Lk. 12:39; Lk. 13:8; Lk. 13:35; Lk. 17:3; Lk. 17:4; Lk. 17:34; Lk. 17:35; Lk. 17:36; Lk. 18:16; Lk. 18:28; Lk. 18:29; Lk. 19:44; Lk. 21:6; Lk. 23:34; Acts 5:38; Acts 8:22; Acts 14:17.

Not long before she died in 1988, in a moment of surprising candor in television, Marghanita Laski, one of our well-known secular humanists and novelists, said, "What I envy most about you Christians is your forgiveness; I have nobody to forgive me."

Mattoon - A childhood accident caused poet Elizabeth Barrett to lead a life of semi-invalidism before she married Robert Browning in 1846. There's more to the story. In her youth, Elizabeth had been watched over by her tyrannical father. When she and Robert were married, their wedding was held in secret because of her father's disapproval. After the wedding, the Brownings sailed for Italy, where they lived for the rest of their lives. But even though her parents had disowned her, Elizabeth never gave up on the relationship. Almost weekly she wrote them letters. Not once did they reply. After 10 years, she received a large box in the mail. Inside, Elizabeth found all of her letters; not one had been opened! Today those letters are among the most beautiful in classical English literature. Had her parents only read a few of them, their relationship with Elizabeth might have been restored. If people would only take time to read the Bible, and such verses as listed above, they could realize how much the Lord loves them. They would restore the relationship with the Lord that their sin has ruined by seeking Christ's forgiveness and cleansing. (Mattoon - Treasures from the Scriptures)

Bringing Our Friends to Jesus

When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralyzed man, “Son, your sins are forgiven.” Mark 2:5

Today's Scripture & Insight: Mark 2:1-12

During my childhood, one of the most feared diseases was polio, often called “infantile paralysis” because most of those infected were young children. Before a preventive vaccine was developed in the mid-1950s, some 20,000 people were paralyzed by polio and about 1,000 died from it each year in the United States alone.

In ancient times, paralysis was viewed as a permanent, hopeless condition. But one group of men believed Jesus could help their paralyzed friend. While Jesus was teaching in the village of Capernaum, four of the men carried the man to Him. When they couldn’t reach Jesus because of the crowd, “they made an opening in the roof above Jesus by digging through it and then lowered the mat the man was lying on” (Mark 2:1-4).

“When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralyzed man, ‘Son, your sins are forgiven’ ” (v. 5), followed by “Get up, take your mat and go home” (v. 11). How remarkable that in response to the faith of the men who brought their friend, Jesus forgave his sins and healed his incurable condition!

When someone we know is facing serious physical difficulty or a spiritual crisis, it is our privilege to join together in prayer, bringing our friends to Jesus—the only One who can meet their deepest needs. David C. McCasland (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

Reflect & Pray

Lord Jesus, we know that You can speak the words of eternal life and healing to people in great need. We bring them to You in prayer today.

Praying for others is a privilege—and a responsibility.

Wholeness Of Life

Read: Mark 2:1-12

Son, your sins are forgiven you. . . . I say to you, arise. —Mark 2:5,11

Social worker Margaret Sangster told her colleagues about seeing a young boy in an urban ghetto who appeared little more than a bit of twisted human flesh. He had been struck by a car several months earlier and had not received proper medical attention.

Although he was not a part of her caseload, she took the boy to an orthopedist, who performed surgery on his legs. Two years later the boy walked into Sangster's office without crutches. His recovery was complete. Margaret recalled that as the two embraced, she thought, If I accomplish nothing else in my life, I have made a real difference with at least this one!

Sangster then told her colleagues, "This was all several years ago now. Where do you think that boy is today?" They suggested that he might be a teacher, a physician, or a social worker. With deep emotion, she responded, "No, he's in the penitentiary for one of the foulest crimes a human can commit." Then she said, "I was instrumental in teaching him how to walk again, but there was no one to teach him where to walk."

Our mission is to point people to Jesus. Only through Him can those with broken bodies, broken dreams, broken homes, and broken hearts experience wholeness of life. (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

Lord, help us to tell of Your love for mankind—
A love for the sin-sick, the broken, the blind;
And help them to see by the way that we live
The wholeness of life that You long to give. —DJD

Only Jesus can give wholeness of life to a broken world.

POWER OF THE LORD - Ray Pritchard

> And the power of the Lord was present for him to heal the sick. (Luke 5:17)

Luke 5:17–26 contains the famous story of the man who was lowered through the roof so that Jesus could heal him. It teaches many lessons regarding persistence, the power of faith, and Jesus' true identity.

Lk 5:17 sets the scene for us. One day as Jesus was teaching in Capernaum, the crowds were so great that no one could get in the door. They had come to hear this amazing rabbi from Nazareth. He taught truths about God that the Pharisees had somehow overlooked. When He spoke, He used vivid word pictures, illustrations from nature, and stories from everyday life. Unlike some of the learned rabbis, Jesus felt no need to impress anyone with His great intellect. He had come to bring people nearer to God, so He had no need to impress anyone.

But they came for more than the teaching. Jesus had the power to work miracles. No one—not even His enemies—could deny that fact. He healed the sick, caused the blind to see and the deaf to hear, and cast out demons. He even raised the dead. No wonder they flocked to Him.

Luke tells us that "**the power of the Lord was present for Him to heal the sick**" That phrase takes us back to Jesus' conception when "**the Power of the Most High**" overshadowed Mary. Luke 4:14+ tells us that Jesus returned to Galilee from His temptation "**in the power of the Spirit**." The people of Capernaum were amazed at His power over demons: "What is this teaching? With authority and power He gives orders to evil spirits and they come out!" (Luke 4:36+).

The power of Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit are one and the same. God is the source of power over sickness, demonic spirits, and death. The Father gave the Son the power of the Spirit that He might work His mighty miracles.

There are three important lessons here.

- **First**, the Holy Spirit is God's divine channel for releasing His power on the earth.
- **Second**, when God's power is released into any situation, no power on earth can stand against it.
- **Third**, as we depend on the Holy Spirit, we will discover that God's power is available to us in every situation.

God never asks us to face our problems alone. Through the Holy Spirit, we have access to the greatest power source in the universe.
The power we need is ours for the asking. Gracious Father, when will I learn the folly of facing my problems alone? Thank You for providing Your Spirit to help me live victoriously. Amen (Names of the Holy Spirit)

D L Moody - FAITH REWARDED - Sermon on Luke 5:17-20 - see message at bottom of page.

Luke 5:21 The scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, "Who is this man who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone?"

> NET Luke 5:21 Then the experts in the law and the Pharisees began to think to themselves, "Who is this man who is uttering blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?"
>
> GNT Luke 5:21 κα ρξαντο διαλογ ζεσθαι ο γραμματε ς κα ο Φαρισα οι λ γοντες, T ς στιν ο τος ς λαλε βλασφημ ας; τ ς δ ναται μαρτ ας φε ναι ε μ μ νος θε ς;
>
> NLT Luke 5:21 But the Pharisees and teachers of religious law said to themselves, "Who does he think he is? That's blasphemy! Only God can forgive sins!"
>
> KJV Luke 5:21 And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, Who is this which speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone?
>
> ESV Luke 5:21 And the scribes and the Pharisees began to question, saying, "Who is this who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?"
>
> NIV Luke 5:21 The Pharisees and the teachers of the law began thinking to themselves, "Who is this fellow who speaks blasphemy? Who can forgive sins but God alone?"
>
> ASV Luke 5:21 And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, Who is this that speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone?
>
> CSB Luke 5:21 Then the scribes and the Pharisees began to think: "Who is this man who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?"

- **scribes**: Lu 5:17 7:49 Mk 2:6,7
- **blasphemies**: Lev 24:16 1Ki 21:10-14 Mt 9:3 26:65 Joh 10:33 Ac 6:11-13
- **Who can**: Ex 34:6,7 Ps 32:5 35:5 103:3 130:4 Isa 1:18 43:25 44:22 Da 9:9,19 Mic 7:19 Ro 8:33
- J C Ryle's Comments on Luke 5- clear, devout, and accurate
- Luke 5:17-26 The Return to Capernaum - Concerning the Forgiveness of Sins - the Healing of the Paralyzed - Alfred Edersheim
- Luke 5:21-25 Only God Forgives Sin, Part 1 - John MacArthur
- Luke 5:21-26 Only God Forgives Sin, Part 2 - John MacArthur
- Luke 5:17-26 - Helping Our Friends Find Forgiveness - Steven Cole
- Multiple Sermons - older
- Luke 5 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Parallel passages on the forgiven paralytic

> Mark 2:6-7+ But some of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts, "Why does this man speak that way? He is blaspheming; who can forgive sins but God alone?"
>
> Matthew 9:3+ has And behold, some of the scribes said to themselves, "This fellow blasphemes."

CRITICS COMMENCE COGITATING

Cogitate means to consider carefully and deeply; to think about; devise; to reflect upon; to turn over in one's mind; to ponder usually intently. "Chew over." You can mark it down, that whenever God's work is being done and bringing Him glory, there will always be criticizing naysayers! It was true in the first century and it is true today!

The scribes (grammateus) **and the Pharisees** (pharisaios) **began to reason** (dialogizomai - literally they held a dialogue with themselves - throwing thoughts back and forth in their heart) - Notice that the two synoptic parallels specify **some** not all **of the scribes** which would suggest not all of the **scribes** had this critical spirit. Instead of joy over forgiveness there was judgment in the hearts of these legalistic leaders regarding the "Forgiver!" For **Pharisees** see discussion of the Greek word pharisaios. Mark 2:6

explains where their reasoning was taking place - "some (INTERESTING! **SOME**, SO APPARENTLY NOT ALL!) of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning **in their hearts**" which Jesus uses in Lk 5:22 asking “Why are you reasoning in your hearts?"

A T Robertson - These scribes and Pharisees were there to cause trouble, to pick flaws in the teaching and conduct of Jesus. His popularity and power had aroused their jealousy. There is no evidence that they spoke aloud the murmur in their hearts, “within themselves” (Matt. 9:3). It was not necessary, for their looks gave them away and Jesus knew their thoughts (Matt. 9:4) and perceived their reasoning (Luke 5:22). Instantly Jesus recognized it in his own spirit (Mark 2:8 "Immediately Jesus, aware in His spirit"). The Master at once recognizes the hostile atmosphere in the house. The debate (dialogizomenoi) in their hearts was written on their faces. No sound had come, but feeling did.

Who is this man who speaks blasphemies (blasphemia) - They did not speak these words but this is what they were reasoning in their heart. Their assessment would have been correct if He were not God incarnate. (cf Mt 9:3 "And some of the scribes said to themselves, “This fellow blasphemes.”) The importance of this fact is that they knew that blasphemy was punishable by death (Lev. 24:10-23-note; Nu 15:30–31)

> Mark 2:7 has "Why does this man speak that way? He is blaspheming; who can forgive sins but God alone?”
>
> In Luke 7:49 "Those who were reclining at the table with Him began to say to themselves, “Who is this man who even forgives sins?”

“The prophet always is a scandalous, irreverent blasphemer from the conventional point of view” (Bruce).

Blasphemy is a frequent charge leveled against Jesus (Mk 14:64; Jn 5:18; 10:33, 36) and would eventually become the basis of Jesus’ conviction and crucifixion. Jesus would repeat this “crime” of declaring "Your sins are forgiven" in Luke 7:48–49+ (as He was dining with one of the Pharisees).

It is notable that this first charge finally became the fatal charge for in Mark 14:61-64 we read "But He kept silent and did not answer. Again the high priest was questioning Him, and saying to Him, “Are You the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?” 62 And Jesus said, “I am; and you shall see THE SON OF MAN SITTING AT THE RIGHT HAND OF POWER, and COMING WITH THE CLOUDS OF HEAVEN.” 63 Tearing his clothes, the high priest *said, “What further need do we have of witnesses? 64 “You have heard the **blasphemy**; how does it seem to you?” **And they all condemned Him to be deserving of death**."

Hendriksen writes - “Who is this fellow that speaks blasphemies?” If these critics had made a thorough and prayerful study of Isa. 35:5, 6; Isa 42:8, 9; Isa 61:1, 2, etc., they would have known better. This shows why earnest, systematic, prayerful Bible study is required.

Johann Bengel adds that "Blasphemy is committed when (1.) things unworthy of God are attributed to Him; (2.) things worthy of God are denied to Him; (3.) when the incommunicable attributes of God are attributed to others."

NET Note - Uttering blasphemies meant to say something that dishonored God. To claim divine prerogatives or claim to speak for God when one really does not would be such an act of offense. The remark raised directly the issue of the nature of Jesus’ ministry.

John MacArthur - Blasphemy was the most heinous crime in Jewish thought, since it was a direct affront to the person of God. They defined three levels of blasphemy. First, one blasphemed God by speaking evil of His law, as Stephen (Acts 6:13) and Paul (Acts 21:27–28) were falsely accused of doing. A more serious form of blasphemy was to slander, speak evil of, or curse God Himself (Lev. 24:10–16; cf. Ex. 20:7). But the ultimate form of blasphemy was to assume the rights and prerogatives of God; to usurp the role of God and act as if one were God. It was this third and most severe type of blasphemy that the scribes and Pharisees accused Jesus of (cf. John 5:18; 8:58–59; 10:33; 19:7). (See Luke Commentary)

Mattoon - When Jesus said, "Your sins are forgiven," the Pharisees antennas popped up. What? Who does this guy think he is? How dare he speak blasphemy! Only God can forgive a person of their sins. The ones that were suffering from paralysis were the Pharisees, not the man on the cot. They were paralyzed by their critical spirit, lack of love, and unbelief. The Pharisees were spiritually crippled. (Mattoon - Treasures from the Scriptures)

Who can (dunamai) **forgive** (aphiemi) **sins** (hamartia)**, but God alone?** - Theologically sound reasoning! However, they have just painted themselves in a "theological corner!" as the story unfolds. **Alone** is monos which means only. Only God can forgive sins! The religious leaders wrongly assumed that Jesus was merely a man and not God incarnate!

Hendriksen - The scribes were right in considering the remission of sins to be a divine prerogative (Ex. 34:6, 7a; Ps. 103:12; Isa. 1:18; 43:25; 44:22; 55:6, 7; Jer. 31:34; Mic. 7:19). To be sure, there is a sense in which we too forgive, namely, when we earnestly resolve not to take revenge but instead to love the one who has injured us, to promote his welfare, and never again to bring up the past (Matt. 6:12, 15; 18:21; Luke 6:37; Eph. 4:32; Col. 3:13). But basically, as described, it is God alone who forgives. It is he alone who is able to remove guilt and to declare that it has actually been removed. (Borrow Baker NT Commentary: Luke)

A T Robertson - They justify the charge with the conviction that God alone has the power ([dunatai]) to forgive sins. The word [blasphēmeō in Mk 2:7] means injurious speech or slander. It was, they held, blasphemy for Jesus to assume this divine prerogative. Their logic was correct. The only flaw in it was the possibility that Jesus held a peculiar relation to God which justified his claim. So the two forces clash here as now on the deity of Christ Jesus. Knowing full well that he had exercised the prerogative of God in forgiving the man's sins he proceeds to justify his claim by healing the man.

Spurgeon on **the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason** - The gentlemen I alluded to just now began to reason. It was just like them; instead of beginning to praise God, they "began to reason,"- **who can forgive sins but God alone** - Most true, O Pharisees; and, therefore he is God, for he can forgive sins, and he has forgiven this poor sinner! (Luke - exposition)

Scribes (1122)(**grammateus** from **grapho** = to write) was one skilled in Jewish law and theology scribe, expert, scholar (Mt 2.4). **Grammateus** also referred to a chief executive officer of a governmental entity such as a town official secretary, town clerk (Acts 19.35). Jesus gives a long rebuke including **8 WOES** primarily to the Scribes and Pharisees which should be read to help understand how this group of Jewish religious men functioned (See Mt 23:1-39, 13, 14, 15, 16, etc). Most sources consider the **lawyers** (nomikos - meaning one skilled in the Mosaic law) to be scribes specialized in the jurisprudence of the Law of Moses. Finally the scribes in Lk 5:17 (nomdidaskalos) were teachers of the Jewish law who were equal to the lawyers and scribes. In the Septuagint grammateus frequently used for a political officer who assisted kings or magistrates by keeping written accounts of public acts and occurrences or royal revenues (2 Ki 12:10) (See Brown-Driver-Briggs definition of saphar).

> **NET Note** on **scribes** - The traditional rendering of grammateus as "scribe" does not communicate much to the modern English reader, for whom the term might mean "professional copyist," if it means anything at all. The people referred to here were recognized experts in the law of Moses and in traditional laws and regulations. Thus "expert in the law" comes closer to the meaning for the modern reader.
>
> **MacArthur** notes that "Not all Pharisees were scribes, but the scribes were primarily Pharisees, who were interpreters and teachers of the law of Moses and the traditional rabbinic writings. Their teaching provided the theological framework for the Pharisees' legalistic system of works-righteousness. The scribes were the dominant force in Judaism, not only theologically, but socially. Their views affected every aspect of life, and they also handled all legal matters, including property, estates, and contracts. They were revered, and given the respectful title of Rabbi (Mt. 23:7). That title was sometimes given to Jesus because He was a teacher (cf. John 1:38, 49; 3:2, 26; 6:25). It was commonly believed that Moses received the law, then gave it to Joshua, who gave it to the elders, who gave it to the prophets, who gave it to the scribes. (Luke Commentary on Lk 20:46)
>
> **W E Vine on scribes -** Noun Masculine — grammateus from gramma, "a writing," denotes "a scribe, a man of letters, a teacher of the law;" the "scribes" are mentioned frequently in the Synoptists, especially in connection with the Pharisees, with whom they virtually formed one party (see Luke 5:21), sometimes with the chief priests, e.g., Matthew 2:4 ; Mark 8:31 ; 10:33 ; 11:18,27 ; Luke 9:22 . They are mentioned only once in John's Gospel, John 8:3 , three times in the Acts, 4:5; 6:12; 23:9; elsewhere only in1 Corinthians 1:20 , in the singular. They were considered naturally qualified to teach in the synagogues, Mark 1:22 . They were ambitious of honor, e.g.,Matthew 23:5-11 , which they demanded especially from their pupils, and which was readily granted them, as well as by the people generally. Like Ezra (Ezra 7:12), the "scribes" were found originally among the priests and Levites. The priests being the official interpreters of the Law, the "scribes" ere long became an independent company; though they never held political power, they became leaders of the people. Their functions regarding the Law were to teach it, develop it, and use it in connection with the Sanhedrin and various local courts. They also occupied themselves with the sacred writings both historical and didactic. They attached the utmost importance to ascetic elements, by which the nation was especially separated from the Gentiles. In their regime piety was reduced to external formalism. Only that was of value which was governed by external precept. Life under them became a burden; they themselves sought to evade certain of their own precepts, Matthew 23:16 ,ff.; Luke 11:46 ; by their traditions the Law, instead of being a help in moral and spiritual life, became an instrument for preventing true access to God, Luke 11:52 . Hence the Lord's stern denunciations of them and the Pharisees (see PHARISEES). (Vine's Expository Dictionary)
>
> **Warren Wiersbe** - The scribes and Pharisees probably developed out of the ministry of Ezra, the priest, who taught the Jewish people to obey the Law of Moses and be separate from the heathen nations around them (Ezra 9–10; Neh. 8–9). The great desire of the scribes and Pharisees was to understand and magnify God's Law and apply it in their daily lives. However, the movement soon became quite legalistic and its leaders laid so many burdens on the people that it was impossible to "serve the Lord with gladness" (Ps. 100:2).

Furthermore, many of the Pharisees were hypocrites and did not practice what they preached (see Matt. 15:1–20; 23:1–36). In the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5–7), Jesus exposed the shallowness of pharisaical religion. He explained that true righteousness is a matter of the heart and not external religious practices alone. (Borrow the Bible Exposition Commentary)

Easton's Dictionary on scribes especially OT scribes which were different from NT scribes - Anciently held various important offices in the public affairs of the nation. The Hebrew word so rendered (sapher - scroll down this link for Brown-Driver-Briggs definition of saphar) is first used to designate the holder of some military office (Judges 5:14KJV, "pen of the writer;" RSV, "the marshal's staff;" marg., "the staff of the scribe"). The scribes acted as secretaries of state, whose business it was to prepare and issue decrees in the name of the king (2 Sa 8:17; 20:25; 1 Chr 18:16; 24:6;1 Ki 4:3; 2 Ki 12:9-11; 18:18-37, etc.). They discharged various other important public duties as men of high authority and influence in the affairs of state. There was also a subordinate class of scribes, most of whom were Levites. They were engaged in various ways as writers. Such, for example, was Baruch, who "wrote from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the Lord" (Jer 36:4,32).In later times, after the Captivity, when the nation lost its independence, the scribes turned their attention to the law, gaining for themselves distinction by their intimate acquaintance with its contents. On them devolved the duty of multiplying copies of the law and of teaching it to others (Ezra 7:6,10-12 ;Neh 8:1,4,9,13). It is evident that in New Testament times the scribes belonged to the sect of the Pharisees, who supplemented the ancient written law by their traditions (Matthew 23), thereby obscuring it and rendering it of none effect. The titles "scribes" and "lawyers" (q.v.) are in the Gospels interchangeable (Matthew 22:35 ; Mark 12:28 ; Luke 20:39 , etc.). They were in the time of our Lord the public teachers of the people, and frequently came into collision with him. They afterwards showed themselves greatly hostile to the apostles (Acts 4:5; 6:12).Some of the scribes, however, were men of a different spirit, and showed themselves friendly to the gospel and its preachers. Thus Gamaliel advised the Sanhedrin, when the apostles were before them charged with "teaching in this name," to "refrain from these men and let them alone" (Acts 5:34-39 ; comp 23:9).

Gilbrant o n **grammateus** - Scribes are frequently mentioned in the New Testament in conjunction with Pharisees (e.g., Matthew 5:20; 23:27; etc.). However, being an expert in the Law did not automatically mean that one was a Pharisee, and neither did being a Pharisee mean that one was also a legal expert (e.g., Acts 23:9). Many Pharisees were not legal experts, although most of the leaders of the sect were. Scribes were also found in the party of the Sadducees, but their influence there was only minor. This explains why those who were both Pharisees and experts in the Law receive the most attention in the New Testament. While some experts in the Law were priests, this was not usually the case. Most had a civilian occupation. This was one aspect of the legal expert's "wisdom." Normally they were businessmen or craftsmen or farmers who earned their livelihood by means of their hands; their scribal duties were done without pay. In spite of the high regard in which they were held, socially speaking most of them belonged to the poorest class of people in Israel. Because of their contribution and role in society, some experts in the Law were supported by the people. To become an official member of a scribal guild involved a long and exhaustive training period. Normally it began around age 15 when the student began learning the expositions of the Law that were later collected in the Talmud. The preparation continued for around 12 years, but the right and authority to teach others (to be a rabbi) were acquired only after one became 40 years old. As mentioned previously, to train and study the Scriptures did not always exempt one from physical labor. In fact, "making study into a spade" was warned against. Furthermore, it was held that having a knowledge of the Law without knowing how to work with the hands leads to vanity and drives one to sin. Experts in the Law came from all classes and groups of people whose main goal was to further the traditions of the Law. This passing on of tradition was the characteristic feature of the scribe. As "lawyers" they presented their rulings to the Sanhedrin, the highest council. They were involved in the administration of the council and the affairs of Israel. They performed the duties of a teacher, too, and they instructed especially in matters of the Law. On the whole, most of the education in Israel revolved around the wisdom of the experts in the Law. Their scope of teaching was comprehensive. Although experts in the Law did not necessarily belong to the priesthood, because of their learning they became the spiritual aristocracy. They paraded their status and maintained rigid ethics. The common people addressed them as "rabbi," an address of respect meaning "master" or "my great teacher" (rabboni). They were also easily identified by their dress. Most experts in the Law wore a loose fitting robe (Greek stolē, Mark 12:38). Tassels on the corners of their garments each had a blue cord. This was to remind the wearer of the commands of the Law (Numbers 15:37-41). Phylacteries (see phulaktērion), perhaps derived from a literal interpretation of Deuteronomy 6:8 (KJV, "frontlets"), were tied to the wrists and forehead. Inside these small, hollow cubes of the skin of a clean animal, pious Jews (especially in the Second Century) kept

portions of Scripture. As time went by, these external things were given more and more emphasis and value. Jesus strongly cautioned against following the vain practices of the scribes (Matthew 23:2-10). During a scribe's interpretation of the Law a great deal of weight was given to texts having common or parallel features. Minute details were scrutinized closely, and "hidden" allusions were "found." Thus, Scripture was viewed as being able to give new understanding of and direction for current problems. Their interpretive method, however, was marked by extreme inconsistency. This especially came about as a result of the frequent use of the allegorical method of interpreting Scripture. This method sought to discover behind the clear, express meaning of a text a deeper meaning. This easily led to reading into the text something that was not actually there. Based upon scriptural insights there gradually arose a fixed, oral tradition of rules and ordinances and of "case studies." This system is called "the tradition of the elders" in the New Testament (e.g., Matthew 15:2ff.). The legal experts contrived a method for passing on the rulings of a teacher to his student. Some have called this the rote method. Disciples of the rabbi memorized the oral tradition. They were supposed to be able to recite it word for word without missing or rearranging a single word. Jesus saw the "traditions of the elders" (Mt 15:2, Mk 7:5, 8) as in conflict with the Scriptures as God's Word. Consequently, He avoided referring to any human authority or tradition when He—the Teacher—interpreted the Scriptures. Instead, He underscored His authority with, "But I say to you..." (Mt 5:11, 18, 32, 34, 39, 44, 12:6) Moreover, what Jesus said was that it was not the Law but He himself who was the way to God (John 14:6). Through receiving Him one had the right to become a child of God (John 1:12). With those kind of declarations Jesus overturned the demands of the experts in the Law for meritorious deeds and conformity to ritual and ethical demands. The "good news," the gospel, supersedes the Law. Doing God's will now involves receiving His kingdom. On a few occasions **grammateus** carries another meaning. It carries more positive overtones in Jesus' comments about the value of a "every scribe who has become a disciple of the kingdom of heaven" (Mt 13:52 cf. Ezra 7:6, 10, 11, 12). The use in Acts 19:35 follows the classical definition of **"town clerk**." Paul's usage in 1 Corinthians 1:20 probably has a meaning broader than just a technical term for Jewish legal experts. (Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary)

Grammateus - 63x in 63v - Usage: scribe(4), scribes(59), town clerk(1). Matt. 2:4; 5:20; 7:29; 8:19; 9:3; 12:38; 13:52; 15:1; 16:21; 17:10; 20:18; 21:15; 23:2,13,15,23,25,27,29,34; 26:57; 27:41; Mk. 1:22; 2:6,16; 3:22; 7:1,5; 8:31; 9:11,14; 10:33; 11:18,27; 12:28,32,35,38; 14:1,43,53; 15:1,31; Lk. 5:21,30; 6:7; 9:22; 11:53; 15:2; 19:47; 20:1,19,39,46; 22:2,66; 23:10; Jn. 8:3; Acts 4:5; 6:12; 19:35; 23:9; 1 Co. 1:20

- Torrey's Topic - Scribes
- Bridgeway Bible Dictionary Scribes
- Charles Buck Dictionary Scribe
- Easton's Bible Dictionary Scribes
- Fausset Bible Dictionary Scribes
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible Scribe Scribes
- Hastings' Dictionary of the NT Scribe Scribes
- Smith Bible Dictionary Scribes
- 1911 Encyclopedia Britannica Scribes
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia Scribes
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopedia Scribes
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia Scribe

Began to reason (literally they held a dialogue with themselves - throwing thoughts back and forth in their heart) (1260) (**dialogizomai** from **dia** = intensifies meaning + **logizomai** - to reason, reckon, consider. Related to our English word "dialogue" a conversation between two or more people) means to consider, reason or reckon thoroughly, to think through, to deliberate by reflection. "To bring together different reasons." (Vine) To hold a discussion. To take full account of, to stop to consider, to distinguish between. To reason with others with meaning to discuss but in some contexts meaning to argue or debate (Mt. 16:7, 8; Mk 8:16, 17; Lu 20:14).

Blasphemies (slander)(988)(**blasphemia** from **blapto** = hinder, injure, hurt + **pheme** = report, rumor, fame from **phemí** = to speak; see study of verb form **blasphemeo**) refers to verbal abuse against someone which denotes the very worst type of slander. In Scripture, blasphemia refers to an intentional and overt defilement of the divine name, and so is any abusive speech or action directed against God, especially against the majesty, nature and power of God. They are reasoning that Jesus is taking for Himself a right that is reserved for God alone!

Blasphemia - 17v - abusive language(1), blasphemies(4), blasphemous(2), blasphemy(6), railing(1),

slander(3), slanders(1). Matt. 12:31; Matt. 15:19; Matt. 26:65; Mk. 3:28; Mk. 7:22; Mk. 14:64; Lk. 5:21; Jn. 10:33; Eph. 4:31; Col. 3:8; 1 Tim. 6:4; Jude 1:9; Rev. 2:9; Rev. 13:1; Rev. 13:5; Rev. 13:6; Rev. 17:3

Luke 5:22 But Jesus, aware of their reasonings, answered and said to them, "Why are you reasoning in your hearts?

NET Luke 5:22 When Jesus perceived their hostile thoughts, he said to them, "Why are you raising objections within yourselves?

GNT Luke 5:22 πιγνο ς δ ησο ς το ς διαλογισμο ς α τ ν ποκριθε ς ε πεν πρ ς α το ς, Τ διαλογ ζεσθε ν τα ς καρδ αις μ ν;

NLT Luke 5:22 Jesus knew what they were thinking, so he asked them, "Why do you question this in your hearts?

KJV Luke 5:22 But when Jesus perceived their thoughts, he answering said unto them, What reason ye in your hearts?

ESV Luke 5:22 When Jesus perceived their thoughts, he answered them, "Why do you question in your hearts?

NIV Luke 5:22 Jesus knew what they were thinking and asked, "Why are you thinking these things in your hearts?

ASV Luke 5:22 But Jesus perceiving their reasonings, answered and said unto them, Why reason ye in your hearts?

CSB Luke 5:22 But perceiving their thoughts, Jesus replied to them, "Why are you thinking this in your hearts?

- **aware of**: 1Ch 28:9 Ps 139:2 Pr 15:26 Isa 66:18 Eze 38:10 Mt 9:4 12:25 Heb 4:12 Rev 2:23
- **Why**: Lu 24:38 Mk 8:17 Ac 5:3
- J C Ryle's Comments on Luke 5- clear, devout, and accurate
- Luke 5:17-26 The Return to Capernaum - Concerning the Forgiveness of Sins - the Healing of the Paralyzed - Alfred Edersheim
- Luke 5:21-25 Only God Forgives Sin, Part 1 - John MacArthur
- Luke 5:21-26 Only God Forgives Sin, Part 2 - John MacArthur
- Luke 5:17-26 - Helping Our Friends Find Forgiveness - Steven Cole
- Multiple Sermons - older
- Luke 5 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Parallel passages

Mark 2:8+ Immediately Jesus, aware in His spirit that they were reasoning that way within themselves, said to them, "Why are you reasoning about these things in your hearts?

Mt 9:4+ And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, "Why are you thinking (enthumeomai in present tense = continually pondering) **evil** in your hearts?

> **Comment**: Matthew helps us understand that the thoughts of the religious sects were not neutral but clearly were evil. The specific Greek word for evil here is not kakos but poneros which describes evil in active opposition to good. It means not only evil in its nature but viciously evil in its influence and actively harmful. Poneros used to describe Satan (*ho poneros* = "Evil one"), the god of this age, who is corrupting man and dragging him to destruction. Poneros describes these scribes and Pharisees as not merely content in being corrupt themselves, but in actively seeking to corrupt others, drawing them to the same destruction (Read Jesus' piercing description of them in Mt 23:15)! In sum, poneros is not just bad in character (like kakos), but bad in effect (injurious)! As an aside their hearts were filled with evil (Read Jesus' description in Mt 12:34, 15:19,20, Mk 7:21-23, cf Lk 6:45)!

JESUS READS THEIR REACTION
LIKE A BOOK!

Jesus, aware of their reasonings (dialogismos) - Mark points out that Jesus detected their reasoning **immediately** and adds that He was **aware in His spirit** clear proof of His deity (even Spirit filled believers cannot "read minds!") Matthew adds that Jesus knew their reasonings were **evil**! (see comment above) The fact that Jesus knew what the scribes and Pharisees were thinking should have been another clue to them that Jesus was no ordinary man for only God can know the heart of a man even as Samuel speaking to David's father Jesse declared "God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart." (cf 1 Kings 8:39; 1 Chr 28:9; Jer. 17:10; Ezek 11:5). Instead of convincing the religious leaders of His deity, Jesus next words inflamed the conflict.

In a sense this passage is a fulfillment of the prophecy in Lk 2:35+ (to Mary) - "and a sword will pierce even your own soul–to the end that **thoughts from many hearts may be revealed**."

Bock addresses the enigmatic question of how is it that Jesus knew - What Jesus' insight reveals about him is a matter of debate. (1) Some argue for natural insight because Jesus has just observed the religious leaders' response. He is simply portrayed as perceptive (Fitzmyer 1981: 584; Luke 4:23; 6:8; 7:40; 9:47). (2) Others argue for prophetic understanding (Schneider 1977a: 134). (3) Still others hold that divine insight is alluded to here. Jesus reflects "divine knowledge" (Schürmann 1969: 283) or is revealing his divinity (Hendriksen 1978: 298). It is hard to be certain of the specific nature of the intention here. The theme's consistency in Luke suggests more than natural perception, as does the use of πιγνούς (epignous), which means he "knew fully" their thoughts. At the least, Jesus operates like a prophet. Jesus' description of his authority in 5:24 as tied to the Son of Man suggests someone who is more than a prophet. Jesus decides to challenge the Pharisees directly, having realized what they are thinking. He simply begins by asking why they should question him. (See Luke: Baker Exegetical Commentary)

Why are you reasoning (dialogizomai) **in your hearts?** (kardia) (Mt 9:4 "Why are you thinking evil in your hearts?") - With this question Jesus rebukes them for their evil and false allegations. They in fact were the ones who were evil (see note above)! (cf their evil intent in Mk 3:6 after Jesus' Sabbath healing). **Hendriksen** comments that "In a highly derogatory manner these enemies are saying something decidedly unfavorable. However, they are not saying it out loud, **only within their hearts**. But hearts are very important. Are they not the mainsprings of dispositions as well as of feelings and thoughts? Does not a man's heart show what kind of a person he really is? (See kardia) See Mark 3:5; 6:52; 7:14–23; 8:17; 11:23; 12:30, 33; Eph. 1:18; 3:17; Phil. 1:7; 1 Tim. 1:5. Cf. Pr 23:7KJV."

> **THOUGHT** - WHO ARE YOU? HAVE YOU HAD A HEART CHECK UP RECENTLY? We are assiduous to do this medically, but woefully lax in doing it spiritually (beloved, I speak from experience!). At regeneration God reverses the spiritual atherosclerosis of our old sinful heart by giving us a total heart transplant! Daily confession and repentance are thereafter necessary to avoid "spiritual atherosclerosis" and gradual, subtle hardening (and becoming cold to the things of God) of our heart! (Practice daily "preventative maintenance" = 1 Jn 1:9+, Pr 28:13+).

Spurgeon - See, Jesus can perceive thoughts. I have heard of "thought-reading." Here is a true specimen of it: "Jesus perceived their thoughts, and said unto them, Why reason ye in your hearts?" (Luke - exposition)

Reasonings (Thoughts, speculations, disputings, doubts) (1261)(**dialogismos** from **diá** = through or as a preposition to intensify meaning of + **logizomai** = reckon, take an inventory, conclude; source of our English *dialogue*) means literally reasoning through and so to think or reason with thoroughness and completeness, think out carefully, reason thoroughly, consider carefully, weighing. In the Greek writings **dialogismos** described the thinking of a man deliberating with himself. **Bock** notes that **dialogismos** "is often negative in the NT (Ro 1:21; 1 Cor. 3:20; Mk 7:21; Mt. 15:19; Lk 2:35; 6:8; 9:47), with Ro 14:1, where it means "reasoning," being the only neutral use of the term. Mt. 9:4 has a synonymous term enthumesis.

Reason (discuss, ponder) (1260) **dialogizomai** from **dia** = intensifies meaning + **logizomai** - to reason, reckon, consider. Related to our English word "dialogue" a conversation between two or more people) means to consider, reason or reckon thoroughly, to think through, to deliberate by reflection. "To bring together different reasons." (Vine) To hold a discussion. To take full account of, to stop to consider, to distinguish between. To think about or reason in one's mind alone as was the case with Mary who had an inner wondering to herself about the angel's words (Mt. 21:25; Mk 2:6, 8; Lu 3:15; 5:21, 22; 12:17; Ps 77:6; 119:59). To reason with others with meaning to discuss but in some contexts meaning to argue or debate (Mt. 16:7, 8; Mk 8:16, 17; Lu 20:14). To deliberate in the sense of to take counsel or to devise (Lxx Pr 6:18, Jer 11:19)

> **Dialogizomai** - 15v - Mt. 16:7; Mt. 16:8; Mt. 21:25; Mk. 2:6; Mk. 2:8; Mk. 8:16; Mk. 8:17; Mk. 9:33; Mk. 11:31; Lk. 1:29; Lk. 3:15; Lk. 5:21; Lk. 5:22; Lk. 12:17; Lk. 20:14

Hearts (2588)(**kardia**) does not refer to the physical organ (over 800 mentions and none refer to the physical organ!) but is always

used figuratively in Scripture to refer to the seat and center of human life. The heart is the center of the personality, and it controls the intellect, emotions, and will. No outward obedience is of the slightest value unless the heart turns to God. Heart in effect describes our "**control center**" (to make a play on the "air traffic control center" at the airport which carefully guards and guides what flies in and what flies out. How applicable to our "hearts" which are so prone to wander!). **Kardia** refers to the the affective center of our being wherein lies the capacity of moral preference and volitional desire. The **kardia** generates thoughts that make the decisions which the mind works out. In other words, our logic flows out of our heart-decisions and not vice versa. Gleason Archer called the **kardia**, the "desire-producer that makes us tick" for it is the place where our "desire-decisions" occur, and which establish who we really are.

Luke 5:23 "Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins have been forgiven you,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'?

NET Luke 5:23 Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Stand up and walk'?

GNT Luke 5:23 τ στιν ε κοπ τερον, ε πε ν, φ ωντα σοι α μαρτ αι σου, ε πε ν, γειρε κα περιπ τει;

NLT Luke 5:23 Is it easier to say 'Your sins are forgiven,' or 'Stand up and walk'?

KJV Luke 5:23 Whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Rise up and walk?

ESV Luke 5:23 Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Rise and walk'?

NIV Luke 5:23 Which is easier: to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'?

ASV Luke 5:23 Which is easier, to say, Thy sins are forgiven thee; or to say, Arise and walk?

CSB Luke 5:23 Which is easier: to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'?

- J C Ryle's Comments on Luke 5 - clear, devout, and accurate
- Luke 5:17-26 The Return to Capernaum - Concerning the Forgiveness of Sins - the Healing of the Paralyzed - Alfred Edersheim
- Luke 5:21-25 Only God Forgives Sin, Part 1 - John MacArthur
- Luke 5:21-26 Only God Forgives Sin, Part 2 - John MacArthur
- Luke 5:17-26 - Helping Our Friends Find Forgiveness - Steven Cole
- Luke 5 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Parallel passages

Mark 2:9+ "Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven'; or to say, 'Get up, and pick up your pallet and walk'?

Mt 9:5+ "For which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise, and walk'?

CHRIST CHALLENGES HIS CRITICS

Which (Greek "ti" = which of two?**) is easier, to say Your sins** (hamartia) **have been forgiven** (aphiemi) **you,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'? -** Jesus confronts His adversaries with a pointed counterquestion, which was a well-known rhetorical device in Rabbinic debates (cf Mk 3:4, Mk 11:30, Mk 12:37) It is obviously easier to say, `**Your sins have been forgiven you,**' since the validity of the statement cannot be tested and confirmed or denied. On the other hand the command to **Get up and walk!**` provides clear evidence simply by the paralyzed person rising and walking.

Robert Stein refers to this as a "counterquestion" by Jesus adding "For other examples of Jesus' use of a counterquestion in Luke, cf. Lk 5:34; 6:3–4, 9; 7:40–42; 10:26; 11:18–19; 13:15–16; 14:3–5; 20:3–4, 24....It is easier to say, "Your sins are forgiven" than, "Get up and walk" because the legitimacy of the former cannot be disproven whereas the latter can if no healing takes place. However, since God alone can forgive sins and since numerous people, both in and out of the Bible, have performed healings, the former is more difficult to do. Luke understood that if God granted Jesus power to work this miracle, then God himself supported Jesus' claim that he can forgive sins. (See Luke: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition)

Spurgeon - "Does not each of these require the same divine power? If I am able to bid him rise up and walk, I am also able, by the same divine authority, to forgive his sins." He that could do the one could do the other. He who bids the paralyzed man walk is divine;

he, therefore, can forgive sin. Anyone can say, “Thy sins be forgiven thee,” or, “Rise up and walk,” but to forgive sins, or to give the power to rise up and walk, equally needs a God. If God be present, and can make the palsied man arise and walk, he is also able to forgive his sins. (Luke - exposition)

Criswell - Jesus asserts that, by comparison, the forgiveness of sin is an infinitely more profound and difficult work than the healing of the paralytic's body. After His authority to forgive sins was questioned, Jesus healed the man. The fact that Jesus ignored the obvious bodily infirmity and moved immediately to remedy the spiritual illness establishes an unqualified priority of spiritual matters over physical ones. (The Believer's Study Bible)

Bock comments on the value of Jesus' miracles - Miracles put **rejection** into the “**without excuse**” category, since miracles provided divine attestation (Acts 2:22; 3:6, 17; 4:9; 10:38). (See Luke : Baker Exegetical Commentary)

Luke 5:24 "But, so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins,"--He said to the paralytic--" I say to you, get up, and pick up your stretcher and go home."

> NET Luke 5:24 But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"– he said to the paralyzed man– "I tell you, stand up, take your stretcher and go home."
>
> GNT Luke 5:24 να δ ε δ τε τι υ ς το νθρ που ξουσ αν χει π τ ς γ ς φι ναι μαρτ ας- ε πεν τ παραλελυμ ν , Σο λ γω, γειρε κα ρας τ κλιν δι ν σου πορε ου ε ς τ ν ο κ ν σου.
>
> NLT Luke 5:24 So I will prove to you that the Son of Man has the authority on earth to forgive sins." Then Jesus turned to the paralyzed man and said, "Stand up, pick up your mat, and go home!"
>
> KJV Luke 5:24 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power upon earth to forgive sins, (he said unto the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy couch, and go into thine house.
>
> ESV Luke 5:24 But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"-- he said to the man who was paralyzed-- "I say to you, rise, pick up your bed and go home."
>
> NIV Luke 5:24 But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins..." He said to the paralyzed man, "I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home."
>
> ASV Luke 5:24 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath authority on earth to forgive sins (he said unto him that was palsied), I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy couch, and go unto thy house.
>
> CSB Luke 5:24 But so you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"-- He told the paralyzed man, "I tell you: Get up, pick up your mat, and go home."

- **The Son of Man:** Da 7:13 Mt 16:13 25:31 26:64 John 3:13 5:27 Rev 1:13
- **Authority**: Isa 53:11 Mt 9:6 28:18 John 5:8,12,22,23 17:2 20:22,23 Ac 5:31
- **I say:** Lu 5:13 7:14 8:54 John 11:43 Ac 3:6-8 9:34,40 14:10
- **Pick up**: John 5:8-12
- J C Ryle's Comments on Luke 5 - clear, devout, and accurate
- Luke 5:17-26 The Return to Capernaum - Concerning the Forgiveness of Sins - the Healing of the Paralyzed - Alfred Edersheim
- Luke 5:21-25 Only God Forgives Sin, Part 1 - John MacArthur
- Luke 5:21-26 Only God Forgives Sin, Part 2 - John MacArthur
- Luke 5:17-26 - Helping Our Friends Find Forgiveness - Steven Cole
- Luke 5 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Parallel passages

> Mark 2:10-11+ "But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"--He said to the paralytic, "I say to you, get up, pick up your pallet and go home."
>
> Matthew 9:6+ "But in order that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"--then He said to the paralytic-- "Rise, take up your bed, and go home."

JESUS WILL PROVE HIS

AUTHORITY TO FORGIVE SINS

But, so that you may know (eido) **- So that** is a term of purpose and in this context the purpose is clearly stated. Be alert to this strategic term of purpose and always pause to interrogate it with at least the simple question "What is the writer's purpose in this context?" Some uses are not as easy to discern as this present passage! The phrase **You may know** could refer to the entire crowd but ultimately Jesus was focusing in on those who were contemplating accusing the **Son of Man** of blasphemy. **Know** (eido) means to know beyond a shadow of doubt, even as the demons knew beyond a shadow of doubt Who Jesus really was! (cf Lk 4:34+)

That the Son of Man has authority (exousia) **on earth to forgive** (aphiemi) **sins** (hamartia) - (See comment on Mark 2:10 regarding Son of Man) The verb **has** is in the present tense indicating Jesus continually has this authority. As **Bock** says "If the paralytic walks, the miracle talks about the **Son of Man**'s authority to forgive sin. If the **Son of Man** possesses such unique authority, then who is the **Son of Man** other than God's unique agent of salvation? That is the question that the miracle raises." (And in effect answers for any who had eyes to see and ears to hear spiritual truth!)

Son of man was used frequently by Ezekiel to describe the prophet himself, but Daniel used **Son of Man** to refer to a prophecy of the Messiah (see below). In the NT **Son of Man** is used in 84 verses the majority referring to Jesus. **Son of Man** was Jesus' favorite description of Himself. By using the phrase "**of Man**" Jesus demonstrates His compassionate willingness to identify with fallen mankind.

> **Son of Man** - Matt. 8:20; 9:6; 10:23; 11:19; 12:8,32,40; 13:37,41; 16:13,27-28; 17:9,12,22; 18:11; 19:28; 20:18,28; 24:27,30,37,39,44; 25:31; 26:2,24,45,64; Mk. 2:10,28; 8:31,38; 9:9,12,31; 10:33,45; 13:26; 14:21,41,62; Lk. 5:24; 6:5,22; 7:34; 9:22,26,44,56,58; 11:30; 12:8,10,40; 17:22,24,26,30; 18:8,31; 19:10; 21:27,36; 22:22,48,69; 24:7; Jn. 1:51; 3:13-14; 5:27; 6:27,53,62; 8:28; 9:35; 12:23,34; 13:31; Acts 7:56; Heb. 2:6; Rev. 1:13; 14:14
>
> **Daniel** prophesied of the Messiah's coming ""I kept looking in the night visions, And behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a **Son of Man** was coming, And He came up to the Ancient of Days And was presented before Him. (Da 7:13+)

Wiersbe on **Son of Man** - In Luke 5:24, we have the first recorded use of the title Son of man in Luke's Gospel, where it is found twenty-three times. Our Lord's listeners were familiar with this title. It was used of the Prophet Ezekiel over eighty times, and Daniel applied it to the Messiah (Dan. 7:13, 18). "Son of man" was our Lord's favorite name for Himself; this title is found at least eighty-two times in the Gospel record. Occasionally He used the title "Son of God" (Matt. 27:43; Luke 22:70; John 5:25; 9:35; 10:36; 11:4), but "Son of man" was used more. Certainly the Jewish people caught the messianic character of this title, but it also identified Him with the people He came to save (Luke 19:10). Like Ezekiel, the Old Testament "son of man," Jesus "sat where they sat" (Ezek. 3:15). (Borrow the Bible Exposition Commentary)

Jesus' ability to heal with a Word (totally and immediately, cf Lk 5:25, Lk 4:38-39) was clear proof of His deity. Jesus as God had all authority to forgive sins. This encounter was a strategic moment in His ministry which should have ended the opposition of the religious leaders. Instead, they began to try to discredit Him by charging Him with violating the Sabbath (cf Lk 6:1-5, Lk 6:6-11).

He said to the paralytic--" I say to you, get up (egeiro)**, and pick up** (airo) **your stretcher and go home."** - A veritable staccato of instructions (including 2 commands) from the Savior. Now was the moment of truth! You can feel the tension in the air! You can just imagine the critics cringing!

Spurgeon WHEREVER OUR LORD WORKS THE DOUBLE MIRACLE, IT WILL BE APPARENT. The man's healing was proved by his obedience. Openly to all onlookers an active obedience became indisputable proof of the poor creature's restoration. Notice, our Lord bade him rise — he rose; he had no power to do so except that power which comes with Divine commands. He did his Lord's bidding, and he did it accurately, in detail, at once, and most cheerfully. Oh! how cheerfully; none can tell but those in like case restored. So, the true sign of pardoned sin, and of paralysis removed from the heart, is obedience.(Carried by Four)

Know (1492)(**eido**) literally means perception by sight as in Mt 2:2 where the wise men "saw His star". This verb speaks of absolute certainty, of knowledge that is self-evident and sure The other major NT word for know is ginosko which generally refers to knowledge obtained by experience whereas eido more often refers to intuitive knowledge although the distinction is not always crystal clear. In the present passage the demons were absolutely certain they were in the presence of God!

> **Eido in Luke and Acts** - Lk. 2:49; Lk. 4:34; Lk. 4:41; Lk. 5:24; Lk. 6:8; Lk. 8:53; Lk. 9:33; Lk. 9:47; Lk. 9:55; Lk. 11:13; Lk. 11:17; Lk. 11:44; Lk. 12:30; Lk. 12:39; Lk. 12:56; Lk. 13:25; Lk. 13:27; Lk. 18:20; Lk. 19:22; Lk. 20:7; Lk. 20:21; Lk. 22:34; Lk. 22:57; Lk. 22:60; Lk. 23:34; Acts 2:22; Acts 2:30; Acts 3:16; Acts 3:17; Acts 5:7; Acts 7:18; Acts 7:40; Acts 10:37; Acts 12:9; Acts 12:11; Acts 16:3; Acts 19:32; Acts 20:22; Acts 20:25; Acts 20:29; Acts 23:5; Acts 24:22; Acts 26:4; Acts 26:27

Authority (Mt 9:6)(1849)(exousia) in simple terms means Jesus has both the right to do this and the might to accomplish it (send sins away)! Luke uses **exousia** to refer to Jesus' message (Lk 4:32, not like the scribes - Mt 7:29), to His authority over the world of the demons (Lk 4:36), to Jesus' delegation of His authority to the 12 disciples (Lk 9:1, cf Lk 10:19), to Jesus' authority to cast into hell (Lk 12:5, cf Mt 25:41), to Jesus' promise to believers to have authority over cities (Lk 19:17) (probably during the Millennium - MacArthur agrees noting this refers to "believers' responsibility and rule under Christ in His future kingdom - cf. 2 Ti 2:12; Rev 1:6+; Rev 5:10+; Rev 20:4, 6+).

Mattoon - Joseph Mallord Turner, English painter, invited Charles Kingsley to his studio to see a picture of a storm at sea. In rapt admiration, Kingsley exclaimed, "It's wonderful! It's so realistic! How did you do it?" The artist replied, "I went to the coast of Holland and engaged a fisherman to take me out to sea in the next storm. Entering his boat as a storm was brewing, I asked him to bind me to the mast. Then he steered his boat into the teeth of the storm. The storm raged with such fury that at times I longed to be in the bottom of the boat where the waves would blow over me. I could not, however. I was bound to the mast. Not only did I see the storm in its raging fury, I felt it! It blew into me, as it were, until I became a part of it. After this terrible ordeal, I returned to my studio and painted the picture." Jesus experienced the same storms of life that we encounter today. He understands everything that you go through for He has felt it too. He understands rejection, suffering, betrayal, disappointment, setbacks, poverty, and the pain of death. He understands our storms. Hebrews 4:15 (Mattoon - Treasures from the Scriptures)

The Cure

Read: Mark 2:1-12

> The Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins. —Mark 2:10

A man with a nagging cough tried all the over-the-counter remedies he could find, but none worked. Finally he went to a doctor, who quickly discovered that he was suffering from pneumonia. The man was trying to ease the symptoms when what he needed was a cure. The doctor treated the deeper, more serious problem and in a short time the cough was gone.

When Jesus was in Capernaum, a large crowd came to the home where He was staying (Mk. 2:1-2). As He was teaching, some men made an opening in the roof and lowered a paralyzed man on a mat. Jesus initially responded not by healing the man but by saying, “Son, your sins are forgiven” (v.5). The deepest need of the man was not physical but spiritual. Then, to show His authority to forgive, Jesus healed the man and sent him on his way—not only with legs that moved but with a heart that was forgiven (v.12).

The world is full of pain and problems. It’s tempting to spend a lot of time and resources to treat the surface symptoms and feel that we have done our part. Like Jesus, however, we need to deal with the heart issues. We need to tell people that their sins can be forgiven through faith in Christ. The gospel holds the cure for our deepest need. David C. Egner (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

The Great Physician holds the cure
That kills the virus of our sin;
It's by His own atoning blood
That we're made whole and pure within.
—DJD

Sin is the disease, Christ is the cure.

All Rise

> Arise, take up your bed, and go to your house. —Mark 2:11

Today's Scripture: Mark 2:1-12

When I asked my husband to buy eggs on his way home so I could make cornbread for supper, he said, “I’ve got something better than cornbread.” Coming from Jay, that was a surprising statement. But I learned what he meant when he walked into the house and handed me a fresh loaf of homemade cinnamon bread. A label on the wrapper said, “Thanks for the dough. We kneaded it.” The bread was made by Sue Kehr and given as a “thank you” for a donation to a youth organization.

Sue started making bread after she had to quit her job as a nurse because of a head injury. Instead of letting circumstances pull her down when she could no longer help people in her usual ways, Sue rose to the challenge and created a unique expression of gratitude. She now makes and gives away delicious homemade bread to ministries that can then distribute the loaves to others.

Although Sue did not receive complete physical healing like the paralytic Jesus healed (Mark 2), she did rise up and cause many to

be amazed at the work of God in her life.

God has something for each of us to do, despite our limitations. Rise up and ask what He might want to do through you. By: Julie Ackerman Link (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

When God asks you to lay aside
Some cherished work you loved to do,
Accept His choice of someone else
And let Him give new work to you.
—Fasick

Step up to the tasks and do what God asks.

Luke 5:25 Immediately he got up before them, and picked up what he had been lying on, and went home glorifying God.

> NET Immediately he stood up before them, picked up the stretcher he had been lying on, and went home, glorifying God.
>
> GNT κα παραχρ μα ναστ ς ν πιον α τ ν, ρας φ κατ κειτο, π λθεν ε ς τ ν ο κον α το δοξ ζων τ ν θε ν.
>
> NLT And immediately, as everyone watched, the man jumped up, picked up his mat, and went home praising God.
>
> KJV And immediately he rose up before them, and took up that whereon he lay, and departed to his own house, glorifying God.
>
> ESV And immediately he rose up before them and picked up what he had been lying on and went home, glorifying God.
>
> NIV Immediately he stood up in front of them, took what he had been lying on and went home praising God.
>
> NAB Luke 5:25 He stood up immediately before them, picked up what he had been lying on, and went home, glorifying God.
>
> NJB And immediately before their very eyes he got up, picked up what he had been lying on and went home praising God.
>
> GWN The man immediately stood up in front of them and picked up the stretcher he had been lying on. Praising God, he went home.

- **immediately**: Lu 5:13 Ge 1:3 Ps 33:9
- **glorifying**: Lu 13:13 17:15-18 18:43 Ps 50:23 103:1-3 107:20-22 Joh 9:24
- J C Ryle's Comments on Luke 5 - clear, devout, and accurate
- Luke 5:17-26 The Return to Capernaum - Concerning the Forgiveness of Sins - the Healing of the Paralyzed - Alfred Edersheim
- Luke 5:21-25 Only God Forgives Sin, Part 1 - John MacArthur
- Luke 5:21-26 Only God Forgives Sin, Part 2 - John MacArthur
- Luke 5:17-26 - Helping Our Friends Find Forgiveness - Steven Cole
- Luke 5 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Parallel passages

> Mark 2:12+ And he got up and immediately picked up the pallet and went out in the sight of everyone, so that they were all amazed and were glorifying God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this."
>
> Mt 9:7+ And he rose, and went home.

IMMEDIATE OBEDIENCE

Immediately (parachrema) **he got up** (anistemi) **before** (enopion) **them** - He **immediately** put his faith into action and obeyed the

Lord's three commands (**get up...pick up...go home!**) How could he obey? Only by the power of the Spirit Who enabled him. See discussion of the Need for the Holy Spirit to obey NT commands (or "How to Keep All 1642 Commandments in the New Testament!") **Before them** means before everyone which is what Mark records (Mk 2:12) but surely especially before the religious leaders. For them the old saying was not to prove to be the case "Seeing is believing."

And picked up (airo) **what he had been lying on** - **Lying on** is katakeimai (**katá** = down + **keimai** = lie outstretched) means he had been lying down, in essence being incapacitated. The paralytic man's immediate obedience underscores the fact that he was now a saved man. When the root of faith is genuine, it will produce the real fruit of obedience. As **Spurgeon** said "**Faith** and **obedience** are bound up in the same bundle. He that obeys God, trusts God; and he that trusts God, obeys God. **Obedience** is the hallmark of **faith**." **J C Ryle** adds "If we would know whether our faith is genuine, we do well to ask ourselves how we are living." (not referring to *perfection*, but to one's general *direction*) Oswald Chambers adds that "The best measure of a spiritual life is not its ecstasies but its obedience." Finally Billy Graham said "Faith that saves has one distinguishing quality; saving faith is a **faith** that produces **obedience**, it is a faith that brings about a way of life."

> **ILLUSTRATION OF OBEDIENCE OF FAITH** - The integral nature of faith and works. It has been said that separating faith and works is like separating the heat and light from a candle. You know both are produced by the candle. You know they are not the same thing. You also know you cannot separate them. See notes on Obedience of Faith.

Spurgeon on **glorifying God -** ALL THIS TENDS TO GLORIFY GOD. Those four men had been the indirect means of bringing much honour to God and much glory to Jesus, and they, I doubt not, glorified God in their very hearts on the housetop. Happy men to have been of so much service to their bedridden friend I When a man is saved his whole manhood glorifies God; he becomes instinct with a new-born life which glows in every part of him, spirit, soul, and body. But who next glorified God? The text does not say so, but we feel sure that his family did, for he went to his own house. Well, but it did not end there. A wife and family utter but a part of the glad chorus of praise, though a very melodious part. There are other adoring hearts who unite in glorifying the healing Lord. The disciples, who were around the Saviour, they glorified God too. And there was glory brought to God, even by the common people who stood around. We must, one and all, do the same.(Carried by Four)

And went home glorifying (doxazo) **God** - **Glorifying** (doxazo) is in the present tense indicating he was continually praising God - a good pattern for all of us to emulate! Giving glory to God was often the (appropriate) reaction when someone was healed (cf. Lk 13:13; Lk 17:15; Lk 18:43). **Bock** adds that "Luke often notes that with the saving action of God, there comes gratitude and joy (Luke 2:20; 4:15; 5:26; 7:16; 13:13; 17:15; 18:43; 23:47 [at the cross!]; Acts 4:21; 11:15–18; 21:20). God's saving work brings a song to one's heart." (Ibid)

> "**To "glorify**" God means to give glory to Him. The word *glory* as related to God in the Old Testament bears with it the idea of greatness of splendor. In the New Testament, the word translated "glory" means "dignity, honor, praise and worship." Putting the two together, we find that glorifying God means to acknowledge His greatness and give Him honor by praising and worshiping Him, primarily because He, and He alone, deserves to be praised, honored and worshipped. God's glory is the essence of His nature, and we give glory to Him by recognizing that essence. " (See full article What does it mean to glorify God?)
>
> **NET Note** - Joy at God's work is also a key theme in Luke: Luke 2:20; 4:15; 5:26; 7:16; 13:13; 17:15; 18:43; 23:47.

Immediately (at once) (3916)(**parachrema**) means suddenly, immediately, at the very moment, on the spot, forthwith, directly after something else has taken place. What does this teach about Jesus' miracles?

> Luke's has most of the 18 uses - Mt. 21:19; Mt. 21:20; Lk. 1:64; Lk. 4:39; Lk. 5:25; Lk. 8:44; Lk. 8:47; Lk. 8:55; Lk. 13:13; Lk. 18:43; Lk. 19:11; Lk. 22:60; Acts 3:7; Acts 5:10; Acts 12:23; Acts 13:11; Acts 16:26; Acts 16:33

Amazing!

> All were amazed and glorified God. —Mark 2:12

Today's Scripture: Mark 2:1-12

When Jesus healed a paralytic as proof of His authority to forgive the man's sins, the people who witnessed the event were amazed, and they "glorified God, saying, 'We never saw anything like this!'" (Mark 2:12). More than a dozen times in the gospel of Mark, we read accounts of people reacting in a similar way to the words and works of Jesus.

The word translated as "amazed" or "astonished" carries the meaning of "being thrown into a state of surprise or fear, or both." We

may sometimes feel that way when we encounter Jesus Christ as we read God's Word. Like the disciples, we may be amazed when we read of Jesus saying, "How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God!" (10:23). So often we think that having lots of money would solve all our problems.

Those who saw a man delivered from a legion of demons reacted with amazement (5:20). But why? Did they think he was beyond God's power to save? Do we feel the same way when God saves certain people?

Jesus is not bound by our limitations or expectations. He speaks and acts with authority and wisdom far beyond ours. With reverence and awe, let's hear Jesus' words and look for the transforming touch of His mighty hand. David C. McCasland (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

I bow, O Lord, before Your throne
In awed humility
When I reflect on who You are
And all You've done for me.
—Sper

Never measure God's unlimited power by your limited expectations.

Luke 5:26 They were all struck with astonishment and began glorifying God; and they were filled with fear, saying, "We have seen remarkable things today."

Hendriksen - Amazement gripped everyone, and they glorified God. Filled with awe, they were saying, "We have seen incredible things today.

NET Then astonishment seized them all, and they glorified God. They were filled with awe, saying, "We have seen incredible things today."

GNT κα κστασις λαβεν παντας κα δ ξαζον τ ν θε ν κα πλ σθησαν φ βου λ γοντες τι Ε δομεν παρ δοξα σ μερον.

NLT Everyone was gripped with great wonder and awe, and they praised God, exclaiming, "We have seen amazing things today!"

KJV And they were all amazed, and they glorified God, and were filled with fear, saying, We have seen strange things to day.

ESV And amazement seized them all, and they glorified God and were filled with awe, saying, "We have seen extraordinary things today."

NIV Everyone was amazed and gave praise to God. They were filled with awe and said, "We have seen remarkable things today."

ASV And amazement took hold on all, and they glorified God; and they were filled with fear, saying, We have seen strange things to-day.

CSB Then everyone was astounded, and they were giving glory to God. And they were filled with awe and said, "We have seen incredible things today!"

NAB Then astonishment seized them all and they glorified God, and, struck with awe, they said, "We have seen incredible things today."

NJB They were all astounded and praised God and were filled with awe, saying, 'We have seen strange things today.'

GWN Everyone was amazed and praised God. They were filled with awe and said, "We've seen things today we can hardly believe!"

- **they**: Lu 7:16 Mt 9:8 12:23 Mk 2:12 Ac 4:21 Ga 1:24
- **and were**: Lu 5:8 8:37 Jer 33:9 Ho 3:5 Mt 28:8 Ac 5:11-13
- J C Ryle's Comments on Luke 5 - clear, devout, and accurate
- Luke 5:17-26 The Return to Capernaum - Concerning the Forgiveness of Sins - the Healing of the Paralyzed - Alfred Edersheim

- Luke 5:21-26 Only God Forgives Sin, Part 2 - John MacArthur
- Luke 5:17-26 - Helping Our Friends Find Forgiveness - Steven Cole
- Luke 5 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Parallel passages:

> Mark 2:12+ And he got up and immediately picked up the pallet and went out in the sight of everyone, so that they were all **amazed** (existemi = "be out of one's sense" - astonished, a mingling of fear and awe) and were glorifying God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this." (i.e., this was unprecedented!)
>
> Mt 9:8+ But when the crowds saw this, they were **awestruck** (ESV = "they were afraid", NLT "Fear swept through the crowd"), and glorified God, Who had given such authority to men.
>
> > **Comment**: The KJV on Mt 9:8 has "**marveled**" (thaumazo) but most manuscripts have the verb phobeo which in this context means to be filled with fear in a reverential sense, which resulted the appropriate response which is to glorify God. Note that the crowds speak of "**such authority to men**" rather than what Jesus had called Himself, **Son of Man**. The NET Note adds " There is thus an ironic allusion to Jesus' statement in Mt 9:6: His self-designation as "**Son of Man**" is meant to be unique, but the crowd regards it simply as meaning "human, person."

FEAR AND WONDER SEIZE THE CROWD

They were all struck with astonishment (ekstasis) - **Ekstasis** is placed first in the Greek sentence to emphasize their reaction. And so too should we be dear reader! One doubts if the "**all**" includes the naysayers, the scribes and Pharisees. The hostility of this group increased and they became more hardened to Jesus (See Luke 5:30; 6:7, 11; 11:15, 53; 13:17; 15:1, 2; 19:47; etc. **Darrell Bock** has an interesting observation from the parallel passage in Mt 9:8+ where "the amazement centers on such authority being given to humans ("**who had given such authority to men**"), a comment that suggests that the crowd did not get the event's uniqueness. They failed to see (or focus upon) Jesus' uniqueness." In short, most missed this clear Messianic sign.

Were...struck is lambano which in general means taken. The **NET** version translates it "astonishment **seized** them all" which gives us a good sense of the crowd's reaction to Jesus' miraculous healing. "**Seized**" would surely also have been the reaction of the antagonistic scribes and Pharisees. Did they glorify God also? We notice that none of the Gospel writers record them as saying anything after being **struck with astonishment**! What could they say. Jesus let his actions (healing) speak even louder than His words (forgiving) and forced them to hold their words!

And began glorifying (doxazo) **God** - They joined in with the healed man whose sins had been forgiven in glorifying God. The theme of praise is frequent in Luke and Acts (Lk 2:13, 20; 5:25–26; 7:16; 13:13; 17:15; 18:43; 23:47; Acts 4:21; 10:46; 11:18; 13:48; 21:20). Matthew 9:8 has "they were awestruck (ESV = "they were afraid", NLT "Fear swept through the crowd"), and glorified God."

And they were filled (pimplemi) **with fear** (phobos)**, saying -** While they were all **astonished** and filled with a reverential **fear**, not all were convinced Jesus was God as indicated by Matthew's translation which describes the crowd glorifying God saying "Who had given such authority to **men**." (Mt 9:8+) They should have said "such authority to **God**!" **MacArthur** comments that " If they did not realize that He was the God-Man, they at least realized He was an extraordinarily godly Man," adding that "Despite the unprecedented display of His (JESUS') divine, miraculous power, many refused to believe." (Ibid) As John would later write. "But though **He had performed so many signs** before them, yet **they were not believing in Him**" (John 12:37; cf. 1 Cor 1:22, 2 Cor 4:3-4).

John MacArthur on the meaning of **phobos** in this context - It is the **fear** that results from an understanding of God's holiness, power, and presence, which is how it is always used in the Synoptic Gospels and Acts (1:12, 65; 2:9; 7:16; 8:37; 21:26; Matt. 14:26; 28:4, 8; Mark 4:41; Acts 2:43; 5:5, 11; 9:31; 19:17). In that sense, it is a healthy fear. It can produce reverence for God, and help believers avoid sin (cf. 2 Cor. 7:1, 11) and lead godly lives (Phil. 2:12). Godly fear also motivates believers to mutually submit to each other and serve each other (Eph. 5:21). It also prompted Paul's desire to persuade others of his personal integrity (2 Cor. 5:11). (See Luke Commentary)

We have seen remarkable (paradoxa) **things today** - As Spurgeon says "May we often see such "strange things" spiritually! With awe, and reverence. They felt that God had come very near to them, and they perhaps said, like Jacob of old, when he was afraid, "flow dreadful is this place! This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." They were filled with fear. Oh, that we might see such "strange things" in this house tonight, and whenever we meet to worship God!"

Robert Stein on **We have seen remarkable things today** - This indicates that the "**today**" of Lk 4:21 means since the events of Lk

3:1f. and refers to the present period of salvation history in which God's kingdom has now come. For other instances where Luke alone used "today," cf. Luke 2:11; 4:21; 13:32–33; 19:5, 9; 22:61; 23:43. (See Luke: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition)

Astonishment (1611)(**ekstasis** [English - ecstasy] from **existemi** = "be out of one's sense") "strictly being put out of place; hence (1) as an abnormal state of mind distraction, terror, amazement (Mk 5.42); (2) as a partially suspended consciousness ecstasy, trance (Acts 10.10)." (Friberg) **Thomas Page** adds that **ekstasis** "represents a state in which a man, to a greater or less extent, ceases to be under the control of conscious reason and intelligence: he 'passes out of himself' (**existemi**) and needs 'to come to himself' again (cf. Acts 12:11). It may describe the effect of awe and amazement (cf. Acts 3:10, Acts 8:9, 8:11, 8:13), or fear (Mark 16:8), or as here and Acts 22:17 a complete loss of outward consciousness, 'a trance'." (The Acts of the Apostles, 1895) **BDAG** - (1) a state of consternation or profound emotional experience to the point of being beside oneself ('distraction, confusion, perplexity, astonishment' in var. aspects) = amazement/astonishment (2) a state of being in which consciousness is wholly or partially suspended, frequently associated with divine action = trance, ecstasy.

Thayer on **ekstasis** - (1) universally, in Greek writing, any casting down of a thing from its proper place or state; displacement (Aristotle, Plutarch). (2) a throwing of the mind out of its normal state, alienation of mind, whether such as makes a lunatic (dianoias, Deut. 28:28), or that of the man who by some sudden emotion is transported as it were out of himself, so that in this rapt condition, although he is awake, his mind is so drawn off from all surrounding objects and wholly fixed on things divine that he sees nothing but the forms and images lying within, and thinks that he perceives with his bodily eyes and ears realities shown him by God (Philo sec. 53 (cf. 51; B. D. under the word, Trance; Delitzsch, Psychol. 5:5): Acts 10:10; Acts 11:5; Acts 22:17, cf. 2 Cor 12:2f. (3) In the OT and the New amazement (cf. Longinus, 1, 4; Stobaeus, flor. tit. 104, 7), the state of one who, either owing to the importance or the novelty of an event, is thrown into a state of blended fear and wonder: Mk 16:8; Mark 5:42 (Ezek 26:16); Luke 5:26; Acts 3:10; trembling, Ge. 27:33; 1 Sam. 14:15, etc; fear, 2 Chr 14:14, etc).

> **Ekstasis** - 7x in 7v - Usage: amazement(1), astonishment(2), completely*(1), trance(3). Mk. 5:42; Mk. 16:8; Lk. 5:26; Acts 3:10; Acts 10:10; Acts 11:5; Acts 22:17
>
> 26x in 26v - **Septuagint** - Ge 2:21; 15:12; 27:33; Nu 13:32; Dt. 28:28; 1 Sa 11:7; 14:15; 2 Ki. 4:13; 2 Chr. 14:14; 15:5; 17:10; 20:29; 29:8; Ps. 31:1,22; 68:27; 116:11; Pr 26:10; Jer. 5:30; Ezek. 26:16; 27:35; 32:10; Da 7:28; Hab 3:14; Zec 12:4; 14:13

Glorifying (present tense = continually) (1392) **doxazo.** They began giving a proper opinion of God with their praises. Surely many were excited by the thought that Jesus could heal physically but what did they think about His authority to heal spiritually?

> **Doxazo in Luke and Acts** - Lk. 2:20; Lk. 4:15; Lk. 5:25; Lk. 5:26; Lk. 7:16; Lk. 13:13; Lk. 17:15; Lk. 18:43; Lk. 23:47; Acts 3:13; Acts 4:21; Acts 11:18; Acts 13:48; Acts 21:20

They were filled (4092)(**pimplemi** from the obsolete **pláō** = to fill) to fill, and intellectually (and spiritually) means to be filled with (in this case reverential fear). What fills us usually controls us and in this case prompted remarks regarding the unprecedented nature of the events they had witnessed.

> **Pimplemi** - 24v - Matt. 22:10; Matt. 27:48; Lk. 1:15; Lk. 1:23; Lk. 1:41; Lk. 1:57; Lk. 1:67; Lk. 2:6; Lk. 2:21; Lk. 2:22; Lk. 4:28; Lk. 5:7; Lk. 5:26; Lk. 6:11; Lk. 21:22; Acts 2:4; Acts 3:10; Acts 4:8; Acts 4:31; Acts 5:17; Acts 9:17; Acts 13:9; Acts 13:45; Acts 19:29

Fear (reverence) (5401) (**phobos**) in this context seems to refer to a positive sense which includes respect, reverence, awe, a healthy fear which is lost in Ro 3.18.

> **Uses of Phobos by Luke** -Lk. 1:12; Lk. 1:65; Lk. 5:26; Lk. 7:16; Lk. 8:37; Lk. 21:26; Acts 2:43; Acts 5:5; Acts 5:11; Acts 9:31; Acts 19:17

Remarkable (3861)(**paradoxa** from **para** = beside + **doxa** - opinion, praise, glory) means contrary to belief (something beyond belief) or contrary to usual expectation or opinion. Exceeding expectation and thus strange, wonderful, remarkable, uncommon, incredible, paradoxical. Only here in the NT and in the Apocryphal writings - Judith 13:13; 2 Macc 9:24; 3 Macc 6:33; 4 Macc 2:14. Paradoxa was "common in secular Greek for "an unusual event contrary to belief or expectation."" (TDNT).

Paradoxa also appears in Josephus's description of Jesus as performing surprising works (Antiquities 18.3.3 §§63–64; F. F. Bruce 1974: 36–41). Here are the translated words of Josephus written about 93AD =

> "About this time there lived Jesus, a wise man, if indeed one ought to call him a man. For he was one who performed surprising deeds and was a teacher of such people as accept the truth gladly. He won over many Jews and many of the Greeks. He was the Messiah. And when, upon the accusation of the principal men among us, Pilate had condemned him to a cross, those who had first come to love him did not cease. He

appeared to them spending a third day restored to life, for the prophets of God had foretold these things and a thousand other marvels about him. And the tribe of the Christians, so called after him, has still to this day not disappeared. (Reference) (See also Did Jesus really exist? Is there any historical evidence of Jesus Christ?)

Mattoon Treasures from the Scriptures) - John Newton, author of the song Amazing Grace, had received from the Lord some almost unbelievable answers to his petitions, and so he often engaged in "large asking." In support of this practice he would frequently tell the story of a man who asked Alexander the Great to give him a huge sum of money in exchange for his daughter's hand in marriage. The ruler consented and told him to request of his treasurer whatever he wanted. So he went and asked for an enormous amount. The keeper to the funds was startled and said he couldn't give him that much without a direct order. Going to Alexander, the treasurer argued that even a small fraction of the money requested would more than serve the purpose. "No," replied Alexander, "let him have it all. I like that fellow. He does me honor. He treats me like a king and proves by what he asks that he believes me to be both rich and generous." John Newton concluded the story by saying, "In the same way, we should go to the throne of God's grace and present petitions that express honorable views of the love, riches, and bounty of our King!" Ask God for great things and trust Him to fulfill your great expectations. Hebrews 4:16- Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. John Newton wrote a great hymn that speaks of great petitions...

Thou art coming to a King,
Large petitions with thee bring;
For His grace and power are such,
None can ever ask too much;
None can ever ask too much.
(Play this beautiful version)

Luke 5:27 After that He went out and noticed a tax collector named Levi sitting in the tax booth, and He said to him, "Follow Me."

NET After this, Jesus went out and saw a tax collector named Levi sitting at the tax booth. "Follow me," he said to him.

KJV And after these things he went forth, and saw a publican, named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he said unto him, Follow me.

ESV After this he went out and saw a tax collector named Levi, sitting at the tax booth. And he said to him, "Follow me."

NLT Later, as Jesus left the town, he saw a tax collector named Levi sitting at his tax collector's booth. "Follow me and be my disciple," Jesus said to him.

- **and noticed a tax collector** : Mt 9:9-13 10:3,
- **named Levi** Mk 2:13-14 3:18
- **Follow me**: Lu 18:22 Mt 4:19-21 8:22 16:24 Joh 1:43 12:26 21:19-22
- J C Ryle's Comments on Luke 5- clear, devout, and accurate
- Luke 5:27-32 Jesus Came to Call and to Save Sinners - John MacArthur
- Luke 5:27-32 Why Jesus Does Not Save Good People - Steven Cole
- Luke 5 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Parallel Passages (Lk 5:27-32, Mk 2:13-17, Mt 9:9-13)

Mark 2:13+ And He went out again by the seashore; and all the people were coming (GRAPHIC IMPERFECT = THEY KEPT COMING, ONE CAN SEE THE CROWD SWELLING) to Him, and He was teaching (ALSO GRAPHIC IMPERFECT) them. 14 As He passed by, He saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting in the tax booth, and He said to him, “Follow Me!” And he got up and followed Him.

Mt. 9:9–13+ As Jesus went on from there, He saw a man called Matthew, sitting in the tax collector’s booth; and He said to him, “Follow Me!” And he got up and followed Him. 10 Then it happened that as Jesus was reclining at the table in the house, behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and were dining with Jesus and His disciples. 11 When the Pharisees saw this, they said to His disciples, “Why is your Teacher eating with

the tax collectors and sinners?" 12 But when Jesus heard this, He said, "It is not those who are healthy who need a physician, but those who are sick. 13 "But go and learn what this means: 'I DESIRE COMPASSION, AND NOT SACRIFICE,' for I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners."

JESUS CALLS THE MOST DESPISED TO FOLLOW HIM!

Jesus still calls the despised and outcasts to be His disciples! Dear reader, no despised, depraved man or woman is ever too far away that they cannot hear and respond to the call of Jesus! This is good news ("Gospel") because ALL of us in one sense in Adam belonged to this category of despised and depraved. But God so loved the world, even the despised and depraved (Jn 3:16).

After that - an expression of time which begs the question after what? After the episode of forgiving and healing the paralytic.

He went out - Mark's version adds that He walked **by the seashore** (Mk 2:13+), which reminds us what He was doing when He called the "two brothers, Simon who was called Peter, and Andrew his brother." (Mt 4:18+). Jesus seemed to find fisher's men near the sea. Jesus is still in Capernaum. Mark 2:14+ says "**He passed by**" which is present tense more vividly depicting Jesus in motion walking along the seashore

And noticed (theaomai) **a tax collector** (telones) **named Levi sitting in the tax booth** (telonion) - Mark 2:14+ calls him "Levi the son of Alphaeus." (see note there on Alphaeus) Mt 9:9+ says "He saw a man called **Matthew**, sitting in the tax collector's booth." **Levi** collected toll for Herod Antipas. The Jews hated and despised the publicans like **Levi** so much that they classed them as **sinners** (hamartolos).

Noticed a tax collector - As explained below the word **noticed** indicates it was not just a glance from Jesus, but a long, contemplative gaze into the eyes of Levi. Jesus knew that His selection of this tax collector would generate a significant controversy with the Jewish religious establishment and for that matter even regular Jewish laity because of the horrible reputation of tax collectors.

> **THOUGHT** - Jesus was constantly on the alert for opportunities to do good, which begs the question as His followers, "Are we too continually on the lookout to help others (and to redeem the time) or are continually on the lookout for our selves?" (Woe!)

A man named Levi - This famous name was first used in Genesis - "She conceived again and bore a son and said, "Now this time my husband will become attached to me, because I have borne him three sons." Therefore he was named Levi." Ge 29:34. Hendriksen adds that "Levi's father's name was Alphaeus, not to be confused (as is sometimes done) with the man by the same name who was the father of James the Less and of Joses (Mark 3:18; cf. 15:40). If Levi or Matthew had had a brother who was also one of The Twelve, this fact would probably have been mentioned, as it was in the case of Peter and Andrew, and of James and John." (Ibid) It is interesting that in Mt 9:9 Matthew (reflecting his humility and authenticity) did not attempt to hide his past heinous occupation or make excuses for what he had done. Matthew is the name that Levi went by after becoming a disciple of Jesus (cf Mk 3:18, Lk 6:15).

> **Robertson** on **a man named Levi** - Mark 2:13 has also "The son of Alphaeus" and Matthew has **Matthew** in Mt 9:9 and in Mt 10:3 Matthew the publican is named as one of the Twelve Apostles. Mark 2:14 and Luke 5:27 call this man **Levi**. He had two names as was common, **Matthew Levi.** The publicans (**telones**) get their name in English from the Latin *publicanus* (a man who did public duty), not a very accurate designation. They were detested because they practiced graft. Even Gabinius the proconsul of Syria was accused by Cicero of relieving Syrians and Jews of legitimate taxes for graft. He ordered some of the tax-officers removed. Already Jesus had spoken of the publican (Mt 5:46) in a way that shows the public disfavour in which they were held.

Sitting in the tax booth - KJV = sitting at the receipt of custom (Luke 5:27KJV) Where else would a tax collector sit?

Spurgeon - This Levi, or Matthew, was a tax collector; not like those of our own day, but one who farmed the taxes for the Roman governor, and made what he could for himself out of them; at least, that is what many of the "publicans" did. (Luke - exposition)

And He said to him, "Follow Me." (akoloutheo) **- Follow me** is a clear call to be a disciple. Have you heeded His call? Note that Jesus' call of Levi was slightly different than that of Peter in Luke 5:10-11+ for there is no mention of a promise here as there was for Peter = "Do not fear, from now on you will be catching men." While that promise was not mentioned, it was in fact what Levi also did as did all of the genuine disciples. Jesus gives the command in the present active imperative which calls for Levi to continually make the choice to follow Him. It is worth noting that while the 12 disciples followed Jesus, not all disciples were called to literally accompany Jesus in His travels.

Robertson on **follow Me** - The challenge of Jesus was sudden and sharp, but Levi (Matthew) was ready to respond at once. He had heard of Jesus and quickly decided. Great decisions are often made on a moment's notice. Levi is a fine object lesson for business men who put off service to Christ to carry on their business.

Noticed (2300)(**theaomai** from **tháomai** =to wonder, from **thaúma** = wonder, admiration <> English = theatrical spectacular performance) means (1) to have an attentive look, to have regard for something, to contemplate, to take in with one's eyes (implying that one is impressed by what he sees - see use in Mt 22:11). **Theaomai** implies an intent contemplative gaze. The point is that it is not a mere glance or quick look, but a long, searching gaze (e.g., Lk 23:55). **Theaomai** describes intelligent beholding, a "careful and deliberate vision which interprets its object" (G. Abbott-Smith). It means to gaze at a show or demonstration or to watch as in a theater. (thus giving us the origin of our English word "*theater*"). (2) **Theaomai** can mean to see for the purpose of visiting as in Ro 15:24. (3) Finally some lexicon's (BDAG) state theaomai can mean to perceive something above and beyond what is merely seen with the eye (this nuance clearly overlaps with definition #1 above). **Westcott** says **theaomai** "expresses the calm, intentional continuous contemplation of an object."

Tax collector (KJV = publican) (5057)(**telones** from **telos** = tax + **onéomai** = to buy) means a reaper of the taxes or customs, tax-collector, one who pays to the government a certain sum for the privilege of collecting the taxes and customs of a district. The public revenues of the Greeks and Romans were usually farmed out. Among the latter, the purchasers were chiefly of the equestrian order and were distinguished as being of a higher class because they rode horses, or they were at least persons of wealth and rank like Zacchaeus who is called the chief tax collector (architelones [754] in Lu 19:2). These farmers also had subcontractors or employed agents who collected the taxes and customs at the gates of cities, in seaports, on public ways and bridges. These, too, were called **telomnai** (pl.), publicans, or eklégontes (n.f.), (ek [1537], out of, + légo [3004], in its original sense meaning to collect), those who collected out of the people. Such publicans in countries subject to the Roman Empire were the objects of hatred and detestation so that none but persons of worthless character were likely to be found in this employment.

> **Telones** - 21x in 20v - not found in the Septuagint. Mt. 5:46; Mt. 9:10; Mt. 9:11; Mt. 10:3; Mt. 11:19; Mt. 18:17; Mt. 21:31; Mt. 21:32; Mk. 2:15; Mk. 2:16; Lk. 3:12; Lk. 5:27; Lk. 5:29; Lk. 5:30; Lk. 7:29; Lk. 7:34; Lk. 15:1; Lk. 18:10; Lk. 18:11; Lk. 18:13
>
> Luke mentions tax collectors six times in his Gospel - Lk 3:12-note; Lk 5:27-32-note; Lk 7:29-34-note; Lk 15:1-note; Lk 18:10-13-note, Lk 19:2-note.

While **tax collectors** were hated by the Jews, it was not a crime to be a tax collector. The crime was to in defrauding and extorting the people which usually "went with the territory!" When the tax collectors came to John the Baptist to be baptized, it is notable that he did not tell them to quit their jobs but he told them to "Collect no more than what you have been ordered to." (Lk 3:13-note). Jesus Himself affirmed the propriety and legality of paying taxes when He commanded "render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." (Lk 20:25-note).

John MacArthur gives this background on **tax collectors** - The Roman occupation of Israel involved more than just a military presence; the nation was also subject to Roman taxation. The taxes in Galilee, for example, were forwarded by tax collectors to Herod Antipas, and by him to Rome. Antipas sold tax franchises to the highest bidder, and such franchises were a lucrative business. Tax collectors had a certain amount that they were required to collect, and whatever they collected beyond that they were permitted to keep (cf. Luke 3:12-13). In addition to the poll tax (on everyone, including slaves), income tax (about one percent), and land tax (one tenth of all grain, and one fifth of all wine and fruit), there were taxes on the transport of goods, letters, produce, using roads, crossing bridges, and almost anything else the rapacious, greedy minds of the tax collectors could think of. All of that left plenty of room for larceny, extortion, exploitation, and even loan sharking, as tax collectors loaned money at exorbitant interest to those who were unable to pay their taxes. Tax collectors also employed thugs to physically intimidate people into paying, and to beat up those who refused. (Luke 1-5, The MacArthur New Testament Commentary [Chicago: Moody, 2009], 330)

Levi was a **telones** not a chief tax collector (architelōnēs) like Zacchaeus in Luke 19:2. Zacchaeus was a higher rank and like one Levi would have reported to.

Marvin Vincent on **publicans** - Publicans (**telones**). From **telos**, a tax, and oneomai, to buy. The collectors of Roman imposts. The Romans farmed out the direct taxes and customs-duties to capitalists, on their payment of a certain sum in publicum, into the public treasury, whence they were called publicani, publicans. Sometimes this sum, being greater than any one person could pay, was paid by a company. Under these were the submagistri, living in the provinces; and under these again the portitores, or actual custom-house officers, who are referred to by the term **telones** in the New Testament. They were often chosen from the dregs of the people, and were so notorious for their extortions that they were habitually included in the same category with harlots and sinners. "If a Jew could scarcely persuade himself that it was right to pay taxes, how much more heinous a crime must it have been in his eyes to become the questionably honest instrument for collecting them. If a publican was hated, how still more intense must have been the disgust entertained against a publican who was also a Jew" (Farrar, "Life of Christ"). The word "publican," as a popular term of

reproach, was used even by our Lord (Mt. 18:17). Even the Gentiles despised them. Farrar cites a Greek saying, "All publicans are robbers." (Notes on Luke 3:11)

During the time of Jesus in first century Israel, there were publicans and tax collectors who could walk up to a man and tax him for what he was carrying, and much more. These tax collectors were hated and despised because they were usually fellow Jews who worked for Rome.

Tax collectors were also called hárpages or **extortioners** (from harpage 724 - extortion. They were called kapelous (2585) or **hucksters**, by Chrysostom and pornoboskoús which means **shepherds of fornication**. Finally they were also called kólakes or **flatterers**. From this plethora of unflattering names, it is clear that the publicans were despised by the general populace. Surely Jesus would not select such a despised Jew like Matthew Levi for one of His disciples! I love Samuel's reply to Jesse after he had rejected several brothers to be king ""Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart." (1 Sa 16:7)

There were two categories of **tax collectors**: (1) gabbai collected general taxes on land and property, and on income, referred to as poll or registration taxes and (2) mokhes collected a wide variety of use taxes, similar to our import duties, business license fees, and toll fees. There were two categories of mokhes: great mokhes hired others to collect taxes for them; small mokhes did their own assessing and collecting. Matthew was a small mokhe. It is likely representatives of both classes attended Matthew's feast (Mk 2:15, Lu 5:29). All of them were considered both religious and social outcasts.

Tax collectors are treated by the Jews as the most despised members of society, being ranked with prostitutes and the basest of people. They collected for the Roman government, and therefore were detested for aiding the Jews' foreign conqueror, as well as for frequently defrauding the people by means of levying excess taxes.

William Barclay has background on **tax collectors** of Jesus' day - The taxation system lent itself to abuse. The Roman custom had been to farm out the taxes. They assessed a district at a certain figure and then sold the right to collect that figure to the highest bidder. So long as the buyer handed over the assessed figure at the end of the year he was entitled to retain whatever else he could extract from the people; and since there were no newspapers, radio or television, and no ways of making public announcements that would reach everyone, the common people had no real idea of what they had to pay. This particular system had led to such gross abuses that by New Testament times it had been discontinued. There were, however, still taxes to be paid, still quisling tax-collectors working for the Romans, and still abuses and exploitation. There were two types of taxes. First, there were stated taxes. There was a poll tax which all men from 14 to 65, and all women from 12 to 65, had to pay simply for the privilege of existing. There was a ground tax which consisted of one-tenth of all grain grown, and one-fifth of wine and oil. This could be paid in kind or commuted into money. There was income tax, which was one per cent. of a man's income. In these taxes there was not a great deal of room for extortion. Second, there were all kinds of duties. A tax was payable for using the main roads, the harbours, the markets. A tax was payable on a cart, on each wheel of it, and on the animal which drew it. There was purchase tax on certain articles, and there were import and export duties. A tax-collector could bid a man stop on the road and unpack his bundles and charge him well nigh what he liked. If a man could not pay, sometimes the tax-collector would offer to lend him money at an exorbitant rate of interest and so get him further into his clutches. Robbers, murderers and tax-collectors were classed together. A tax-collector was barred from the synagogue. A Roman writer tells us that he once saw a monument to an honest tax-collector. An honest specimen of this renegade profession was so rare that he received a monument. (Luke 5 Commentary)

To summarize, Jewish tax collectors were all extortioners, thieves and traitors to their own nation. They were symbols for the worst kind of people. Cf. Mt 9:10, 11; 11:19; 18:17; 21:31; Mk 2:14–16; Lk 5:30; 7:25, 29, 34; 18:11–13.

Related Resources: Tax collectors (Publicans)

- American Tract Society Publican
- Easton's Bible Dictionary Publican
- Holman Bible Dictionary Publican
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible Publican
- Hastings' Dictionary of the NT Publican
- Morrish Bible Dictionary Publicans
- Hawker's Poor Man's Dictionary Publican
- Smith Bible Dictionary Publican
- Vines' Expository Dictionary Publican
- Whyte's Bible Characters The publican
- Wilson's Bible Types Publican
- Webster Dictionary Publican

- Watson's Theological Dictionary Publican
- International Bible Encyclopedia Publican
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopedia Publican
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia Publican
- The Nuttall Encyclopedia Publicans
- The Jewish Encyclopedia Publican

Tax booth (5058)(**telonion**) toll house, revenue or tax office, toll collector's booth. Tax booths were located on main roads at the edges of towns where farmers, merchants, and caravans passed. "The **tax booth** was a booth located on the edge of a city or town to collect taxes for trade. There was a tax booth in Capernaum, which was on the trade route from Damascus to Galilee and the Mediterranean (click map - see purple path with Hazor about the site of Capernaum)(see Via Maris). The "**taxes**" were collected on produce and goods brought into the area for sale, and were a sort of "**sales tax**" paid by the seller but obviously passed on to the purchaser in the form of increased prices. It was here that Jesus met Levi (also named Matthew [see Mt 9:9]) who was ultimately employed by the Romans, though perhaps more directly responsible to Herod Antipas. It was his job to collect taxes for Rome and he was thus despised by Jews who undoubtedly regarded him as a traitor." (NET Note)

Follow (NLT paraphrases it "Follow me and be my disciple")(190)(**akoloutheo** from **a** = expresses union with, likeness + **keleuthos** = a road, way) means to walk the same road (Ponder that simple definition dear believer - Am I willing to walk the same road as Jesus?) Literally to follow (like the crowds followed Jesus BUT they were not truly committed to him. E.g., see Jn 6:66) and in a figurative sense to follow Jesus as a disciple.

Below are most of the calls by Jesus for men to follow Him, the verbs in red being in the present imperative calling for discipleship to be their lifestyle. Follow in Mt 4:19 and Mk 1:17 is aorist imperative meaning something like do this now, do not delay....

> Matthew 4:19 And He said to them, '**Follow Me**, and I will make you fishers of men."
>
> Matthew 8:22 But Jesus said to him, '**Follow Me**, and allow the dead to bury their own dead."
>
> Matthew 9:9 As Jesus went on from there, He saw a man called Matthew, sitting in the tax collector's booth; and He said to him, "**Follow Me**!" And he got up and **followed** Him.
>
> Matthew 16:24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and **follow Me.**
>
> Matthew 19:21 Jesus said to him, "If you wish to be complete, go and sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, **follow Me**."
>
> Mark 1:17 And Jesus said to them, '**Follow Me**, and I will make you become fishers of men."
>
> Mark 2:14 As He passed by, He saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting in the tax booth, and He said to him, **Follow Me**!" And he got up and **followed** Him.
>
> Mark 8:34 And He summoned the crowd with His disciples, and said to them, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and **follow Me.**
>
> Mark 10:21 Looking at him, Jesus felt a love for him and said to him, "One thing you lack: go and sell all you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, **follow Me."**
>
> Luke 5:27 After that He went out and noticed a tax collector named Levi sitting in the tax booth, and He said to him, **Follow Me**."
>
> Luke 5:10-11 and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not fear, from now on you will be catching men." 11 When they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and **followed Him.**
>
> Luke 9:23 And He was saying to them all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and **follow Me.**
>
> Luke 9:59 And He said to another, '**Follow Me**." But he said, "Lord, permit me first to go and bury my father."
>
> Luke 18:22 When Jesus heard this, He said to him, "One thing you still lack; sell all that you possess and distribute it to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come, **follow Me.**"

John 1:43 The next day He purposed to go into Galilee, and He found Philip. And Jesus said to him, **Follow Me**."

John 10:27 "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they **follow Me**;

John 12:26 "If anyone serves Me, he must **follow Me;** and where I am, there My servant will be also; if anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him.

John 13:36 Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, where are You going?" Jesus answered, "Where I go, you cannot **follow Me** now; but you will follow later."

John 21:19 Now this He said, signifying by what kind of death he would glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He said to him, "**Follow Me!"**

John 21:22 Jesus said to him, "If I want him to remain until I come, what is that to you? You **follow Me**!"

Mattoon - Jesus wanted the people to understand that being a disciple demanded their whole life, not just the times when it was convenient. It was like the old ad they used to run for Pony Express riders: "DUTY IS HAZARDOUS, ORPHANS PREFERRED." Like this old time ad, Jesus wanted people to understand what they were getting into if they followed Him. Many people don't follow the Lord today because they want to lead. Following is difficult for them. S. I. McMillen, in his book None of These Diseases, tells a story of a young woman who wanted to go to college, but her heart sank when she read the question on the application blank that asked, "Are you a leader?" Being both honest and conscientious, she wrote, "No," and returned the application, expecting the worst. To her surprise, she received this letter from the college: "Dear Applicant: A study of the application forms reveals that this year our college will have 1,452 new leaders. We are accepting you because we feel it is imperative that they have at least one follower." Beloved, "Will you be a follower of Christ?" (Mattoon - Treasures from the Scriptures)

Jesus' Team Read: Luke 5:27-35

> He . . . saw a tax collector named Levi . . . . And He said to him, "Follow Me." —Luke 5:27

In 2002 the Oakland Athletics built a winning baseball team in an unorthodox way. They had lost three top players after 2001, and the team didn't have money to sign any stars. So Oakland's general manager, Billy Beane, used some often-neglected statistics to assemble a group of lesser-known players either "past their prime" or seen by other teams as not skilled enough. That ragtag team ran off a 20-game winning streak on the way to winning their division and 103 games.

This reminds me a little of the way Jesus put together His "team" of disciples. He included rough Galilean fishermen, a zealot, and even a despised tax collector named Levi (Matthew). This reminds me that "God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty" (1 Cor. 1:27). God used those dedicated men (minus Judas) to ignite a movement that affected the world so dramatically it has never been the same.

There's a lesson here for us. Sometimes we seek out the familiar, the influential, and the rich. And we tend to ignore people with less status or those with physical limitations.

Jesus put some of society's less desirable people on His team—treating everyone the same. With the Spirit's power and guidance, we too can honor all people equally. By David Egner (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

In Jesus Christ we all are equal,
For God's Spirit makes us one;
As we give each other honor,
We give glory to His Son.
—Fitzhugh

There are no unimportant people in the body of Christ.

JESUS' TEAM

> He . . . saw a tax collector named Levi . . . . And He said to him, "Follow Me." —Luke 5:27

In 2002 an American baseball club built a winning team in an unusual way. They had lost three top players after 2001 and the team didn't have money to sign any stars. So the manager used some often neglected statistics to assemble a group of lesser known players either 'past their prime' or seen by other teams as not skilled enough. That ragtag team achieved a 20 game winning streak

on the way to winning their division and 103 games.

This reminds me a little of the way Jesus put together His 'team' of disciples. He included rough Galilean fishermen, a zealot and even a despised tax collector named Levi (Matthew). This reminds me that "God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty" (1 Cor. 1:27). God used those dedicated men (minus Judas) to ignite a movement that affected the world so dramatically it has never been the same.

There's a lesson here for us. Sometimes we seek out the familiar, the powerful and the rich. And we tend to ignore people with less status or those with physical limitations. by David C. Egner (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

Jesus put some of society's less desirable people on His team—treating everyone the same. With the Spirit's power and guidance, we too can honour all people equally.

THERE ARE NO UNIMPORTANT PEOPLE IN THE BODY OF CHRIST.

Leader Or Follower?

Read: Luke 5:27-32

> [Jesus] said to him, "Follow Me." —Luke 5:27 (cf Lk 5:27-32, Mk 2:13-17, Mt 9:9-13)

A close friend asked Gandhi, "If you admire Christ so much, why don't you become a Christian?" It is said that he replied, "When I meet a Christian who is a follower of Christ, I may consider it."

But isn't that what a Christian is supposed to be—a follower of Christ? Joe Stowell, former president of Moody Bible Institute, wrote in Following Christ: "Many of us live out our faith as though [Christ] exists to follow us. We come to believe that Christ exists to satisfy our demands. . . . This disguised form of self-serving religion sets Christ up as just one more commodity in life that will enhance and empower our dreams."

When Jesus called His disciples to follow Him, He meant that He would do the leading and directing; they would do the following (Luke 5:27). Like the disciples, we must give up our will, obey Him, and choose to "lose" our lives for Him (17:33).

Without too much thought, this might sound simple. But in reality, it is impossible to do on our own. Only by choosing each day to let go of our own plans and by trusting the Holy Spirit's leading can we cooperate with His work in us.

This is God's way of teaching us to become His submissive followers instead of the leader. By Anne Cetas (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

Because Christ is the One who holds
The key to all our needs,
We can release what we hold dear
To follow where He leads.
—Sper

To lead others to Jesus, you must first learn to follow Him.

Luke 5:28 And he left everything behind, and got up and *began* to follow Him.

- Lu 5:11 Lk 9:59-62 1Ki 19:19-21 Mt 19:22-27
- J C Ryle's Comments on Luke 5 - clear, devout, and accurate
- Luke 5:27-32 Jesus Came to Call and to Save Sinners - John MacArthur
- Luke 5:27-32 Why Jesus Does Not Save Good People - Steven Cole
- Luke 5 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

COUNTING THE COST
TO FOLLOW JESUS

Spurgeon on Jesus' call to Matthew - This was just a parallel case to that of curing the palsied man; it is precisely the same morally as the other was physically. The office of a publican was disreputable in the eyes of the Jews, and this Levi was probably

making money fast at the cost of his own countrymen. He was paralyzed morally as the other man was physically; but as soon as Christ said to him, “Follow me,” “he left all, rose up, and followed him.” (Luke - exposition)

And he left (kataleipo) **everything behind** - Luke alone of the synoptic Gospels records this important detail. Tax collecting was profitable business, but Levi made the choice of a lifetime, to leave a profitable temporal occupation to enter into the eternally profitable service of the Lord Jesus Christ. Do you see a difference between Peter, et al, leaving everything to follow Him and the action of Levi? Recall they had just witnessed first hand evidence of His divine power causing Peter to acknowledge Him as "Lord" (kurios). There is no record that Levi had a previous miraculous event to motivate him to leave all and follow! Not to mention, that what Levi left was undoubtedly far more lucrative than the fishing business of Peter, et al. Levi is a perfect example of a man who counted the cost and said "I want my life to count!" Do you? Then count the cost and follow Jesus!

> **THOUGHT** - We are not all called to leave our current place of service but some surely are. What about you? Have you been clearly called and yet you are hesitating to leave a comfortable position to follow Christ in what would be in the world's eyes a less profitable service? I know a man who had the gift of preaching and he was doing this as a lay minister while working at Dell Computers in the early days of its existence. I can remember talking with his wife who was willing to live on less to **follow** Jesus, but her husband was attracted to the potential he had at Dell, where he was an excellent salesman. That was over 20 years ago. Every time I think of this man, I become saddened by what he gave up eternally for worldly wealth. Today he is a very rich man (probably 100's of millions rich - in Austin we call them "*Dellionaires*"!), but he missed the opportunity of a lifetime to **follow** Jesus! We were good friends with another couple who told how the husband knew in his 30's he was being called to preach the Gospel, but his wife could not stand the thought of a lower income (he was a well-paid NASA engineer) and so they eschewed full time ministry. Later as we talked with them while they were in their 60's we heard both of them say sadly **how they regretted not heeding God's call on their life**. Let's be honest, we can't fault either of these men, for we don't know what we would have done if placed in similar positions of choosing between **visible worldly wealth** and **invisible heavenly wealth**! So let me ask again, is Jesus calling you, crying out "**Follow Me**!"? (See the related discussion of the value of "Vertical Vision")

The phrase **left everything** reminds us of Jesus' words in Mark 8:34-37+ -

> And He summoned the multitude with His disciples, and said to them, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. 35 "For whoever wishes to save his life shall lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's shall save it. 36 "For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world, and forfeit his soul? 37 "For what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

Compare Jesus' words in Luke 14:33+

> “So then, none of you can be My disciple who does not give up all his own possessions.

Note the striking contrast between the response of a **well off tax-collector** and a **rich young ruler** in Luke 18

> A ruler questioned Him, saying, “Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” 19 And Jesus said to him, “Why do you call Me good? No one is good except God alone. 20 “You know the commandments, ‘DO NOT COMMIT ADULTERY, DO NOT MURDER, DO NOT STEAL, DO NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS, HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER.’” 21 And he said, “All these things I have kept from my youth.” 22 When Jesus heard this, He said to him, “One thing you still lack; sell all that you possess and distribute it to the poor, and **you shall have treasure in heaven;** and come, follow Me.” 23 But when he had heard these things, he became very sad, for he was extremely rich. 24 And Jesus looked at him and said, “How hard it is for those who are wealthy to enter the kingdom of God! 25 “For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.” 26 They who heard it said, “Then who can be saved?” 27 But He said, “The things that are impossible with people are possible with God.” 28 Peter said, “Behold, we have left our own homes and followed You.” 29 And He said to them, “Truly I say to you, there is no one who has left house or wife or brothers or parents or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God, 30 **who will not receive many times as much at this time and in the age to come, eternal life.**” (Luke 18:18–30+).

Compare others who had a desire to follow but lacked the "follow through!" Here we encounter two men who wanted to become permanent disciples and accompany Jesus wherever He would lead them, but they did not want it enough to "count the cost!"

> As they were going along the road, someone said to Him, “**I will follow You wherever You go**.” 58 And Jesus said to him, “The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head.” 59 And He said to another, “Follow Me.” But he said, “Lord, permit me first to go and bury my

> father." 60 But He said to him, "Allow the dead to bury their own dead; but as for you, go and proclaim everywhere the kingdom of God." 61 Another also said, "I will follow You, Lord; but first permit me to say good-bye to those at home." 62 But Jesus said to him, "No one, after putting his hand to the plow and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." (Luke 9:57-62+)

And got up (anistemi) **and** *began* **to follow** (akoloutheo) **Him** - We see a similar description in Lk 5:11+ "When they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed Him." To re-emphasize, it is the call to every believer to follow Jesus. **Followed** is imperfect tense active voice (choice of his will) signifying that Matthew began at once to follow Jesus and continued following Him (he kept it up).

Robertson says Matthew was "sitting at the toll-gate (telōnion) on the Great West Road from Damascus to the Mediterranean (click map - see purple path with Hazor about the site of Capernaum)(see Via Maris)

To **follow** (closely) was used of soldiers, servants and pupils. To go after someone or something (not as a true disciple however as we see with the crowds who physically followed Jesus, following however without a willingness to commit wholly to Him! cf John 6:60-65, 66) Early in the history of the Greek language **akoloutheo** came to mean to imitate or follow someone's example. This dual meaning colored the New Testament use of our word akoloutheo. **Akoloutheo** is a technical term in Hebrew and Greek for the reactions and relationships of a disciple to his teacher. The essence of Christianity in fact lies in the words "to follow Jesus." When we walk with Him, He promised we would never walk in darkness! (Jn 8:12). He is our Lamp wherever we walk, always walking with us, His Spirit within us enabling us to "Walk by the Spirit." (Gal 5:16) Paul expressed walking after Jesus as being His imitator (1 Cor 11:1) When He say's go, I go. When He says stop, I stop. His sheep know His voice and follow Him (Jn 10:27) Sadly , some declined to follow (Mt 19:21-23).

Play and ponder the words of Chris Tomlin's poignant song "**I will follow you, Jesus**!"

> Where You go, I'll go
> Where You stay, I'll stay
> When You move, I'll move
> **I will follow You**...
> Who You love, I'll love.
> Who You serve, I'll serve.
> If this life I lose,
> **I will follow You**

Hendriksen applies this text - What a Magnet is Jesus. Cf. John 12:32. A magnet attracts; a repellent—think of water-repellent fabrics—rejects. What are we? (Borrow Baker NT Commentary: Luke)

The old **Amy Grant song** (one of the first songs I heard after I began to follow Jesus in 1984) would be apropos to Matthew - **I Have Decided**...

I have decided
I'm gonna live like a believer
Turn my back on the deceiver
I'm gonna live what I believe
I have decided
Being good is just a fable
I just can't, cause I'm not able
I'm gonna leave it to the Lord

Jon Courson has an interesting observation - Note the order: First, Matthew left all. Then he rose up. Oftentimes, I want to rise up before I leave all. But when you read the Gospels, it's an interesting study to see all of the things left behind by people who rose up to follow Jesus...

- Fishermen left their fish.
- The woman at the well left her waterpot.
- The widow of Nain left her son's casket.
- Lazarus left his grave clothes.
- Mary left the pieces of her alabaster box.
- Bartimaeus left his beggar's clothes.

The people who soar the highest in the Lord presently and who will be rewarded in the kingdom eternally are those who have left

things behind. I've seen my own life limited in ministry when I was not willing to do so. Satan wants to weigh us down with the stuff of this world. Jesus wants to set us free. (See Jon Courson's Application Commentary)

Mattoon - Matthew was now marching to the drum beat of a different drummer. He no longer listens to the drum beat of Rome or to the crescendo of coins in a bag. No, Matthew abandoned his lucrative job, his power, his authority, his prestige among other tax collectors and Roman officials, to march to the drum beat of Jesus Christ. Marching to the drum beat of a different drummer involves the identification of the proper value of material possessions compared to spiritual matters. Matthew saw the greater value in following Christ than making more money. Can a person make lots of money today and still follow Christ? The answer is "Yes," but it is very difficult in juggling the time and the pull of possessions. If a person sees finances as a tool to serve Christ and help others, then he will be able to keep his focus on the Lord and his funds in proper perspective. If he sees money as a tool for grasping power or living in wickedness, his funds will eventually ruin him and his family. Most people in America today do not realize just how rich they are and what God has given to them, even though they don't have a mansion or have millions of dollars in the bank. This happens when we fail to count our blessings. Paul Brand, in his book Fearfully and Wonderfully Made, recorded this letter to the Lord, which reminds us of the truth of how much we truly have. He said, "Dear Lord, I have been re-reading the record of the Rich Young Ruler and his obviously wrong choice, but it has set me thinking. No matter how much wealth he had, he could not—ride in a car, have any surgery, turn on a light, buy penicillin, hear a pipe organ, watch TV, wash dishes in running water, type a letter, mow a lawn, fly in an airplane, sleep on an inner-spring mattress, or talk on the phone. If he was rich, then what am I?" The second principle involved in marching to the drum beat of a different drummer involves the immediate response or taking advantages of present opportunities. It involves not making excuses for inactivity, but seeing the possibilities in your situation. It like the story in the March, 1988, issue of the Rotarian. It tells about a bounty of $5,000 offered for each wolf captured alive. This bounty turned two country boys, Sam and Jed, into fortune hunters. Day and night they scoured the mountains and forests looking for their valuable prey. Exhausted one night, they fell asleep dreaming of their potential fortune. Suddenly, Sam awoke to see that they were surrounded by about fifty wolves with flaming eyes and bared ivory teeth, dripping with saliva. He nudged his buddy and said, "Jed, wake up! Wake up!.....We're rich! We're rich!" Sam saw an opportunity! Matthew saw the opportunity presented to him. He immediately followed the Lord. The opportunity presented itself and he took advantage of it. People who stand out, people who tend to accomplish great things, are people who work hard and discern the importance of today's opportunities. They know that present opportunities can be gone tomorrow. There are folks who claim that you can serve the Lord anytime. If you decide to not live for Him today or take advantage of present opportunities, you can always serve the Lord some other time when you are older. Hold the phone! This is not true. It may sound good, but it is not true. Your opportunities to follow Christ may be gone tomorrow. Why? 1. Disability: You may become disabled or sick where you are hindered from or limited in your service to Christ. 2. Desire: You may become spiritually cold and hard and have no desire to live for Christ. 3. Death: You could die. 4. Difficulty: Others that need to be reached for Christ may become harder toward the gospel, they may move out of reach, or they may die without the Lord. 5. Deceptive Conclusions The drum beat of Jesus Christ beats the cadence of TODAY and living for the Lord NOW! Today! Today! Today! Now! Now! Now! (Mattoon - Treasures from the Scriptures)

Left...behind (abandoned, forsook) (2641)(**kataleipo** from **kata** = intensifies or strengthens the meaning of leipo + **leipo** = to leave behind, forsake, to be wanting or deficient) literally means to leave behind or leave remaining (of a person or place - Mt 4:13, 16:4, 21:17, He 11:27). Kataleipo is often used to indicate abandoning a heritage, giving up riches, and leaving one's native land. Kataleipo conveys a strong sense of to abandon or forsake (as forsaking true Christianity 2 Pe 2:15).

Got up(got up, stood) (450)(**anistemi**) in this context means to change physical position from sitting to standing with the purpose of taking action.

Follow (190)(**see also akoloutheo** from **a** = expresses union with, likeness + **keleuthos** = a road, way) means to walk the same road (Ponder that simple definition dear believer - Am I willing to walk the same road as Jesus?) Literally to follow (like the crowds followed Jesus) and in a figurative sense to follow Jesus as a disciple.

Luke 5:29 And Levi gave a big reception for Him in his house; and there was a great crowd of tax collectors and other people who were reclining at the table with them.

- **Levi gave a big reception for Him in his house**: John 12:2
- **there was a great crowd of tax collectors and other people**: Mt 9:10 Mk 2:15 1 Co 5:9-11 10:27
- J C Ryle's Comments on Luke 5 - clear, devout, and accurate
- Luke 5:27-32 Jesus Came to Call and to Save Sinners - John MacArthur
- Luke 5:27-32 Why Jesus Does Not Save Good People - Steven Cole
- Luke 5 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

NLT Later, Levi held a banquet in his home with Jesus as the guest of honor. Many of Levi's fellow tax collectors and other guests also ate with them.

Parallel Passages (Lk 5:27-32, Mk 2:13-17, Mt 9:9-13)

Matthew 9:10+ Then it happened that as Jesus was reclining at the table in the house, behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and were dining with Jesus and His disciples.

Mark 2:15+ And it *happened that He was reclining at the table in his house, and many tax collectors and sinners were dining with Jesus and His disciples; for there were many of them, and they were following Him. 16 When the scribes of the Pharisees saw that He was eating with the sinners and tax collectors, they said to His disciples, "Why is He eating and drinking with tax collectors and sinners?" 17 And hearing this, Jesus *said to them, "It is not those who are healthy who need a physician, but those who are sick; I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners."

LEVI INTRODUCES THE DESPISED TO JESUS

Click to enlarge

Notice that the artistic rendering while beautiful is not accurate. Jesus, Levi and the crowd were not sitting on chairs but reclining on mats or couches (see below). It makes the point that we never want to get our orthodox doctrine/theology from Christian artwork!

Hendriksen comments that "What is so wonderful about Levi is that surrendering everything made him "the happiest man in the world." So filled with deep, inner delight was he that he immediately arranged a feast in honor of the One whom he considered his Benefactor!" (Borrow Baker NT Commentary: Luke)

And Levi gave a big reception (doche) **for Him in his house** - This is a clear indication of "fruit in keeping with repentance." That he had a **big reception** suggests **his house** was big and that when he "**left everything behind**" (Lk 5:28), in worldly terms, he had a lot to leave behind! Talk about counting the cost! (Lk 9:23-26+, Luke 14:33+) (I am convicted!) Matthew was celebrating out with the old (life) and in with the new (life)! "Matthew's first instinct was to share the wonder he had found. John Wesley once said, "No man ever went to Heaven alone; he must either find friends or make them." It is a Christian duty to share the blessedness that we have found. (Barclay) Apparently when it said he left everything, this would include **his house**. **Hendriksen** adds "What is so wonderful about Levi is that surrendering everything made him "the happiest man in the world." So filled with deep, inner delight was he that he immediately arranged a feast in honor of the One whom he considered his Benefactor!" For the next 2-3 years he would be on the move following Jesus. Levi apparently sensed the intense evangelistic nature of his calling (in spite of not hearing Jesus' promise to Peter in Lk 5:10!), and responded by inviting his friends (other tax collectors were probably the only friends he had) to a banquet in order to introduce them to Jesus. His desire is that *outsiders* should be invited to become *insiders*. This methodology remains an excellent evangelistic approach. Luke records a number of dinners which Jesus attended, always for the purpose of teaching and revealing Himself - Luke 7:36; 9:12; 10:38; 11:37; 14:1; 19:7; 22:14; 24:30; 24:41.

THOUGHT - I remember when I was first born again at age 39. I was so excited about Jesus that I told all my relatives about Him. Some became so irritated that they told me if I continued to speak of Jesus they did not want me to come see them again. There is a point of application here -- Levi a tax collector exposed despised tax collectors to Jesus. Each of us as followers of Jesus has our own unique sphere of influence and for many in that sphere we may be their only significant contact with Jesus! Are you salty salt or irritating salt (Mt 5:13-note, cf Col 4:3-6-note)? Are you letting your light shine (Mt 5:14-15-note, Mt 5:16-note)? Have you opened your home like Matthew to the outcasts of society in order that you might introduce them to Jesus? Or at least are you opening your home to your circle of influence so you can introduce them to your best Friend?

Jon Courson - There were three places Jesus consistently frequented: **open places**, where He preached to the masses; **quiet places**, where He prayed to His Father; and **festive places**, where He would celebrate with the people. When you read the Gospels, you cannot help but see that Jesus loved to go to parties. Whether it was in the home of a religious leader like Simon the Pharisee or in that of Matthew, a tax collector with the riffraff of society, Jesus was often in attendance at feasts or festivals. This shouldn't surprise us, considering that the first public miracle He ever did was turning water into wine—not for the purpose of serving Communion, but simply in order that a wedding celebration could continue. Jesus had the ability to attract people to Himself constantly and to enjoy being with others immensely. (Jon Courson's Application Commentary)

There was a great crowd of tax collectors (telones) **and other people who were reclining** (katakeimai) **at the table with them** - This was Matthew's version of an "evangelistic outreach." Note that Matthew 9:10+ identities the **other people** as "**sinners**." There was a **great crowd** of sinners, the very ones the Son of Man came to seek and save (Luke 19:10+)! Jesus' heart must have been filled with joy at so many who knew they were sinners. I know that when I have an opportunity to share the Gospel with a lost sinner, the rest of my day is invariably filled with inexplicable joy, even if I do not see them receive Jesus as Savior and Lord, for I know that God's Word will not return empty! (cf Isa 55:11). Exactly where Jesus sought to be seated with His disciples. Remember "disciples" means learners and here we see Jesus teaching His men that no one was too far removed from the Good News of the Kingdom not even hated tax collectors! This would be an important lesson for them, because they had been trained in orthodox Judaism which taught them to shun shady sinners! Compare Peter's summary of Jesus' ministry in Acts 10:36–39+. **Reclining at the table** suggests this was a lengthy celebration with time for extended conversation. No self-respecting Jew would be caught dead dining with such derelicts!

Click picture to enlarge
Click here for further explanation

Bock says that "The **table** is a place where spiritual points are made and fellowship occurs. Levi seeks to use his home and resources to bring the message of Jesus to his friends....Levi has gone to great trouble to bring Jesus to many who might not normally be expected to have contact with a religious dignitary. The turnout is clearly not the moral upper crust of society. Nevertheless, Jesus reclines with them in meal fellowship." (Baker Exegetical Commentary)

Spurgeon - It seems that there can never be a great wonder wrought by Christ without somebody or other objecting to it. I suppose that the sun never rose without annoying thieves, who would like a longer time to perpetrate their deeds of darkness; and no miracle of mercy is ever wrought without somebody finding fault with it for some reason or other. Be not dismayed, therefore, now that in these modern days there have arisen many cunning objectors to the gospel of Jesus Christ. Let them object to it, as the dog barks at the moon; but still the moon shines on in her silver brightness. So, when all objectors shall have howled themselves to silence, the eternal gospel will shine on with never-failing splendor. These scribes and Pharisees murmured against Christ's disciples, and said to them, "Why do ye eat and drink with publicans and sinners?" Their Master did not leave there to defend themselves, but he took the case into his own hands. (Luke - exposition)

Reception (feast, banquet)(1403)(**doche** from **dechomai** = to willingly receive or accept) means literally a receiving of guests and hence a banquet or feast. A meal given with hospitality. Used only by Luke here and Lk 14:13. Of the synoptic accounts only Luke mentions a reception (feast).

> But when you give a **reception**, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, 14 and you will be blessed, since they do not have the means to repay you; for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous."
>
> **Doche** - 9x in 9v in the Septuagint - note the feasts in Esther and Daniel, this latter being the last feast of the Babylonian empire! - Gen. 21:8; Gen. 26:30; Est. 1:3-note; Est. 5:4; Est. 5:5; Est. 5:8; Est. 5:12; Est. 5:14 (see notes on Esther 5); Da 5:1-note
>
> **NET Note** on **reception** - A great banquet refers to an elaborate meal. Many of the events in Luke take place in the context of meal fellowship: Luke 7:36–50+; Lk 9:12–17+; Lk 10:38–42+; Lk 11:37–54+; Lk 14:1–24+; 22:7–38+; Lk 24:29–32, 41–43+.

Related Resources:

- What is the significance of Jesus eating with sinners?
- Description of Jewish banquets
- Excellent Summary of Mealtime Customs in the Ancient World
- Triclinium - an ancient formal dining room with a sort of "couch" or rather chaise longue.

Reclining (2621)(**katakeimai** from **katá** = down + **keímai** = lie outstretched) was used of a man lying prostrate who was healed in Lk 5:25. In this context it refers to these guests reclining on a couch for Levi's banquet. **ESV Study Bible** on **reclining** - In formal dining, guests reclined on a couch that stretched around three sides of a room. The host took the center seat at a U-shaped series of low tables, surrounded by the most honored guests on either side, with the guests' heads reclining toward the tables and their feet toward the wall. **NET Note** on **reclining** - 1st century middle eastern meals were not eaten while sitting at a table, but while reclining on one's side on the floor with the head closest to the low table and the feet farthest away.

Vincent has a description that may have been what this looked like - "This hall answered to the khāwah of Arabian houses, which is thus described by William Gifford Palgrave: "The khāwah was a long, oblong hall about twenty feet in height, fifty in length, and

sixteen or thereabouts in breadth. The walls were covered in a rudely decorative manner with brown and white wash, and sunk here and there into small triangular recesses, destined to the reception of books, lamps, and other such like objects. The roof was of timber, and flat; the floor was strewn with fine, clean sand, and garnished all round alongside of the walls with long strips of carpet, upon which cushions, covered with faded silk, were disposed at suitable intervals. In poorer houses, felt rugs usually take the place of carpets" ("Central and Eastern Arabia")."

Cross The Divide

> As [Jesus] was dining in Levi's house, . . . many tax collectors and sinners also sat together with Jesus. — Mark 2:15

Today's Scripture: Mark 2:13-17 (cf Lk 5:27-32, Mk 2:13-17, Mt 9:9-13)

Two young men with mischief on their minds approached a missionary's outreach bus parked in a downtown area of a German city.

The missionaries were there to offer refreshments as a way to open up conversations about Christ. The two visitors, wearing skull-and-crossbones bandannas, were there to offer trouble.

But the missionaries didn't respond to the ruffians as they expected. The Christians welcomed them warmly and engaged them in discussion. Surprised, the guys hung around long enough to hear the gospel. One trusted Jesus that day. The other, the next day.

Those two young men and the missionaries who reached them were light-years apart culturally. The guys were German; the missionaries, American. The guys were involved in a culture of darkness and death; the missionaries were shining the light. The cultural divide was crossed with cookies and nonjudgmental love.

Look at the people around you. How can you show those on the other side of the cultural fence unconditional, unquestioning love? How can you cross the divide and help them see that Jesus' love knows no boundaries? By: Dave Branon (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

Cross the divide.
Take Christ to the culture—
even if it doesn't look anything like yours.

Making Friends

> Many tax collectors and sinners also sat together with Jesus and His disciples. —Mark 2:15

Today's Scripture:Mark 2:13-17 (cf Lk 5:27-32, Mk 2:13-17, Mt 9:9-13)

A letter from a friend described the adjustments that his son and daughter-in-law were facing as young missionaries in a country long resistant to the gospel of Christ. "After some rough early going," he wrote, "they are getting used to not having modern conveniences and are falling in love with the people."

A photo showed the couple's 2-year-old-son Wesley and a waiter in a restaurant, both grinning widely as they shared a moment of friendship. My friend commented, "Ever smiling, Wesley makes friends wherever he goes." That got me to thinking. Making friends and loving people is the key to sharing the gospel wherever we are, because that's what Jesus did.

Some religious leaders were surprised when Jesus openly associated with people they considered undesirable. They said to His disciples, "How is it that He eats and drinks with tax collectors and sinners?" (Mark 2:16). Yet Jesus was known as the friend of sinners. He said, "I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance" (Mk 2:17).

A loving heart and a friendly smile go a long way to communicate the love of Christ to the people we meet each day. May they say of us, as they did of little Wesley, "Ever smiling, he makes friends wherever he goes." By: David C. McCasland (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

Reflect & Pray

To the lost is where Christ went,
Revealing grace from God above;
To lost sinners we've been sent
To be their friends, to share God's love.
—Fitzhugh

Loving the lost is the first step in leading them to Christ.

Gene Brooks applies this verse to our lives: Many Christians have been criticized for the very thing Jesus was attacked for: associating with the wrong kind of people. The problem is that while we are to separate from evil, we are also to call sinners to repentance. Jesus' way of doing this was not to shout at sinners from a distance, but spend time with them. Because we cannot tell what another person's motives are, we must not criticize fellow believers just for associating with them. Another myth we believe is that "I will be criticized or embarrassed if people do not respond." BUT – Levi was so happy about being a follower of Jesus that he had a party and invited everyone, especially those who needed Jesus. AND – He was criticized BUT . . .Jesus was the focus of the party. Sinners confessed their sins and received forgiveness. New believers met others followers of Jesus and were established in their faith. Matthew grew spiritually. The critics were silenced.

Is God calling you to do what Levi did, to introduce those with whom you have a relationship to Jesus? Here's how you can do what Levi did, and invite people to your home:

> i. Look around and identify your friends, co-workers, neighbors, fellow students, and family who do not know Jesus Christ as Lord. Write their names down.
>
> ii. Look up and pray every day for each person you have listed.
>
> iii. Look out for opportunities to build your relationship with these people.
>
> iv. Look forward to your Party. Invite every person on your list. Prepare your own 3 minute story of how you came to know Jesus as Lord. Have your Party and invite them to follow Jesus!
>
> v. Look after those who gave their lives to Jesus Christ. Help them grow in their faith. Invite them to church. Give them a Bible and show them how you talk to God. (Levi's Party)

Luke 5:30 The Pharisees and their scribes began grumbling at His disciples, saying, "Why do you eat and drink with the tax collectors and sinners?"

- Lu 5:17,21 7:29,30,34,39 15:1,2 18:11 19:7 Isa 65:5 Mt 21:28-32 Mk 7:3
- J C Ryle's Comments on Luke 5 - clear, devout, and accurate
- Luke 5:27-32 Jesus Came to Call and to Save Sinners - John MacArthur
- Luke 5:27-32 Why Jesus Does Not Save Good People - Steven Cole
- Luke 5 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Parallel passages:

> Mark 2:16+ When the scribes of the Pharisees saw that He was eating with the sinners and tax collectors, they said to His disciples, "**Why is He eating and drinking** with tax collectors and sinners?"
>
> Matthew 9:11+ When the Pharisees saw this, they said to His disciples, "**Why is your Teacher eating** with the tax collectors and sinners?"

THE "SEPARATISTS" GRUMBLE
THAT JESUS DOES NOT SEPARATE FROM SINNERS

Bock makes an interesting observation - The official response to the meal occurs some time after the event when the Pharisees and their scribes approach the disciples with a question. That this encounter comes after the party is clear, because the Pharisees would not have come to such a party, as their question shows, even in the unlikely event that they had been invited (Marshall 1978: 220; Tiede 1988: 128). The appearance that the leaders are near or at the party is a result of literary compression.

Craig Evans gives rationale for the anger of the Pharisees at Jesus' failure to separate from shady scum - Since they were the party of "separatists," who believed that redemption would come about by separating themselves from every impurity and impure person (inspired by the admonition of Lev. 10:10), they were offended by Jesus' frequent association with those persons considered religiously impure and sinful....The major difference between the outlook of the Pharisees and the approach taken by Jesus was that whereas the former were separatistic and exclusivistic Jesus called people of every sort to himself. Jesus was not interested in isolating himself from sinners, but was interested in bringing change to the lives of sinners. Thus, the difference in religious philosophy between Jesus and the Pharisees was fundamental, making conflict unavoidable. (Ibid)

The Pharisees undoubtedly were familiar with the (non-Biblical) rule set down by the rabbis = “The disciples of the learned shall not recline at table in the company of the ‘am hā—’āreç” (translated = “the people of the soil,” aka “the rabble that does not know the law.”

> **THOUGHT** - Is there some group with which you refuse to associate? Perhaps some who engage in perverse sexual behavior or partake of noxious substances or who run establishments of questionable nature, etc, etc. What did Jesus pray to His Father? "I do not ask You to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one." (Jn 17:15) In short, disciples of Jesus are to be IN the world but not OF the world! How else can these lost souls hear? I recall being at a church that was near a park frequented by homosexual men who engaged in sinful acts, and my wife had the gall to ask the leadership of the church if we could send men to sit at the tables in the park (it was no more than 100 yards away from the sanctuary!) so that they could share the Gospel with and explain how Jesus had come to set men free from such sinful behavior. The answer she received was an uncompassionate "No! We cannot do that!" Believers are to be **in the world** but not **"of" the world** (IN = Jn 17:11, not OF = Jn 17:14, 15, 16, 18). We are to be lights of Jesus (Jn 8:12) in the world (Mt 5:14-15, 16+, Php 2:15+). We are to be like boats in the water. That is our ***design***. But when water (world) gets in the boat, that is ***disaster***! This truth is illustrated by a submarine which is fully functional ***in*** water but is ruined if water gets in the cabin. A submarine on the ground (out of the water) is useless and is hardly able to accomplish its mission. When it is in the water it must be *insulated* from the water. If the water ever gets into the submarine then there is cause to sound the alarm. Believers are to be ***insulated*** from the world (like Daniel in the midst of idol infested Babylon) but not ***isolated*** from the world. Are you in a holy huddle or are you actively pursuing your calling to be salt and light to those who are dead in their trespasses and sins (Eph 2:1+) and need to be thrown the life preserving Gospel, which they may grab or may refuse and drown forever in the eternal abyss. We cannot save them but we can certainly throw them a Gospel life preserver! How are you doing dear "submarine saint?"

The Pharisees (pharisaios) **and their scribes** (grammateus) **began grumbling** (gogguzo) **at His disciples** (mathetes) - The phrase **the Pharisees and their scribes** describes those men within the sect **of the Pharisees** who were **scribes** or “lawyers” (cf. Lk 10:25+), men who were professional theologians and OT scholars who traced their history back to the time of Ezra and Nehemiah. While not all Pharisees were scribes, most of the scribes were Pharisees with lesser numbers found among the sects of the Sadducees and Essenes. The meaning of **Pharisees** is separated ones while the meaning of **saints** is set apart ones. Do you see the difference? Saints are set apart from the world but also set apart unto God as ambassadors to the godless world. Sadly some saints can fall into subtle forms of legalism and end up acting like "Pharisees!" Theses separated ones, the **Pharisees**, would not even let the edge of their robe touch the likes of men like Levi, much less eat with them! And notice who is "taking the heat" from the religious leaders! The ire of the religious leaders falls on the **disciples** who had been eating with the despised vermin. His disciples were beginning to learn what it meant to follow Jesus. It was that way then. It is the same way now for all who seek to follow Jesus! Do not be surprised for "all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted (You won't find this promise in most of the books of "Bible Promises!")(2 Ti 3:12+, cf "many tribulations" = Acts 14:22+) As Jesus taught us in John 15 (a clear warning to all who would follow Him in every age)...

> “If the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me before it hated you (IF YOU ARE LIKE ME, I PARTICULARLY DON'T LIKE THIS ONE BECAUSE MY NATURAL BENT IS FOR EVERYONE TO LIKE ME! FLESH IS HORRIBLY SELF-CENTERED!). 19 “If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, because of this **the world hates you**. 20 “Remember the word that I said to you, ‘A slave is not greater than his master.’ **If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you;** if they kept My word, they will keep yours also. 21 “But all these things they will do to you for My name’s sake, because they do not know the One who sent Me. (John 15:18-21)
>
> Matthew 10:25 “It is enough for the disciple that he become like his teacher, and the slave like his master. If they have called the head of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign the members of his household!
>
> Luke 6:40+ “A pupil is not above his teacher; but everyone, after he has been fully trained, will be like his teacher.
>
> Luke 10:16+ “The one who listens to you listens to Me, and**the one who rejects you rejects Me;** and he who rejects Me rejects the One who sent Me.”

Why were the **Pharisees grumbling**? Because they had missed the truth expressed in Micah and Matthew...

> Micah 6:8+ He has told you, O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you But to do

justice, to love kindness, And to walk humbly with your God?

Matthew 23:23 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cummin, and have neglected the weightier provisions of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness; but these are the things you should have done without neglecting the others.

The Pharisees (pharisaios) **and their scribes** (grammateus) **began grumbling** (gogguzo) - Matthew and Mark's version lack Luke's colorful word **grumbling**. **Grumble** in English is an onomatopoeic word - Can't you just hear the low rumble coming from the religious brood of vipers (Mt 3:7, 12:34, 23:33). And the Greek sentence places **grumbling** at the beginning for emphasis! "Grumbling the Pharisees..." is how it reads literally. In addition the verb **grumbling** is in the imperfect tense, which indicates that they were doing this over and over and over - grumble, grumble, grumble!

Gene Brooks - The use of “were complaining” (*egongyzon*) is significant because in the LXX it is used to describe the murmuring of Israel in the Wilderness (Ex 15:24+; Ex 16:7-12+; Ex 17:3+; Nu 11:1+; Nu 14:2, 27-29, 36+; Nu 16:11, 14+; Nu 17:5, 10+) and of Israel’s rebellion against God (Ps 59:15;106:25; 1 Cor 10:10). The point? In opposing the faithful Son of God, the Pharisees and scribes are following the rebellious ways of their ancestors (Luke 15:2; 19:7). (Luke 5:27-39 - Common Sinners & New Wine)

> **THOUGHT** - You never grumble like the Pharisees and scribes do you? If so, recall Paul's command in Phil 2:14+ to "**D o** (present imperative = continually, habitually, as your lifestyle) **A L L** (HOW MANY? NO EXCEPTION CLAUSES!) things without **grumbling** or **disputing**." Then Paul gives us the reason/purpose it is so critically important for disciples of Jesus **not to grumble**, writing "**SO THAT** (term of purpose) you will prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world (BELIEVERS ARE LIKE WALKING "BILLBOARDS" "ADVERTISING", SO TO SPEAK, THE GOSPEL!)." (Php 2:15+). And remember that you may the only light in some lost sinner's life! If we grumble we cannot fulfill Jesus' command in Mt 5:16+ "Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father Who is in heaven." In short, if we grumble, we fail to bring glory to our Father in Heaven! People (lost and saved) fail to get a proper opinion of the invisible God because of our visible ungodly grumbling! Think about that the next time your entertain the temptation to grumble! (Woe!) Now, before you tell me "This is simply not possible! You don't know my circumstances!" While I do not know your circumstances, I do know that what is humanly (naturally) impossible is super-humanly (supernaturally) possible! What do I mean? Remember that God never gives us a command without giving us the ability to obey that command. And in this context, Paul has just commanded the saints at Philippi to "**Work out** (present imperative) your salvation in fear and trembling," (Phil 2:12+) an "all inclusive" command which would obviously include not grumbling or disputing. Then Paul explains how this is supernaturally possible beginning with "**for**" (a term of explanation) "**FOR** it is God Who is at work in you (THE SPIRIT OF JESUS INDWELLS EVERY BELIEVER - Ro 8:9+), both to will (THE HOLY SPIRIT INITIATES THIS BY GIVING US THE "*WANT TO*" SO TO SPEAK BECAUSE OUR FALLEN FLESH DOES NOT "*WANT TO*" NOT GRUMBLE!) and to work (SPIRIT CONTINUALLY [energeo in present tense] ENERGIZES US TO FOLLOW THROUGH AND NOT GRUMBLE) for His good pleasure (THIS PLEASES OUR FATHER IN HEAVEN AND AS NOTED ALSO GIVES HIM GLORY AS OTHERS AROUND US SEE WE DO NOT GRUMBLE WHEN MOST EVERYONE ELSE WOULD GRUMBLE UNDER THE ADVERSE CIRCUMSTANCE). " (Phil 2:13+, see the NLT version Phil 2:13NLT+). See also the discussion of the Need for the Holy Spirit to obey NT commands or "How to Keep All 1642 Commandments in the New Testament!"

At His disciples - Not at Him directly! Why not? Probably cowardice and/or fear. Of course leveling a charge at Jesus' disciples would have been tantamount to making an accusation against their Leader. As the Jesus' ministry progresses and causes the religious leaders more and more anger, their bravado increases so that they brazenly confront Him face to face in the mock trials before His crucifixion.

Why do you eat and drink with the tax collectors (telones) **and sinners** (hamartolos)**?** - NLT has the somewhat redundant rendering of "disreputable sinners" although it does make the point. Their question was not one of sincere curiosity but was a rhetorical rebuke! In truth, the question was like a "boomerang" which spoke volumes about their proud, hypocritical hearts! As an aside, isn't that what often happens to our critical words? They come back to have more effect on us than on the one we sought to criticize! Better to "Bite our tongues" then be bitten by words from our tongue! "It was an offence for a Jew to eat with Gentiles as even many of the early Jewish Christians felt (Acts 11:3+, Gal 2:11-17+) and publicans and sinners were regarded like Gentiles (1 Cor. 5:11)." (**Robertson**) As noted above Jewish tax collectors were so despised that their name was virtually synonymous with **sinners**. The Pharisees had their own (false) definition of **sinners** as those who did not obey their legalistic Pharisaic interpretations of the law, to which they added many traditions which were like heavy burdens. To speak with these "sinners" would have been bad enough but as noted above to dine with them reflected a level of intimacy that was abhorrent to the religious leaders.

David Turner - Fellowship around a table was taken seriously in Jesus' time, as being an act that implies deeper unity than is currently attributed to it in the West....His participation in table fellowship probably should be viewed as a foretaste of eschatological festivities (Mt 8:11; Mt 22:1–14; Mt 25:1–13; Mt 26:29). (Drr Matthew Cornerstone Bible Commentary)

ESV note - Such table fellowship implies welcoming these people into extended interpersonal association, which the Pharisees thought would make a person "unclean." But just as Jesus would cleanse the leper rather than being made unclean by the leper (Luke 5:13+), so Jesus will bring sinners to repentance (Lk 5:32+) and forgiveness rather than being defiled by association with the sinners. (Borrow ESV Study Bible)

Hendriksen - As these hair-splitting legalists saw it, it would be impossible to remain ceremonially pure when one consented to dine with people whom they considered riffraff, scum. Did not the rabbis lay down this rule, "The disciples of the learned shall not recline at table in the company of the people of the soil (the rabble, the disreputable ones)"? Contamination must be avoided. Besides, did not eating and drinking with a person imply that one had entered into a covenant relationship with him? Was it not true that not only the rabbinical interpretation of God's law but even that divine law itself was being grossly violated by tax-collectors and their ilk? Were they not traitors and extortionists? Then why not stay clear of them? (Borrow Baker NT Commentary: Luke)

We repeatedly see Jesus' pattern of association with social outcasts...

Luke 7:34+ "The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, 'Behold, a gluttonous man and a drunkard, **a friend of tax collectors and sinners!'**

Luke 15:2+ Both the Pharisees and the scribes began to grumble, saying, "This man receives **sinners** and eats with them."

Luke 19:7+ When they saw it, they all began to grumble, saying, "He has gone to be the guest of a man who is a **sinner**."

Grumble (1111)(**gogguzo**) means to murmur, mutter, make complaining remarks or noises under one's breath. In 1 Co 10:10 it is used with idea of complaint (cf Nu 11:1). Gogguzo is an onomatopoeic word derived from the sound made when murmuring or muttering in a low and indistinct voice with the idea of complaint. In short this word gives us a vivid picture to help us imagine this scene of religious hypocrites making audible expressions of their dissatisfaction with Jesus and His acceptance of a despised tax collector even to the point of willingness to fellowship over a meal with him! Philosophers also warned against grumbling, noting that one ought to accept whatever the gods and Fate would send. Webster's English Dictionary has this note on **grumble** - to complain in a low harsh voice and often in a surly manner <workers grumbling about the low wages. Synonyms include croak, grouch, grouse, grunt, murmur, mutter, scold; compare complain, bellyache, crab, fuss, gripe, holler, squawk, whine; groan, moan; complain, kick.

Gogguzo - Usage: did(1), grumble(2), grumbled(2), grumbling(2), muttering(1).

Matthew 20:11 "When they received it, they **grumbled** at the landowner,

Luke 5:30 The Pharisees and their scribes began **grumbling** at His disciples, saying, "Why do you eat and drink with the tax collectors and sinners?"

John 6:41 Therefore the Jews were **grumbling** about Him, because He said, "I am the bread that came down out of heaven."

John 6:43 Jesus answered and said to them, "Do not **grumble** among yourselves.

John 6:61 But Jesus, conscious that His disciples **grumbled** at this, said to them, "Does this cause you to stumble?

John 7:32 The Pharisees heard the crowd **muttering** these things about Him, and the chief priests and the Pharisees sent officers to seize Him.

1 Corinthians 10:10 Nor **grumble**, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer.

1 Corinthians 10:10YLT neither **murmur** ye, as also some of them did **murmur**, and did perish by the destroyer. (1Co 10:10 YLT)

Gogguzo - 12x in 11v in the Septuagint **especially in reference to the Israelites wandering in the wilderness, who frequently grumbled at God and at Moses** (and judgment was often the result of their grumbling!) - Ex 17:3; Nu 11:1; Nu 14:27; Nu 14:29;

Nu 16:41; Nu 17:5; Jdg 1:14; Ps 59:15; Ps 106:25; Isa 29:24; Isa 30:12; Lam 3:39

> **Grumbling** is a term often used to describe the Israel complaining against God in the OT where it always spoke of inappropriate grumbling:
>
> Exodus 15:24 So the people **grumbled** at Moses, saying, "What shall we drink?"
>
> Exodus 16:7-8 and in the morning you will see the glory of the LORD, for He hears your**grumblings** against the LORD; and what are we, that you **grumble** against us?" 8 Moses said, "This will happen when the LORD gives you meat to eat in the evening, and bread to the full in the morning; for the LORD hears your **grumblings** which you **grumble** against Him. And what are we? Your **grumblings** are not against us but against the LORD."
>
> Nu 14:2 All the sons of Israel **grumbled** against Moses and Aaron; and the whole congregation said to them, "Would that we had died in the land of Egypt! Or would that we had died in this wilderness!

Disciples (3101)(**mathetes** from **manthano** = to learn which Vine says is "from a root *math*, indicating thought accompanied by endeavor". English = "*mathematics*"; cf matheteuo - make disciples) describes a person who learns from another by instruction, whether formal or informal. Discipleship includes the idea of one who intentionally learns by inquiry and observation (cf **inductive Bible study**) and thus **mathetes** is more than a mere pupil. A **mathetes** describes an adherent of a teacher. As discussed below **mathetes** itself has no spiritual connotation, and it is used of superficial followers of Jesus as well as of genuine believers. " As **followers** of Jesus we are to be, first of all, **learners**. We are to learn from Him by listening to Him, learn the truth that will set us free (John 8:32) and keep us from error. But we are also to learn from Him by looking at Him- learn how to live a life of beauty and blessing." (Earle - Word Meanings in the New Testament) **Barclay** adds that "All his life a Christian should be learning more and more about Jesus. The shut mind is the end of discipleship!" (DSB) **Mounce** adds that "Typically in the Jewish world, a disciple would voluntarily join a school or otherwise seek out a master rabbi; however, Jesus seeks out and chooses those whom he wants as his disciples (Mk 1:17; 2:14; Lk 5:1–11; cf. Mt 4:18–21). A dedicated disciple was generally expected someday to become a rabbi himself, yet Jesus teaches his disciples that he will always be their rabbi and they will have a lifetime of discipleship (Mt 23:8; cf. Mt 10:24–25, 37; Lk 14:26–27; Jn 11:16). Jesus' disciples are bound to him and to God's will (Mt 12:46–50; cf. Mk 3:31–45). They are called to a lifetime of work and service (Mt 16:15–19; Mk 1:17; Lk 5:10)." (Mounce's Complete Expository Dictionary)

Jesus! What a Friend for Sinners
by J. Wilbur Chapman (1910)
Play beautiful version from Matthew Smith

Jesus! What a Friend for sinners! Jesus! Lover of my soul!
Friends may fail me, foes assail me, He, my Savior, makes me whole.

Jesus! What a Strength in weakness! Let me hide myself in Him;
Tempted, tried, and sometimes failing, He, my Strength, my vict'ry wins.

Jesus! What a Help in sorrow! While the billows o'er me roll,
Even when my heart is breaking, He, my Comfort, helps my soul.

Jesus! What a Guide and Keeper! While the tempest still is high,
Storms about me, night o'ertakes me, He, my Pilot, hears my cry.

Jesus! I do now receive Him, More than all in Him I find,
He hath granted me forgiveness, I am His, and He is mine.

Refrain
Hallelujah! What a Savior! Hallelujah! What a Friend!
Saving, helping, keeping, loving, He is with me to the end.

Luke 5:31 And Jesus answered and said to them, "It is not those who are well who need a physician, but those who are sick.

- **Said to them**: Mt 9:12-13 Mk 2:17 Jer 8:22
- J C Ryle's Comments on Luke 5 - clear, devout, and accurate
- Luke 5:27-32 Jesus Came to Call and to Save Sinners - John MacArthur

- Luke 5 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Parallel passages:

> Matthew 9:12-13+ But when Jesus heard this, He said, “It is not those who are healthy who need a physician, but those who are sick. 13 “But go and learn what this means: ‘I DESIRE COMPASSION, AND NOT SACRIFICE,’ for I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners.”
>
> Mark 2:17+ And hearing this, Jesus said to them, “It is not those who are healthy who need a physician, but those who are sick; I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners.”

THE PERFECT ANSWER TO THE "RELIGIOUS" RIGHTEOUS

And Jesus (Iesous) **answered and said to them** - "Jesus made the perfect answer. Once Epictetus called his teaching “the medicine of salvation.” Jesus pointed out that it is only sick people who need doctors; and people like Matthew and his friends were the very people who needed him most." (Barclay)

Those who are well (hugiaino) - The Pharisees and Scribes were deceived! They thought they were spiritually "**well**" -- religiously pure and whole -- the perfect picture of self-righteousness which like a walled off medieval castle keeps out the good news of righteousness obtainable only by grace through faith in Christ. Tragically there are still many modern day self-righteous "Pharisees." This recalls Luke's later passage that "He also told this parable to some people who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and viewed others with contempt." (Luke 18:9+) The Pharisees thought they were "**well**" and since they viewed **sinners** as sick, why would they not want to heal them? We see one reason is the viewed the "sick sinners" not with **compassion** but with **contempt**! In the parallel passage Mt 9:13+ records "go and **learn** what this means: ‘I DESIRE COMPASSION, AND NOT SACRIFICE." (cf Mt 12:7+)

> **THOUGHT** - This horrible sin of self-righteous pride flourishes in the sad caste system in India, where the higher castes view the lower castes as untouchables and often cut off any contact whatsoever with them! Here is the irony -- the high caste are very resistant to the Gospel, while the major inroads of the Gospel are into the lower castes with a significant number of believers in the untouchable Dalits with a population of about 50 million! How absurd is this caste discrimination? Here is an utter absurdity - Traditional upper caste members will even avoid a Dalit’s shadow! (See Dalit work in India, Another Article) In fact over 42% of Indian Christians are Dalits! These truths beg the question dear believer, dear Gospel carrier for Jesus, "Are there any "untouchables" in your life? Are there any souls created in the image of God, with whom you absolutely refuse to associate and give the Gospel?" Then if so, ask the Lord of the harvest to change your heart, for He died for the lowly, the outcast, the untouchable sinners (which is what we all were before Christ rescued us by grace through faith!)
>
> **If you think you are good enough for Heaven,**
> **then you are not.**

It is not those who are well (hugiaino) **who need** (chreia) **a physician** (iatros)**, but those who are sick** (kakos) - **NLT** has "Healthy people don't need a doctor-- sick people do." Another one of Jesus' puzzling statements, which makes no sense who do not have spiritual ears to hear and understand. Only the Holy Spirit can "illuminate" these paradoxical statements. Unsaved (deceived and foolish) minds hear this utterly profound truth as if it were utter foolishness! Of course in a literal sense a sick person know they are sick. Of course, Jesus as He often does, uses common experiences to speak spiritual truths. And so these soul who recognizes he or she is spiritual sick (with a virus called "sin") will manifest a humble, open, honest heart, a heart that is willing and ready to repent and rest by grace through faith in the Great Physician, Jesus, our Jehovah Rapha.

Hendriksen on **those who are sick** (kakos) - When (Jesus) associates on intimate terms with people of low reputation He does not do this as a hobnobber, a comrade in evil, “birds of a feather flocking together,” but as a Physician, One Who, without in any way becoming contaminated with the diseases of His patients, must get very close to them in order that He may heal them! Moreover, it is especially the Pharisees who should be able to understand this. Are not they the very people who regard themselves as being healthy, and all others as being sick? (Borrow Baker NT Commentary: Luke)

NET Note on who needs a **physician** (iatros) - Jesus' point is that He associates with those who are sick because they have the need and will respond to the offer of help. A person who is well (or who thinks mistakenly that he is) will not seek treatment.

THEY ARE LIKE MANY "RELIGIOUS" FOLKS - AS A MEDICAL DOCTOR I LIKE COMPARE THEIR "RELIGION" TO A VACCINE

THAT KEEPS THEM FROM CONTRACTING THE REAL "DISEASE," A RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS! HAVE YOU EVER WITNESSED TO SOMEONE WHO IS FILLED WITH RELIGION WITHOUT RELATIONSHIP? THEY ARE **MUCH MORE DIFFICULT** TO SPEAK TO ABOUT JESUS AND THE GOSPEL, BECAUSE THEY THINK THEY ARE "WELL" AND DO NOT NEED THE GREAT PHYSICIAN! THIS DESCRIBES SO MANY IN AMERICA WHERE SOME SURVEYS RECORD THAT 75% OF INDIVIDUALS SURVEYED CLAIM TO BE A "CHRISTIAN!" SO DECEIVED! SO ETERNALLY TRAGIC!

Mattoon adds "He explains to the Pharisees that He was the Great Physician and He did not go around healing people that were well! He came to help those who were sick with sin. It is pretty hard to reach sinners for Christ who think they don't need a Savior or don't believe they have done anything wrong. The Great Physician can do nothing for those who think they are not sick. If you are self-sufficient, if you recognize no personal needs, and if you go in a rebellious, self-chosen pathway, your choice will lead you to destruction. Those who recognize their sinfulness, however, find the gospel very appealing. They will find God's forgiveness and cleansing by turning to Christ for cleansing and forgiveness. The Pharisees did not benefit from the ministry of Jesus because they thought they were righteous people. Actually, the Pharisees were not righteous. They needed to be saved as much as the tax collectors, but they were unwilling to confess their sins and acknowledge their guilt. So they criticized the Doctor of all doctors for going to people who were seriously ill." (Mattoon - Treasures from the Scriptures)

> **THOUGHT** - Have you come to that place in your life where you knew you were desperately sin sick and in need of soul cleansing that can only be found in Jesus the Great Physician? Jesus is ever calling as in Mt 11:28-30+
>
> > **Come** to Me, all who are weary (OF YOUR SIN) and heavy-laden (WITH THE CONSEQUENCES OF YOUR SIN), and I will give you rest. 29 **Take** My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS. 30 “For (TERM OF EXPLANATION) My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”

Jesus (2424)(**Iesous**) is transliterated from the Hebrew Yeshua which means Jehovah is help or Jehovah is Salvation. Jesus corresponds to the OT name Jehoshua is contracted to Joshua. Jesus =Savior (Mt 1:1, 16, 21). In the gospels, our Savior is designated by the name of Christ alone in nearly 300 passages; by the name of Jesus Christ or Christ Jesus less than 100 times, and by the name of the Lord Jesus Christ less than 50 times. Prior to His resurrection, He was designated as Jesus Christ; after His resurrection, He is often referred to as Christ Jesus

Well (5198) (**hugiaino** verb from noun **hugies** = whole, healthy; English = hygienic = making sick folk whole) means to be in good health, to be healthy and wholesome, referring to literal, physical health as here and in (Luke 7:10). Most of the NT uses of **hugiaino** are figurative, describing that which is free from admixture of error and generally referring to Christian teaching or doctrine which is to accurately or correctly reflect the Bible and God's will and way. The first three NT uses **hugiaino** , all by Dr Luke, refer to the literal meaning, **to be sound in health.** The synoptic parallel passages in Mark 2:17+ and Mt 9:12+ translate healthy with the verb ischuo (instead of hugiano) which speaks of one having strength, and so in this context is used to convey the picture of visible strength and robust health.

> **Hugiaino** is used 12x in NT (Lk. 5:31; Lk. 7:10; Lk. 15:27; 1 Tim. 1:10; 1 Tim. 6:3; 2 Tim. 1:13; 2 Tim. 4:3; Tit. 1:9; Tit. 1:13; Tit. 2:1; Tit. 2:2; 3 Jn. 1:2)

Need (5532)(**chreia** from **chraomai** = to use, make use of or **chreos** = a debt) means a necessity, what is needed or the occasion of need. 1. need, necessity Lk 10:42; Heb 7:11. crei,an e;cein have need Mt 3:14; 6:8; Mk 11:3; Lk 19:31, 34; 1 Cor 12:21, 24; Heb 5:12; 10:36.—2. need, lack, want, difficulty; be in need, lack something Mk 2:25; Ac 2:45; 4:35; Eph 4:28; Rev 3:17.—In other expressions Ac 20:34; Ro 12:13; Phil 4:16, 19.—3. the thing that is necessary Eph 4:29.—4. office, duty, service Ac 6:3.

> **Luke's uses of chreia** - Lk. 5:31; Lk. 9:11; Lk. 10:42; Lk. 15:7; Lk. 19:31; Lk. 19:34; Lk. 22:71; Acts 2:45; Acts 4:35; Acts 6:3; Acts 20:34; Acts 28:10

Physician (2395)(**iatros** from **iaomai** = to heal) healer, one who undertakes the cure of physical ailments. BDAG adds "one who undertakes the healing of supra-physical maladies, physician (of the soul) " Thayer comments on use in Luke 4:23 - "a proverb, applied to Christ in this sense: `come forth from your lowly and mean condition and create for yourself authority and influence by performing miracles among us also, that we may see that you are what you profess to be,' "

> **Iatros - 6v** - Matt. 9:12; Mk. 2:17; Mk. 5:26; Lk. 4:23; Lk. 5:31; Col. 4:14
>
> **Iatros in Septuagint** - 2 Chr. 16:12; Job 13:4; Ps. 88:10; Pr 14:30; Isa. 26:14; Jer. 8:22

Sick (2560)(**kakos**) means badly, wrongly, wickedly Jn 18:23; Acts 23:5; Jas 4:3. Severely Mt 15:22; 17:15 be ill, sick Mt 4:24; Mk 6:55; Lk 5:31. **Friberg** - adverb; badly; (1) physically severely (Mt 21.41); idiomatically k. e;cein literally have badly, i.e. be ill, be sick (Mt 4.24); (2) morally, of a manner of speaking wrongly, incorrectly, with wrong motives (Jn 18.23)

Kakos - 16v - cruelly(1), evil(1), ill*(5), sick(6), very(1), wretched(1), wrong motives(1), wrongly(1).Mt. 4:24; Mt. 8:16; Mt. 9:12; Mt. 14:35; Mt. 15:22; Mt. 17:15; Mt. 21:41; Mk. 1:32; Mk. 1:34; Mk. 2:17; Mk. 6:55; Lk. 5:31; Lk. 7:2; Jn. 18:23; Acts 23:5; Jas. 4:3

Kakos in Septuagint - Ex 22:27; Lev 19:14; Lev 20:9; Isa 8:21; Jer 7:9; Ezek 34:4

ILLUSTRATION - A businessman well known for his ruthlessness once announced to writer Mark Twain, "Before I die I mean to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. I will climb Mount Sinai and read the 10 Commandments aloud at the top." "I have a better idea," replied Twain. "You could stay in Boston and keep them." Twain was rebuking this man's hypocrisy and self-righteousness and stressed his need to start "walking" the truth instead of just "talking" about it. The attitude of self-righteousness was not the case with some of the tax collectors who realized they were sinners and needed to be saved from their sins. Christ was calling sinners to repentance and continues to do so today. If you want to march to the drum beat of the Lord, you will need to change your attitude about the Lord, about yourself, and the needs of others. God wants us to implement into our lives His way of living. (Mattoon - Treasures from the Scriptures)

Follow Me

> It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. Mark 2:17

Today's Scripture & Insight: Mark 2:13-17 (cf Lk 5:27-32, Mk 2:13-17, Mt 9:9-13)

Health clubs offer many different programs for those who want to lose weight and stay healthy. One fitness center caters only to those who want to lose at least 50 pounds and develop a healthy lifestyle. One member says that she quit her previous fitness club because she felt the slim and fit people were staring at her and judging her out-of-shape body. She now works out 5 days a week and is achieving healthy weight loss in a positive and welcoming environment.

Two thousand years ago, Jesus came to call the spiritually unfit to follow Him. Levi was one such person. Jesus saw him sitting in his tax collector's booth and said, "Follow me" (Mark 2:14). His words captured Levi's heart, and he followed Jesus. Tax collectors were often greedy and dishonest in their dealings and were considered religiously unclean. When the religious leaders saw Jesus having dinner at Levi's house with other tax collectors, they asked, "Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?" (Mk 2:16). Jesus replied, "I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners" (Mk 2:17).

Jesus came to save sinners, which includes all of us. He loves us, welcomes us into His presence, and calls us to follow Him. As we walk with Him, we grow more and more spiritually fit. By: Marvin Williams (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

> Read Acts 9:10-19 and see how one man obeyed God and welcomed someone who was considered spiritually unfit. What were the results? How can you reach out to those who need the Savior? How can you help your church become a more welcoming place for the spiritually unfit?

Jesus' arms of welcome are always open.
(ED: WERE HIS ARMS NOT OPENED WIDE EVEN AS HE DIED?)

Diagnosis And Cure

Read: Matthew 9:1-13

> Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. —Matthew 9:12

One of my favorite stories concerns the old country doctor who gave his patient a thorough examination, scratched his head in bewilderment, and asked, "Have you had this before?" When the patient answered, "Yes," the doctor wrinkled his brow and said, "Well, you've got it again."

There's nothing quite so frustrating as a problem that defies diagnosis. What a relief it is to find a skilled practitioner who can say with confidence, "This is your problem and this treatment will help."

Jesus Christ always correctly identified the condition of anyone who came to Him for help. From physically blind Bartimaeus (Mk. 10:46-52) to spiritually blind Nicodemus (Jn. 3:1-21+), Jesus put His finger on the person's true need and offered an opportunity to trust Him for the solution.

Nineteenth-century hymn writer Oscar Clute celebrated this truth in a very personal way as he wrote:

Come and rejoice with me,
I, once so sick at heart,
Have met with One who knows my case,
And knows the healing art.

Jesus Christ is the Great Physician. Whatever our need or difficulty, He invites us to seek Him, believe His diagnosis, accept His prescription, and place ourselves in His wise and loving care. Will you do that with your life today? By David C. McCasland (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

Come and rejoice with me,
I, once so sick at heart,
Have met with One who knows my case,
And knows the healing art.

Jesus is the master of diagnosis and cure.

A Fresh Start

Read: Luke 5:17-26

> Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. —Luke 5:31

In many countries, health laws prohibit reselling or reusing old mattresses. Only landfills will take them. Tim Keenan tackled the problem and today his business employs a dozen people to extract the individual components of metal, fabric, and foam in old mattresses for recycling. But that's only part of the story. Journalist Bill Vogrin wrote, "Of all the items Keenan recycles . . . it's the people that may be his biggest success" (The Gazette, Colorado Springs). Keenan hires men from halfway houses and homeless shelters, giving them a job and a second chance. He says, "We take guys nobody else wants."

Luke 5:17-26 tells how Jesus healed the body and the soul of a paralyzed man. Following that miraculous event, Levi answered Jesus' call to follow Him and then invited his fellow tax collectors and friends to a banquet in honor of the Lord (Lk 5:27-29). When some people accused Jesus of associating with undesirables (Lk 5:30), He reminded them that healthy people don't need a doctor —adding, "I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance" (Lk 5:32).

To everyone who feels like a "throwaway" headed for the landfill of life, Jesus opens His arms of love and offers a fresh beginning. That's why He came! By David McCasland (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

The power of God can turn a heart
From evil and the power of sin;
The love of God can change a life
And make it new and cleansed within.
—Fasick

Salvation is receiving a new life.
(Christ our life! Col 3:4+)

INSIGHT: The religious leaders accused Jesus of blasphemy for claiming divine attributes for Himself (Luke 5:21+). Blasphemy is showing contempt or a lack of reverence for God or something sacred (v.20). A violation of the third commandment, it was punishable by death (Lev. 24:15-16+).

Luke 5:32 "I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance."

- Lu 4:18,19 15:7,10 18:10-14 19:10 24:47 Isa 55:6,7 57:15 Mt 18:11 Mk 15:7,10 Ac 2:38 3:19,26 5:31 17:30 20:21 26:18-20 1Co 6:9-11 1Ti 1:15,16 2Ti 2:25,26 2Pe 3:9
- J C Ryle's Comments on Luke 5 - clear, devout, and accurate
- Luke 5:27-32 Jesus Came to Call and to Save Sinners - John MacArthur
- Luke 5:27-32 Jesus Came to Call and to Save Sinners - John MacArthur
- Luke 5:27-32 Why Jesus Does Not Save Good People - Steven Cole
- Luke 5 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Parallel passages:

> Matthew 9:13+ But when Jesus heard this, He said, "It is not those who are healthy who need a physician, but those who are sick. 13 "But go and learn what this means: 'I DESIRE COMPASSION, AND NOT SACRIFICE,' for **I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners**"
>
> Mark 2:17+ And hearing this, Jesus said to them, "It is not those who are healthy who need a physician, but those who are sick; **I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners**"

JESUS' RESCUE MISSION: TO CALL SICK TO REPENT

Spurgeon - The murmuring of those Pharisees and doctors of the law had one good result, for it led the Saviour to declare the purpose of his mission to the earth: "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners." (Luke - exposition)

Bock adds "Jesus elaborates on his physician remark with a description of his mission. Such mission declarations are common (Luke 7:34; 12:49, 51; 18:8; 19:10; Mark 1:38; 10:45; Matt. 5:17; 20:28." (See Luke: Baker Exegetical Commentary)

I have not come to call the righteous (dikaios) **but sinners** (hamartolos) **to repentance** (metanoia) - **I have...come** is in the verb is perfect tense - In other words Jesus "invaded" earth at a point in time with a distinct purpose and His purpose endures. It is a mission to sick sinners not those who are well think they are righteous (aka "don't need a physician"). Jesus is not endorsing the righteousness of the Pharisees, who did not see themselves as **sinners** in need of Christ's righteousness! They were self-righteous, sanctimonious hypocrites! This statement is in all three synoptic gospels, which is not surprising as this is the reason Jesus came to earth. This was (and is) His purpose. So Jesus does not dispute that there is a form of "righteousness" that men can have, but it is a dangerous "righteousness" because it produces in that man or woman a heart that is proud and fails to see their personal need for God's gift of righteousness found only in Christ. In Luke 19:10+ Jesus declares "the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost." (We as His disciples should do likewise! Are you?) The righteous think they are "right" with God, which blinds them to seeing their true lost condition and their true need!

I have... come to call...sinners (hamartolos) - In contrast to the self-righteous religious leaders who assiduously shunned "sinners" (which of course they too were but did not acknowledge!) and called Jesus a "friend of tax collectors and sinners" (Lk 7:34, cf Lk 15:2, 19:7), the very ones they would not touch! Jesus came to touch the untouchables of this world! One of the major penetrations of the Gospel of Jesus is into the Dalits (secular description), the **untouchables** of India (see note). Why are they now so open to the Gospel? Because only Jesus offers them hope in this world and the world to come.

Hendriksen on calling **sinners** (hamartolos) **to repentance** (metanoia)- As reported by Luke, Jesus adds that the call he had come to extend to sinners was "to conversion." Not only "repentance" or sorrow for sin is needed, but nothing less than complete transformation: change of mind, heart, will, conduct....The rendering favored by almost all English translations, namely, "**repentance**," is too weak and one-sided. That translation emphasizes only the negative aspect of what is meant here. The word used in the original indicates a radical transformation. The Dutch rendering (both Statenvertaling and Nieuwe Vertaling) is correct: bekering; not merely berouw. The concept has two elements: (a) a definite sorrow for and turning from evil; (b) a resolute turning to God in faith and obedience. Only in such instances in which the emphasis is placed exclusively on sorrow for sin is the rendering "repentance" or (for the verb) "repent" justified. See, for example, Luke 10:13 (cf. Matt. 11:21). "They would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes." See further: the explanation of Luke 3:3 in this commentary; N.T.C. on Matthew, pp. 196, 197, including the footnotes on p. 197; and see also J. Behm on this word, Th.D.N.T., Vol. IV, pp. 999–1003. Note that on p. 1001 that author also endorses the rendering "conversion" for Luke 5:32. (Borrow Baker NT Commentary: Luke)

But sinners to repentance - Of the 3 synoptic accounts (Mt 9:13+; Mk 2:17+), only Luke has this last phrase of calling **sinners to repentance**. This call to repent is how Jesus began His ministry, Matthew recording "From that time Jesus began to preach and say, "**Repent**, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Mt 4:17+) In Luke 13:5+ He declared ""I tell you, no, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish." The apostles imitated their Master with the call for sinners to repent...

> Acts 3:19 "Therefore **repent** and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord;
>
> Acts 3:26 "For you first, God raised up His Servant and sent Him to bless you by **turning every one of you from your wicked ways.**"
>
> 2 Timothy 2:25; 26 with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, **if perhaps God may grant them repentance** leading to the knowledge of the truth, 26 and they may come to their senses and escape from the

snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will.

2 Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish **but for all to come to repentance**.

Repentance is a repeated theme in the Gospel of Luke -

Luke 3:3, 8+ (THIS REFERS TO JOHN THE BAPTIST) And he came into all the district around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins; (3:8) "Therefore bear fruits in keeping with repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham for our father,' for I say to you that from these stones God is able to raise up children to Abraham.

Luke 15:7+ "I tell you that in the same way, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who **repents** than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no **repentance**.

Luke 15:10+ "In the same way, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who **repents**."

Luke 13:1-5+ Now on the same occasion there were some present who reported to Him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. 2 And Jesus said to them, "Do you suppose that these Galileans were greater sinners than all other Galileans because they suffered this fate? 3"I tell you, no, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish. 4"Or do you suppose that those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them were worse culprits than all the men who live in Jerusalem? 5"I tell you, no, but unless you **repent**, you will all likewise perish."

Luke 16:30+ "But he said, 'No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will **repent**!'

Luke 24:47+ and that **repentance** for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem.

Righteous (1342) **dikaios** from **dike** = right, just) defines that which is in accordance with high standards of rectitude. It is that which is in right relation to another and so in reference to persons defines the one who is morally and ethically righteous, upright or just. Luke's first 3 uses speak of true God given, God glorifying righteousness (Lk. 1:6; Lk. 1:17; Lk. 2:25) but Lk 5:32 speaks of the self-righteous.

Dikaios in Luke and Acts - Lk. 1:6; Lk. 1:17; Lk. 2:25; Lk. 5:32; Lk. 12:57; Lk. 14:14; Lk. 15:7; Lk. 18:9; Lk. 20:20; Lk. 23:47; Lk. 23:50; Acts 3:14; Acts 4:19; Acts 7:52; Acts 10:22; Acts 22:14; Acts 24:15;

Repentance (3341)(**metanoia** from **meta** = after + **noéo** = to understand) literally means "afterthought" or "to think after" and implies a change of mind. From the NT uses, it is clear that **metanoia** means however much more than merely a change of one's mind but also includes a complete change of heart, attitude, interest, and direction. **Metanoia** is a conversion in every sense of the word. Jesus' teaching would support this conclusion for our Lord declared "I tell you that in the same way, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who **repents** (metanoeo), than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no **repentance** (metanoia)." (Luke 15:7+) **See also**: Great quotes on repentance primarily from Puritan writers

Metanoia - 22x in 22v in NT - Matt. 3:8; Matt. 3:11; Mk. 1:4; Lk. 3:3; Lk. 3:8; Lk. 5:32; Lk. 15:7; Lk. 24:47; Acts 5:31; Acts 11:18; Acts 13:24; Acts 19:4; Acts 20:21; Acts 26:20; Rom. 2:4; 2 Co. 7:9; 2 Co. 7:10; 2 Tim. 2:25; Heb. 6:1; Heb. 6:6; Heb. 12:17; 2 Pet. 3:9

Craig Evans has an interesting note on **repentance** - Luke is especially fond of the subject. In Matthew the noun "repentance" (metanoia) and the verb "to repent" (metanoein) occur seven times; in Mark three times. But in Luke these words occur fourteen times (and eleven more times in the book of Acts). The closely related words, "conversion" (Greek: epistrophe) and "to convert" (epistrepho), also occur much more frequently in Luke's writings than in Matthew and Mark. Luke's heavy use of these words testifies to his interest in evangelism and the mission of the Church. (See The Bible Knowledge Background Commentary)

One of the best illustrations of **genuine repentance** is found in Paul's description of the saints at Thessalonica…

> For they themselves (other believers in Macedonia and Achaia) report about us (Paul, Silvanus and Timothy) what kind of a reception we had with you, and **how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven**, whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, who delivers us from the wrath to come. (1Th 1:9; 1:10- See **notes** 1Th 1:9; 1:10)

C H Spurgeon in a sermon entitled The Plumbline (Amos 7:7, 8) wrote that "Side by side with that **faith**, God puts true **repentance**. When a man attempts to convert his fellow-man, he gives him a sham repentance, or perhaps he tells him that there is no need of

any repentance at all. Certain preachers have been telling us, lately, that it is a very easy matter to obtain salvation, and that there is no need of repentance; or if repentance is needed, it is merely a change of mind. That is not the doctrine that our fathers used to preach, nor the doctrine that we have believed. That faith, which is not accompanied by repentance, will have to be repented of; so, whenever God builds, he builds repentance fair and square with faith. These two things go together; the man just as much regrets and grieves over the past as he sees that past obliterated by the precious blood of Jesus. He just as much hates all his sin as he believes that his sin has been all put away. (Amos 7:7-8 The Plumbline)

Related Resources:

- Baker Evangelical Dictionary Repentance
- American Tract Society Repentance
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia Repentance
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia Repentance
- The Jewish Encyclopedia Repentance
- Bridgeway Bible Dictionary Repentance
- Charles Buck Dictionary Repentance
- Torrey Topical Textbook Repentance
- Easton's Bible Dictionary Repentance
- Holman Bible Dictionary Repentance
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible Repentance
- Hastings' Dictionary of the NT Repentance Repentance (2)
- Vines' Expository Dictionary Repent, Repentance

Jesus Friend of Sinners
by Casting Crowns

Jesus, friend of sinners, we have strayed so far away
We cut down people in your name but the sword was never ours to swing
Jesus, friend of sinners, the truth's become so hard to see
The world is on their way to You but they're tripping over me
Always looking around but never looking up I'm so double minded
A plank eyed saint with dirty hands and a heart divided

Oh Jesus, friend of sinners
Open our eyes to the world at the end of our pointing fingers
Let our hearts be led by mercy
Help us reach with open hearts and open doors
Oh Jesus, friend of sinners, break our hearts for what breaks yours

Yeah

Jesus, friend of sinners, the one who's writing in the sand
Make the righteous turn away and the stones fall from their hands
Help us to remember we are all the least of thieves
Let the memory of Your mercy bring Your people to their knees
No one knows what we're for only against when we judge the wounded
What if we put down our signs crossed over the lines and loved like You did

Oh Jesus, friend of sinners
Open our eyes to world at the end of our pointing fingers
Let our hearts be led by mercy
Help us reach with open hearts and open doors
Oh Jesus, friend of sinners, break our hearts for what breaks yours

You love every lost cause; you reach for the outcast
For the leper and the lame; they're the reason that You came
Lord I was that lost cause and I was the outcast
But you died for sinners just like me, a grateful leper at Your feet

'Cause You are good, You are good and Your love endures forever

You are good, You are good and Your love endures forever
You are good, You are good and Your love endures forever
You are good, You are good and Your love endures forever

Oh Jesus, friend of sinners
Open our eyes to world at the end of our pointing fingers
Let our hearts be led by mercy
Help us reach with open hearts and open doors
Oh Jesus, friend of sinners, break our hearts for what breaks Yours

And I was the lost 'cause and I was the outcast
Yeah
You died for sinners just like me, a grateful leper at Your feet

---

FRIENDS IN LOW PLACES

People who are involved with Alcoholics Anonymous say the group is at a turning point of sorts. In many chapters, people would be scandalized if a “sloppy drunk” walked into a meeting and made a scene. Those chapters have apparently become too respectable for such behavior. Imagine—an organization dedicated to helping alcoholics, offended by drunken behavior! And yet the church faces a similar dilemma. What would happen if a hard-core “sinner” came to your fellowship and made a spectacle of himself, sobbing, crying out for forgiveness, interrupting the routine? Jesus associated with the “wrong” people—sinners, tax gatherers, undesirables—and was criticized harshly for it. He offered them God’s love and forgiveness regardless of their social status. Could anyone criticize you or your church for hanging out with the “wrong crowd”? If not, make it a matter of prayer for God to move you into the lives of one or two people who really need to experience his grace and mercy.

Repentance Is For Everyone

Read: Luke 5:27-3

I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance. —Luke 5:32

A local newspaper carried an article about my work of helping drug addicts. Later, the paper published this letter: “I commend Mrs. Yoder for trying to help drug addicts, but sadly, she is dealing with a problem that shouldn’t be there in the first place.” That’s true, but it’s no use saying it shouldn’t be there—it already is!

Sin shouldn’t be here at all. Yet God anticipated our sin and prepared a perfect sacrifice—”the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world” (Revelation 13:8). In Romans 5:8, Paul emphasized that “while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

No matter what circumstances drive us to God, He won’t deride us for honestly seeking His deliverance from our most regrettable sins. Jesus insisted that He came into the world for this very reason, not to “call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance” (Luke 5:32). When we repent, we not only admit our wrongs, but we willingly turn from them and open ourselves to God’s transforming power.

Repentance is necessary to enter into a relationship with Christ. **Daily repentance** is necessary to stay in close fellowship with Him and to grow spiritually. Both lead us to the fountain of God’s forgiveness and His life-changing power. Which repentance do you need today? By Joanie Yoder (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

When we confess our sins to God,
We're washed as white as snow;
And He keeps on forgiving us
Each time to Him we go.
—Sper

If you are truly sorry for your sins, you will want to give them up.

All Welcome!

Read: Luke 5:27–32

I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. Luke 5:32

The much-prayed-for film night at the church youth club had finally arrived. Posters had been displayed all around the village and pizzas were warming in the oven. Steve, the youth pastor, hoped that the film—about gang members in New York who were brought face-to-face with the claims of Jesus by a young pastor—would bring new recruits to the club.

But he hadn't realized that a key football match was being shown on television that evening, so attendance was much smaller than he had hoped for. Sighing inwardly, he was about to dim the lights and begin the film when five leather-clad members of the local motorbike club came in. Steve went pale.

Lord, please help me to see people through Your eyes of love.

The leader of the group, who was known as TDog, nodded in Steve's direction. "It's free and for everyone, right?" he said. Steve opened his mouth to say, "Youth club members only" when TDog bent down and picked up a bracelet with the letters WWJD (What Would Jesus Do) stamped on it. "This yours, mate?" he asked. Steve nodded, hot with embarrassment, and waited while the new guests found a seat.

Have you ever been in Steve's situation? You long to share the good news about Jesus, but you have a mental list of the "right" people who would be acceptable? Jesus was often criticized by the religious authorities for the company He kept. But He welcomed those everyone else avoided, because He knew they needed Him most (Luke 5:31–32).

Lord, please help me to see people through Your eyes of love and to welcome all those You bring into my life.

A heart that is open to Christ will be open to those He loves.

INSIGHT: In ancient Israel, tax collectors were considered traitors to their country because they were employees of the occupying Roman force. To make matters worse, some tax collectors demanded more tax than required from their fellow citizens. Thus Jesus's choice of a "traitor" as one of His closest followers would have seemed strange, to put it mildly. Yet when the religious leaders confronted Jesus, His defense was not only logical but revealed the depth of His love and mission. "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick" (Luke 5:31). Jesus wasn't applauding the religious leaders while condemning the depravity of Levi. Instead He was placing everyone on the same level. All need the love and healing He offers. By Marion Stroud (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

Come As You Are

Read: Luke 5:27-32

> I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance. —Luke 5:32

There's a story about an artist who wanted to paint a picture of the prodigal son (described by Jesus in Luke 15:11-32). He saw an unkempt beggar on the street and asked him to come to his studio and pose.

The man showed up the next day, but he was neatly shaven and clean. When the artist saw him, he exclaimed, "Oh no, I can't use you as you are now!"

God asks us to come to Him just as we are, admitting that we are sinners who deserve nothing but judgment. This is humbling, but it is the only way we can receive the forgiveness Christ paid for on the cross and be accepted and used by God.

The scribes and Pharisees were scrupulous lawkeepers. They thought God was pleased with them because they were all "cleaned up." So when they saw Jesus eating with people who had bad reputations, they complained. But Jesus said, "I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance" (Lk. 5:32). This was a rebuke to their self-righteous attitude. They needed to admit their sin. Then Jesus could receive them too.

If you need to be saved or to be restored to fellowship, repent and come to Jesus just as you are! He will forgive your sin and make you righteous. By Dennis J. De Haan (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

Sinners are the only people who can be saved.

An Eye-Opener

Read: Matthew 9:9-13

> Go and learn what this means: "I desire mercy and not sacrifice.. —Matthew 9:13 (cf Lk 5:27-32, Mk 2:13-17, Mt 9:9-13)

A man left his house for church one Sunday just as his neighbor was loading his golf clubs into his car. “Henry,” the neighbor called, “come play golf with me today.” Henry answered firmly, “I always go to church on the Lord’s Day.”

After a pause the golfer said, “You know, Henry, I’ve often wondered about your church and I really admire your faithfulness. But I’ve invited you to play golf with me seven or eight times, and you’ve never once invited me to go to church with you.”

What an eye-opener! To all the “Henrys” in today’s church, Jesus gives the same challenge He gave to the Pharisees: “I desire mercy and not sacrifice” (Mt. 9:13). In other words, He wants us to show mercy and love to those who need salvation, not just go through the motions of our own religious beliefs. Jesus further explained His mercy by saying, “I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance” (v.13).

Consider the destiny of people without Christ. Let this stir you to a compassion greater than your comfortable routine or your fear of rejection. Pray for several people or families near you and ask God to love them through you. And, without nagging, invite them to church. By Joanie Yoder (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

We need to see through Jesus' eyes
Our neighbors who are lost;
For then we will reach out to them,
Regardless of the cost.
—Sper

We are to be channels of God's truth, not reservoirs.

Undeserved Praise

Read: Luke 5:27-32

> I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance. —Luke 5:32

Even before I could afford a self-cleaning oven, I managed to keep my oven clean. Guests even commented on it when we had them over for a meal. “Wow, your oven is so clean. It looks like new.” I accepted the praise even though I knew I didn’t deserve it. The reason my oven was clean had nothing to do with my meticulous scrubbing; it was clean because I so seldom used it.

How often, I wonder, am I guilty of accepting undeserved admiration for my “clean” life? It’s easy to give the impression of being virtuous; simply do nothing difficult, controversial, or upsetting to people. But Jesus said we are to love people who don’t agree with us, who don’t share our values, who don’t even like us. Love requires that we get involved in the messy situations of people’s lives. Jesus was frequently in trouble with religious leaders who were more concerned about keeping their own reputations clean than they were about the spiritual condition of those they were supposed to care for. They considered Jesus and His disciples unclean for mingling with sinners when they were simply trying to rescue people from their destructive way of life (Luke 5:30-31).

True disciples of Jesus are willing to risk their own reputations to help others out of the mire of sin.

Dear Lord, give me a heart of compassion for those who are lost in sin. Help me not to be concerned about what others think of me but only that Your holy name will be honored.

Christ sends us out to bring others in.

INSIGHT: The role of tax collector in first-century Israel was quite different from what we would think today. Ancient Rome operated on the back of the taxes drained from conquered lands like Israel. This was overseen by the local governor (or procurator), but it was actually accomplished by local citizens like Levi (also known as Matthew), who worked for Rome. These tax collectors, however, were not viewed as simple agents or bureaucrats. They were known to charge higher taxes than were due and to pocket the excess. They were despised as collaborators who had aligned themselves with the hated occupying force. The taxes they collected were a continuing symbol of the oppression the Jews felt as a conquered people, and the tax collectors were considered participants in that oppression.

By Julie Ackerman Link (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

Luke 5:33 And they said to Him, "The disciples of John often fast and offer prayers, the disciples of the Pharisees also do

the same, but Yours eat and drink."

Hendriksen - They said to him, “John’s disciples often fast and say prayers, and so do the disciples of the Pharisees, but yours keep on eating and drinking.”

NET Luke 5:33 Then they said to him, "John's disciples frequently fast and pray, and so do the disciples of the Pharisees, but yours continue to eat and drink."

GNT Luke 5:33 Ο δ ε παν πρ ς α τ ν, Ο μαθητα ω ννου νηστε ουσιν πυκν κα δε σεις ποιο νται μο ως κα ο τ ν Φαρισα ων, ο δ σο σθ ουσιν κα π νουσιν.

NLT Luke 5:33 One day some people said to Jesus, "John the Baptist's disciples fast and pray regularly, and so do the disciples of the Pharisees. Why are your disciples always eating and drinking?"

KJV Luke 5:33 And they said unto him, Why do the disciples of John fast often, and make prayers, and likewise the disciples of the Pharisees; but thine eat and drink?

ESV Luke 5:33 And they said to him, "The disciples of John fast often and offer prayers, and so do the disciples of the Pharisees, but yours eat and drink."

NIV Luke 5:33 They said to him, "John's disciples often fast and pray, and so do the disciples of the Pharisees, but yours go on eating and drinking."

ASV Luke 5:33 And they said unto him, The disciples of John fast often, and make supplications; likewise also the disciples of the Pharisees; but thine eat and drink.

CSB Luke 5:33 Then they said to Him, "John's disciples fast often and say prayers, and those of the Pharisees do the same, but Yours eat and drink."

- **Disciples of John**: Lu 18:12 Isa 58:3-6 Zec 7:6 Mt 9:14-17 Mk 2:18-22
- **offer prayers** : Lu 11:1 20:47 Pr 28:9 Isa 1:15 Mt 6:5,6 23:14 Mk 12:40 Ac 9:11 Ro 10:2,3
- **but Yours eat and drink.**: Lu 7:34,35
- J C Ryle's Comments on Luke 5- clear, devout, and accurate
- Luke 5:33-39 The Uniqueness of the Gospel - John MacArthur
- Luke 5:33-6:5 Avoiding Gospel Killjoys - Steven Cole
- Luke 5 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Parallel passages: Mt. 9:14–17; Mk 2:18–22; Lk 5:33–39

Matthew 9:14+ Then the disciples of John came to Him, asking, “Why do we and the Pharisees fast, but Your disciples do not fast?”

Mark 2:18+ John’s disciples and the Pharisees were fasting; and they came and said to Him, “Why do John’s disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but Your disciples do not fast?”

CRITICISM OF JESUS' DISCIPLES

In this passage we see two distinct and different groups, who join forces to criticize the disciples of Jesus. It might seem surprising to see **the disciples of John** (see them question Jesus' disciples in Mt 9:14) on the same side as **the Pharisees** in criticizing Jesus. Why do I say that? Clearly John was no favorite of the Pharisees, for he had sternly **castigated** the Pharisees calling them a "brood of vipers" (Mt 3:7+), commanding them to "bear fruit in keeping with repentance," (M 3:8+) and not to think they were safe from eternal punishment in hell because they had Abraham as their physical father (Mt 3:9+)! And yet here we see these two somewhat **discordant** groups of disciples join forces as '**strange bed-fellows**"! Even though John's ministry was preparatory for Jesus' ministry, it was still different from that of Jesus, as Jesus Himself alludes to declaring that "John **came neither eating nor drinking,** (cf "fasting") and they say, ‘He has a demon!’ 19 “The Son of Man**came eating and drinking,** (cf "feasting") and they say, ‘**Behold**, a gluttonous man and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!’ Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds.” (Mt 11:18-19, cf Lk 7:33-35+)

Craig Blomberg explains the difference between their ministries noting that "Preparation for the Messiah’s coming required repentance and a certain austerity, but now the time for joy has arrived. Neither the Pharisees nor John’s disciples were wrong in fasting as a prelude to the reception of spiritual blessings, but now those blessings are present. Jesus’ inauguration of the kingdom

stimulates celebration and rejoicing, as at wedding festivities." (NAC)

Barton points out that "By this time, the Pharisees were constantly skirmishing with Jesus. Two confrontations have preceded this section: one over Jesus' authority to forgive sins (Lk 5:17–26) and the other over Jesus' friendship with "sinners" (Lk 5:27–31)....At every turn, Jesus challenged the Pharisees' way of looking at life. They lived by appearance; he challenged their motives. They developed conspicuous habits that showed off their "holiness"; Jesus taught that good actions done for the wrong reasons are useless. (See Luke)

Robert Stein introduces Lk 5:33-39 remarking that "This account demonstrates the contrast that exists between the new and the old, i.e., between the coming of God's kingdom inaugurated by Jesus and the old Judaism of the Pharisees." (See Luke: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition)

> The Law and the Prophets were proclaimed until John; since that time the Gospel of the kingdom of God has been preached, and everyone is forcing his way into it. (Luke 16:16+)
>
> > **Comment** - Note the critical time phrase "**until**" means something will continue to happen up to a point (The Law and the Prophets were proclaimed) and then it will not happen (Ed: This is not saying that we won't continue to preach and teach the Law and Prophets). When **John** came, he began preaching the kingdom of God was at hand which marked the turning point in redemptive history. While the OT had pointed to Messiah and His Kingdom in shadows and types, John the forerunner points to the King and His Kingdom as now present. To state it another way, what **the Law and the Prophets** promised, was now a reality for the King was present. The ESV Study notes says "the old covenant age, was now superseded by the kingdom of God."

And they said to Him - Who is **they**? Matthew 9:14 says "**the disciples of John came to Him**." Mark 2:18 has "**John's disciples and the Pharisees** (pharisaios) **were fasting; and they came and said to Him**." Thus the "**they**" includes some from both groups of disciples. There is no contradiction. Mark's synoptic account simply has more specificity than the accounts in Matthew and Luke. So they join forces to confront Jesus Who is more interested in feasting than fasting!

The disciples (mathetes) **of John often fast** (nesteuo) **and offer prayers, the disciples** (mathetes) **of the Pharisees** (pharisaios) **also do the same -** Note that **often** means occurring at frequent intervals and so describes their fasting and prayers as a frequently occurrence. **Fast and offer prayers** are both in the present tense indicating this was their habitual practice. **The disciples of John** are described in (Lk 7:18-19+) and some even continued as **disciples of John** some time after his death as described in Acts 18:25–26+ and in Acts 19:1–7+. Disciples of the Pharisees is a bit confusing as Pharisees did not typically have disciples and most writers interpret these men as something akin to "Pharisees-in-training" who would observe the older Pharisees and attempt to imitate their practices.

Note that all three synoptic accounts include the fact that **the Pharisees were fasting**, which is important in interpreting this section. As we have seen, the **Pharisees** were practicing a religion of ritual, a religion of externals, a religion based on law, a religion of works aimed at fostering self-righteousness, all of this diametrically in contrast to the "religion" which Jesus brought, which was one of relationship (with God), of internals (heart change) , of grace (not law), and of faith in Jesus with imputation of His righteousness. The **Pharisees** practice was "bad news," while Jesus introduced a "religion" of "good news." As we see in the Gospels, sadly the Jewish religious leaders even refused to "sample" the Jesus' way because they believed their their old way was better (Lk 5:39).

Robertson on **disciples** (mathetes) **of John often fast** - Probably Levi's feast happened on one of the weekly fast-days (second and fifth days of the week for the stricter Jews) (**ED**: It is interestingly that John Wesley fasted once a week on Wednesdays.). So there was a clash of standpoints. **The disciples of John** sided with the **Pharisees** in the Jewish ceremonial ritualistic observances. John was still a prisoner in Machaerus. John was more of an ascetic than Jesus (Mt. 18:1f.; Lk 7:33–35+), but neither one pleased all the popular critics. These learners (mathetes) or **disciples of John** had missed the spirit of their leader when they here lined up with the **Pharisees** against Jesus. But there was no real congeniality between the formalism of the **Pharisees** and the asceticism of John the Baptist. The **Pharisees** hated John who had denounced them as broods of vipers.

The combination of **fast** and **pray** is uncommon in the NT - Mt 17:21, Lk 2:37; Acts 13:3; Acts 14:23. It is worth noting that while Jesus is criticized for not fasting, He had carried out a 40 day fast at the beginning of His ministry and also made a statement about fasting toward the end of His ministry declaring "for I say to you, **I shall never again eat it until** it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God." 17 And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He said, "Take this and share it among yourselves; 18 for I say to you, **I will not drink of the fruit of the vine from now on** until the kingdom of God comes."(Lk 22:16-18+) Jesus has been "fasting" for 2000 years!

William Barclay on **fast** and **prayers** - They had systematized their religious observances. They fasted on Mondays and Thursdays

(ED: And prayed for Israel's deliverance from oppressors); and often they whitened their faces so that no one could fail to see that they were fasting. True, fasting was not so very serious because it lasted only from sunrise to sunset and after that ordinary food could be taken....Even prayer was systematized. Prayer was to be offered at 12 midday, 3 p.m. and 6 p.m.

Offer prayers is two words poieo meaning make and deesis which is supplication for a particular need (for one's self or others, e.g., Lk 1:13). God wants us to pray. That is not the issue. The problem is that the disciples (especially the Pharisees) had turned their prayers into rituals. Jesus did fast on at least one occasion (Mt 4:2) but privately, in accordance with His own teaching (cf. Mt 6:16-18). The law also prescribed a fast on the Day of Atonement (Lv 16:29-31; 23:27 - rabbis forbade eating even a single date or drinking because it was a day set aside for mourning sin). All other fasts were to be voluntary, for specific reasons such as penitence and earnest prayer. It is notable the because the disciples of the Pharisees raised this question shows that they thought of fasting as a public exercise to display their spirituality. **Fasting** (Mt 6:16-18+), **prayer** (Mt 6:5-8+) and **giving alms** (Mt 6:1-4+) were all frequently done by the Jews in public to show others how "pious" or "holy" they were! It was these very practices that Jesus warned against in the Sermon on the Mount (Mt 7) God sternly rebuked hypocritical fasting in Isaiah 58:3-6

> Why have we (JEWS) fasted and You (JEHOVAH) do not see? Why have we humbled ourselves and You do not notice?' Behold, on the day of your fast you find your desire, And drive hard all your workers. 4 "**Behold**, you fast for contention and strife and to strike with a wicked fist. You do not fast like you do today to make your voice heard on high. 5 "Is it a fast like this which I choose, a day for a man to humble himself? Is it for bowing one's head like a reed And for spreading out sackcloth and ashes as a bed? Will you call this a fast, even an acceptable day to the LORD? 6 "Is this not the fast which I choose, To loosen the bonds of wickedness, To undo the bands of the yoke, And to let the oppressed go free And break every yoke?

A STRIKING CONTRAST
FASTING VERSUS FEASTING

But (**de**) - Is a sharp term of contrast between the frequent fasting of the disciples of John and the Pharisees and the continual eating and drinking of the disciples of Jesus.

Bruce Barton - In response to their questions about fasting, Jesus turned the discussion from outward behavior to the reasons for fasting. Jesus made it clear that fasting was not a self-justifying action. It was right in its proper place, but there was also a proper place for feasting and joy. (LAC Luke)

Yours eat and drink - **Yours** refers to the disciples of Jesus. It is interesting that they don't attack Jesus with a direct personal accusation, perhaps out of fear and/or cowardice! **Eat and drink** are both in the present tense. Both Matthew 9:14+ and Mark 2:18+ have the statement "but Your disciples do not fast." Luke was fond of the combination "eating and drinking" (11 times Luke 5:30, 33, 7:33, 34, 10:7, 12:19, 12:29, 45, 17:8, 28, 22:30).

Robert Stein observes by Luke's used of "**eat and drink**" "he tied this account more closely with the preceding one in which Jesus' disciples were accused of eating and drinking with tax collectors and sinners (Lk 5:30). In Lk 7:34 these two criticisms are brought together when Jesus is described as a friend of tax collectors and sinners and as a glutton (eating) and drunkard (drinking)." (See Luke: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition)

Hampton Keathley IV - There was only one time in Israel's calendar of events that they were required to fast--the day of atonement. You were supposed to fast and beat your chest in mourning over your sinfulness. All other fasts were instigated by culture or personal choice. Therefore, to demand that someone fast, other than on the day of atonement, was ritualistic legalism....The **feast imagery** is imagery of the kingdom and that is what Jesus is proclaiming - the presence of the kingdom. (Parabolic Sayings)

Warren Wiersbe sees four pictures of Jesus' ministry described in all three synoptic Gospels -

(1) As the **Physician**, He came to bring spiritual health to sick sinners. (Mt 9:12-13+, Mk 2:17+, Lk 5:31-32+)

(2) As the **Bridegroom**, He came to give spiritual joy. The Christian life is a feast, not a funeral.(Mt 9:14-16+, Mk 2:18-20+, Lk 5:33-35+)

(3) The illustration of the **cloth** reminds us that He came to bring spiritual wholeness; He did not come to "patch us up" and then let us fall apart. (Mt 9:16+, Mk 2:21+, Lk 5:36+)

(4) The image of the **wineskins** teaches that He gives spiritual fullness. Jewish religion was a worn-out wineskin that would burst if filled with the new wine of the Gospel. Jesus did not come to renovate Moses or even mix Law and grace. He came with new life! (Mt 9:17+, Mk 2:22+, Lk 5:37-39+) (Borrow the Bible Exposition Commentary)

It would be reasonable to preach or teach Luke 5:33-39 as a unit for in this section there are four illustrations using pairs of things that do not mix, all alluding to the fact that the "old way" of Judaism does not mix with the new way of the Gospel. (See John MacArthur's sermon below for a more in depth discussion.)

1. First Illustration -- Feasting and Fasting (Lk 5:33-35)
2. Second Illustration -- New patch on Old garment (Lk 5:36)
3. Third Illustration -- New wine in Old wineskins (Lk 5:37-38)
4. Fourth Illustration -- New wine and Old wine (Lk 5:39)

BACKGROUND - John MacArthur in his sermon asks what is Luke 5:33-39 really about and he sums it up by answering it is about The Uniqueness of the Gospel. - And what it's about is essentially the title of the message today, "The Uniqueness of the Gospel"...And I want you to understand this, it is critical, it has far-reaching implications. The Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Gospel of God, as Paul calls it, the Gospel of grace, the message of forgiveness through the work of Jesus Christ, the Gospel which we know and love and believe is unique. And I mean that in the purest sense of the word. When I say the Gospel is unique, I mean to say that it is incompatible with any and all other religious belief. It stands alone. The idea that the Christian gospel can mix with or blend with any other religious system in any way is absolutely wrong. You cannot mix the Gospel with Roman Catholic or Orthodox sacramentalism. You cannot mix the Gospel with liberalism. You cannot mix the Gospel with Mormonism, or the religion of the Jehovah's Witness, or Christian Science or any other religion. You cannot mix the Gospel even with the religion of Judaism. **The Gospel is absolutely exclusive**. It mixes with no other religion. In fact, it replaces all other religion. Now this needs to be emphatically understood in a time which exalts diversity of belief, tolerance of religion, pluralism, inclusivism, and even universalism, which essentially says we're all headed the same direction....And that singularity of the Christian gospel means that any intrusion that mixes or alters the singularity of the gospel renders it void, nullifies it. It stands alone....(Luke 5:33-39 is) very important and very focused on...the uniqueness of the Gospel. And what this passage does for us is demonstrate that the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Gospel of salvation is incompatible with Judaism...we're going to find that Jesus didn't come to add to Judaism. He didn't come to alter Judaism. He didn't come to blend with Judaism. He came to bring the Gospel which replaced it. And here Jesus will show us the bankruptcy, the emptiness and the incompatibility of Judaism with the Gospel...**the hostility (OF THE JEWS WHICH EVENTUALLY LED TO JESUS' CRUCIFIXION) was based upon the fact that Jesus came with the Gospel that totally replaced the religion of Judaism. That must be understood....there is a huge gulf between the religion of Judaism, concerned with staying away from sinners, and the gospel of Jesus, concerned with being with sinners. The religion of Judaism concerned with self-righteousness, the gospel of Jesus concerned with heart righteousness. The religion of Judaism concerned about what men think, and the gospel of Jesus concerned about what God thinks. The religion of Judaism concerned only with the outside, the gospel concerned with the inside.** Huge gulf exists and it is very natural then to transition into the passage that I just read to you because in this passage Jesus makes it very clear that in fact the gospel is incompatible with Judaism, that what these Pharisees and scribes are seeing that looks to them to be a kind of religious behavior that is the very opposite of their religion in fact is accurate. The behavior is different because the gospel is different. Here we have then the **uniqueness of the gospel** by demonstration of its **incompatibility with Judaism**. And here in this text, Jesus points out the bankruptcy, the emptiness, the incompatibility of the Jewish religion of His day with the gospel. And this is something we need to keep in our minds because today in this inclusivistic mentality, everybody wants to give people credit for their religion and maybe we introduce Jesus into it but we don't upset it. The fact of the matter is the gospel can only, if it is to be effective, it can only replace all other religious systems. (The Uniqueness of the Gospel)

ILLUSTRATIONS related to **Ascetics** (like the disciples of John the Baptists) and **legalists** (disciples of Pharisees) -- Someone incorrectly, but nonetheless humorously, defined a **Puritan** as “a person who suffers from an overwhelming dread that somewhere, sometime, somehow, someone may be enjoying himself.” That definition is incorrect because the Puritans had as their purpose “to glorify God and enjoy Him forever.” Since God is absolutely good, truly enjoying Him is the greatest joy possible. But we all have met someone who fits that incorrect definition of a Puritan—a religious person who only seems to be content when everyone else is miserable. They put starch in their underwear and they want to make sure that everyone else lives the same way! These folks are like Garrison Keillor’s Lake Wobegon Lutherans, who are suspicious of a place like Hawaii that doesn’t have harsh winters. Those Minnesota winters are good for you because they make you tough. These folks will have trouble adjusting to heaven if it doesn’t have harsh winters! Two of the biggest spiritual killjoys have been ascetics and legalists. Ascetics deliberately make I ife tough on themselves and think that pleasure is evil or, at least, tends toward evil. They wouldn’t feel quite right to enjoy life. Legalists delight in keeping their lists of rules and judging those who don’t have or keep the same rules. Invariably, their rules are not the weighty matters of God’s Law, such as love, justice, mercy, and matters of the heart. Rather, they congratulate themselves for keeping manmade standards dealing with external things and they judge those who ignore these things. Ascetics and legalists are gospel killjoys. In our text, Jesus encounters some who tended toward asceticism and some who were legalistic. (Steven Cole - Avoiding

Gospel Killjoys)

Luke 5:34 And Jesus said to them, "You cannot make the attendants of the bridegroom fast while the bridegroom is with them, can you?

Hendriksen -Jesus said to them, “So long as the bridegroom is with them, you cannot make the bridegroom’s attendants fast, can you?

NET Luke 5:34 So Jesus said to them, "You cannot make the wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them, can you?

GNT Luke 5:34 δ ησο ς ε πεν πρ ς α το ς, Μ δ νασθε το ς υ ο ς το νυμφ νος ν νυμφ ος μετ α τ ν στιν ποι σαι νηστε σαι;

NLT Luke 5:34 Jesus responded, "Do wedding guests fast while celebrating with the groom? Of course not.

KJV Luke 5:34 And he said unto them, Can ye make the children of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them?

ESV Luke 5:34 And Jesus said to them, "Can you make wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them?

NIV Luke 5:34 Jesus answered, "Can you make the guests of the bridegroom fast while he is with them?

ASV Luke 5:34 And Jesus said unto them, Can ye make the sons of the bride-chamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them?

CSB Luke 5:34 Jesus said to them, "You can't make the wedding guests fast while the groom is with them, can you?

NKJ Luke 5:34 And He said to them, "Can you make the friends of the bridegroom fast while the bridegroom is with them?

NRS Luke 5:34 Jesus said to them, "You cannot make wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them, can you?

YLT Luke 5:34 And he said unto them, 'Are ye able to make the sons of the bride-chamber -- in the bridegroom being with them -- to fast?

- **the attendants**: Jdg 14:10,11 Ps 45:14 Song 2:6,7 3:10,11 5:8 6:1 Mt 25:1-10 Rev 19:7-9
- **bridegroom**: Ps 45:10-16 Isa 54:5 62:5 Zep 3:17 Mt 22:2 Jn 3:29 2Co 11:2 Eph 5:25-27
- J C Ryle's Comments on Luke 5- clear, devout, and accurate
- Luke 5:33-39 The Uniqueness of the Gospel - John MacArthur
- Luke 5:33-6:5 Avoiding Gospel Killjoys - Steven Cole
- Luke 5 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Parallel Passages Mt. 9:14–17; Mk 2:18–22; Lk 5:33–39

Matthew 9:15+ And Jesus said to them, “The attendants of the bridegroom cannot mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them, can they? But the days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast.

Mk 2:19+ And Jesus said to them, “While the bridegroom is with them, the attendants of the bridegroom cannot fast, can they? So long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast.

NO MIXING OF FASTING AND FEASTING!

Guzik emphasizes that "A wedding feast was the most vivid picture of joy and happiness in that culture. During the weeklong wedding feast it was understood that joy was more important than conformity to religious rituals. If any ceremonial observance would detract from the joy of a wedding feast, it was not required. Jesus said that His followers should have this kind of happiness. Basically, they thought Jesus was too happy. When was the last time you were accused of being too cheerful or too happy?

According to Pate, there was a popular rabbinic text called the Scroll of Fasting, and in it was a custom that said that fasting was forbidden on certain specified days devoted to joyous celebration of Israel's blessings from God. Jesus appealed to this kind of thinking."

Jesus' response to their question is that the NEW way (His way) and the OLD way (the way of John and the Pharisees) simply do not mix. And so in Luke 5:34-39 Jesus gives four illustrations which depict the contrast between the NEW and the OLD, the NEW represented by the coming of God's kingdom inaugurated by Jesus (Lk 16:16) and the OLD represented by the religion of Judaism practiced by the Pharisees. (1) First Illustration -- Feasting and Fasting (Lk 5:34-35) (2) Second Illustration -- New patch on Old garment (Luke 5:36) (3) Third Illustration -- New/old Wine in new/old wineskins (Luke 5:37-38) and (4) Fourth Illustration -- New wine and Old wine (Lk 5:39)

And Jesus said to them, "You cannot (me = negative + dunamai) **make the attendants of the bridegroom** (numphon) **fast** (nesteuo) **while the bridegroom** (numphios) **is with them, can you?** - Jesus answers their question with a rhetorical question, which clearly expects a negative reply. How absurd would it be for **the attendants of the bridegroom** to fast while the celebration is ongoing! The **attendants of the bridegroom** is literally "the sons of the bride-chamber." In those days a wedding would usually last seven days, and the bridegroom would choose his best friends as attendants to be responsible for the festivities. Matthew substitutes **mourn** for fast, in recording Jesus' question "The attendants of the bridegroom **cannot mourn** as long as the bridegroom is with them, can they?" (Mt 9:15+). This would indicate that the fasting the critics are referring to was associated with mourning. This helps make sense of Jesus' reply as if He is saying during the joyful time of a marriage ceremony you can't expect the attendants to fast and mourn!

MacArthur - A fast is always meaningless if it is performed from habit and does not result from deep concern and mourning over some spiritual need. Going to church on Sunday is hypocritical if it is done apart from a genuine desire to worship and glorify God. Singing a hymn is only a pretense of worship if it does not come from a heart that seeks to praise the Lord. (See Commentary)

EXPLANATORY NOTES - It helps to understand the marriage customs of that day. After the wedding, there was a week long marriage feast. As long as the bridegroom was there, there was much celebrating. That was not a time for mourning. This is Kingdom imagery. The one who is bringing in the kingdom, the Messiah, is here! (Keathley - Parabolic Sayings)

> **STEPS IN JEWISH MARRIAGE CEREMONY - Charles Ryrie** - Jewish marriage included a number of steps: first, betrothal (which involved the prospective groom's traveling from his father's house to the home of the prospective bride, paying the purchase price, and thus establishing the marriage covenant); second, the groom's returning to his father's house (which meant remaining separate from his bride for 12 months, during which time he prepared the living accommodations for his wife in his father's house); third, the groom's coming for his bride at a time not known exactly to her; fourth, his return with her to the groom's father's house to consummate the marriage and **to celebrate the wedding feast for the next seven days** (during which the bride remained closeted in her bridal chamber). (Come Quickly, Lord Jesus)
>
> **STEPS IN JEWISH MARRIAGE CEREMONY - Arnold Fruchtenbaum** - First, the father of the groom made the arrangements for the marriage and paid the bride price. The timing of the arrangement varied. Sometimes it occurred when both children were small, and at other times it was a year before the marriage itself. Often the bride and groom did not even meet until their wedding day. The second step, which occurred a year or more after the first step, was the fetching of the bride. The bridegroom would go to the home of the bride in order to bring her to his home. In connection with this step, two other things should be noted. First, it was the father of the groom who determined the timing. Second, prior to the groom's leaving to fetch the bride, he must already have a place prepared for her as their abode. This was followed by the third step, the wedding ceremony, to which a few would be invited. Prior to the wedding ceremony, the bride underwent a ritual immersion for ritual cleansing. **The fourth step, the marriage feast, would follow and could last for as many as seven days.** Many many more people would be invited to the feast than were to the marriage ceremony. In the Marriage of the Lamb all four of these steps of the Jewish wedding ceremony are evident. (Footsteps of Messiah)

CHRIST THE BRIDEGROOM OF THE CHURCH - Regarding the term **bridegroom** it should be noted **bridegroom** is never used as a messianic title either in the OT or in the Rabbinical writings. The point is that Jesus did not use **bridegroom** as a specific messianic claim. The reference to Jesus as the Church's Bridegroom is strictly a NT concept which Jesus introducing in this passage as a reference to Himself especially in this context in which the next verse describes the time when the Bridegroom would be taken away. The parallel passages in Matthew and Mark present the same picture (Mt. 9:15; Mk 2:19–20). In addition John the Baptist also uses a similar analogy in John 3:29 declaring "He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. So this joy of mine has been made full." Finally, in the Revelation, the Church is depicted as the bride of Christ which of course implies Christ is the Bridegroom. For example, John writes ""Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself

ready." (Rev 19:7+; see also Rev 21:2, 9; Rev 22:17).

Robert Stein explains "The bridegroom's presence and the joy of the kingdom inaugurated by Jesus makes such behavior (FASTING AND MOURNING) highly inappropriate. There is a time for everything. But this was not a time for weeping or mourning; it was rather a time for laughing and dancing (Eccl 3:4). Since the question is introduced with the Greek particle mē, it anticipates a negative answer from the reader. Even though Jesus' message is one of repentance (Luke 5:32), such repentance leads not to sorrow and mourning but rather to the joyous celebration of forgiveness and membership in the kingdom. Compare Lk 15:17–24." (See Luke: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition)

William Barclay gives us the background on Jewish marriages - When two young people married in Palestine they did not go away for a honeymoon; they stayed at home, and for a week kept open house. They dressed in their best; sometimes they even wore crowns; for that week they were king and queen and their word was law. They would never have a week like that again in their hard-wrought lives. And the favoured guests who shared this festive week were called the children of the bride-chamber ("attendants of the bridegroom") (Luke 5)

J C Ryle applies the truth of **bridegroom** to our lives...The name "**bridegroom**," like every name applied to our Lord in the Bible, is full of instruction. It is a name peculiarly comforting and encouraging to all true Christians. It teaches the deep and tender love with which Jesus regards all sinners of mankind, who believe in Him. Weak, and unworthy, and short-coming as they are in themselves, He feels towards them a tender affection, even as a husband does towards his wife. It teaches the close and intimate *UNION,* which exists between Jesus and believers. It is something far nearer than the union of king and subject, master and servant, teacher and scholar, shepherd and sheep. It is the closest of all unions, the union of husband and wife, the union of which it is written, "what God has joined together, let no man put asunder." Above all, the name teaches that entire *PARTICIPATION* of all that Jesus is and has, which is the privilege of every believer. Just as the husband gives to his wife his name, makes her partaker of his property, home, and dignity, and undertakes all her debts and liabilities, so does Christ deal with all true Christians. He takes on Himself all their sins. He declares that they are a part of Himself, and that he who hurts them hurts Him. He gives them, even in this world, such good things as pass man's understanding. And He promises that in the next world they shall sit with Him on His throne, and go out from His presence no more. (J C Ryle's Comments on Luke 5)

Related Resources:

- Steps in the Jewish Marriage Ceremony - excellent chart showing parallel relationships to passages in the Bible
- Marriage of the Lamb
- Church Betrothed to Christ
- What is a bridegroom? | GotQuestions.org
- What is the marriage supper of the Lamb? | GotQuestions.org
- What does it mean that the church is the bride of Christ? | GotQuestions.org
- What is the meaning of the Parable of the Ten Virgins? | GotQuestions.org
- Are there parallels between Jewish wedding traditions and our relationship to Christ? | GotQuestions.org

Attendants of the bridegroom (numphon) - The word **attendants** is **huios** which is translated **sons** over 300x in the NAS. In the present context **huios** expresses the close relationship between the **attendants** (disciples) and the **bridegroom** (Jesus). The literal Greek is "*sons of the wedding hall*" which idiomatically speaks of the friends of the bridegroom (again conveying the picture of their close relationship) who were participating in the wedding.

Robertson on **attendants of the bridegroom** (numphon) (KJV = "**the sons of the bridechamber**") - Not merely the groomsmen, but the guests also, the paranumphs (paranumphoi of the old Greek). Jesus here adopts the Baptist's own metaphor (John 3:29), changing the **friend of the bridegroom** (ho philos tou numphiou) to **sons of the bridechamber.....**Mourning does not suit the wedding feast. Mark, Matthew, and Luke all give the three parables (bridegroom, unfulled cloth, new wineskins) illustrating and defending the conduct of Jesus in feasting with Levi on a Jewish fast-day. Luke 5:36 calls these **parables**. Jesus here seems iconoclastic to the ecclesiastics and revolutionary in emphasis on the spiritual instead of the ritualistic and ceremonial....(in another note) Hebrew idiom for the wedding guests, "the friends of the bridegroom and all the sons of the bride-chamber" (Tos. Berak. ii. 10)

Vincent on **attendants of the bridegroom** - It is noteworthy that Christ twice uses a figure drawn from marriage in his allusions to John the Baptist, the ascetic. Compare John 3:29. The **sons of the bride-chamber** are different from the groomsmen. They are the guests invited to the bridal. The scene is laid in Galilee, where groomsmen were not customary, as in Judaea. Hence there is no mention of them in the account of the marriage at Cans. In Judea thee were at every marriage two groomsmen or friends. (**Vincent** on **friend of the bridegroom** in John 3:29) - The term is appropriate to Judea, the groomsmen not being customary in Galilee. In Judea there were two groomsmen, one for the bridegroom, the other for his bride. Before marriage they acted as intermediaries between the couple; at the wedding they offered gifts, waited upon the the bride and bridegroom, and attended them

to the bridal chamber. It was the duty of the friend of the bridegroom to present him to his bride, after marriage to maintain proper terms between the parties, and especially to defend the bride's good fame. The Rabbinical writings speak of Moses as the friend of the bridegroom who leads out the bride to meet Jehovah at Sinai (Ex 19:17); and describe Michael and Gabriel as acting as the friends of the bridegroom to our first parents, when the Almighty himself took the cup of blessing and spoke the benediction. John the Baptist represents himself as standing in the same relation to Jesus.

Cannot (1410)(me = negative + **dunamai**) means to have power by virtue of inherent ability and resources.

Fast (3522)(**nesteuo** from **ne**- = not + **esthío** = to eat) means to abstain from food (and sometimes drink) for a certain length of time and in the NT most often done for religious reasons. One idea is that fasting was done to express dependence on God and submission to His will. Others say fasting was done as a mark of religious commitment and devotion or as an expression of repentance for sins. Fasting was also connected with mourning or grieving (Septuagint of 2 Sa 12:16). Some see fasting as a "weakening" of the body in order to "strengthen" the spirit, which sounds good but can easily evolve into a fleshly, self-centered "work" (see Mt 6:18+) rather than an act of genuine self-less devotion. Clearly, we can strengthen our spirit in other ways, most importantly by regular, daily intake of God Word of truth (Mt 4:4, cf Heb 13:9)! In Jesus' day zealous Jews fasted twice a week on Monday and Thursday (cf Lk 18:12+). Jesus discussed fasting in Mt 6:16-18+ but He did not command fasting. Jews sometimes fasted as a result of personal loss, sometimes as an expression of repentance, sometimes as preparation for prayer, and sometimes merely as a meritorious act. The only biblically prescribed fast was on the Day of Atonement (Lev 16:29, 31, cf Lev 23:26–32; Nu 29:7–11), although other fasts grew up late in the OT period (Zech 7:5; Zech 8:19). So important was fasting for ancient Jews that an entire tractate of the Mishna, Taanith, was devoted to it. Today fasting is a matter of Christian freedom, not obligation. Therefore Didache 8.1 (early second century) is wrong in insisting that Christians fast on Wednesdays and Fridays instead of Mondays and Thursdays (like the Jews). Note that the OT does mention several non-required fasts and these were generally spontaneous and associated with grief, mourning, and/or humbly seeking God. So over time fasts multiplied and varied as to the length of the fast. And so we see **fasts** -- From sunrise to sunset (Jdg. 20:26; 1 Sa 14:24; 2 Sa 1:12; 2 Sa 3:35); for seven days (1 Sa 31:13); for three weeks (Da 10:3); fro forty days (Ex 34:2, 28; Dt. 9:9, 18; 1 Ki 19:8); in the fifth and seventh month (Zech 7:3–5); in the fourth, fifth, seventh, and tenth month (Zech 8:19), and by the time of Jesus being observed "twice a week," as boasted by the Pharisee in Luke 18:12. This twice a week fast was practiced by the more zealous (and more legalistic) Jews on Monday and Thursday.

> **Evans** adds that "**Fasting** is usually observed at times of repentance (Jdg. 20:26; 1 Sam. 7:6; 1 Ki 21:27; Ezra 8:21, 23; Neh. 9:1; Jonah 3:5) or in times of mourning (1 Sa 31:13; 2 Sa 1:12; Neh. 1:4), in times of great distress (2 Sa 12:16, 21–23; Esth. 4:3; 4 Ezra 5:20 "I fasted seven days, mourning and weeping"), or in preparation for a time of trial or special mission (Esth. 4:16; Da 9:3; Mt. 17:21; Acts 13:2–3; 14:23; 27:33). It was self-effacing and self-humiliating, the antithesis to pride and presumption (or at least it was supposed to be)." (BKBC)

Bridegroom (in phrase "attendants of the bridegroom")(3567)(**numphon**) is a wedding hall, the place where the wedding ceremonies are held (Mt 22:10) or a bridal chamber, as the place where the marriage is consummated, the chamber containing the bridal bed. The bridal chamber in which the marriage bed was prepared, usually in the house of the bridegroom where the bride was brought in procession (See Jewish Wedding Analogy). In the present passage it refers to the friends of the bridegroom whose duty it was to provide and care for whatever pertained to the bridal chamber, i. e. whatever was needed for the due celebration of the nuptials in the bridal chamber. Found only 4x in NT - bridegroom(3), wedding hall(1). - Matt. 9:15; Matt. 22:10; Mk. 2:19; Lk. 5:34. No uses in the Septuagint.

The bridegroom (the actual individual)(3566)(**numphios**) is distinct from "the sons of the bride-chamber" and here is the actual spouse, the one newly married. In classical Greek numphios carries the meaning of "bridegroom," "betrothed," and "young husband." In Homer's Iliad it refers to "one lately married" (cf. *Liddell-Scott*). In addition to the singular form the plural numphiois is used to signify the "bridal pair" (e.g., Euripides [Fifth Century B.C.]). Also, numphios is used adjectivally with the meaning "bridal."

> **Numphios** - 12x - Matt. 9:15; Matt. 25:1; Matt. 25:5; Matt. 25:6; Matt. 25:10; Mk. 2:19; Mk. 2:20; Lk. 5:34; Lk. 5:35; Jn. 2:9; Jn. 3:29; Rev. 18:23
>
> **Numphios** in Septuagint - Jdg. 15:6; Jdg. 19:5; Neh. 13:28; Ps. 19:5; Isa. 61:10; Isa. 62:5; Jer. 7:34; Jer. 16:9; Jer. 25:10; Jer. 33:11; Joel 2:16;
>
> **Gilbrant** - In the Septuagint numphios is translated as "bridegroom" and is used both literally and figuratively. Literally, Jeremiah spoke of the coming conditions of Israel and how, along with other occurrences, the voice of the "bridegroom" would be heard no more (Jeremiah 7:34; 16:9; 25:10). Later, when speaking of the return and restoration of Israel from her captivity, the picture is used of the voice of the "bridegroom" again being heard in the land. Symbolically, the implication is that of the loss and eventual regaining of joy by a people who had disobeyed God, who had repented, and who then were restored. Figuratively,

numphios is used with regard to the relationship between God and the nation of Israel. Isaiah 61:10 and Isa 62:5 picture God as a numphios, “bridegroom.” In this relationship Israel is God’s bride. A prominent theme throughout these passages is that of the joy which is present in the relationship. (Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary)

Gilbrant on NT - In the New Testament the various referents found in the classical writings (e.g., “young husband”) and the Septuagint (e.g., “son-in-law”) are absent. Only “bridegroom” is carried into the New Testament. However, this usage is primarily a reflection of the Jewish customs and concepts. The use of numphios in the New Testament is relatively rare, being found primarily in the Gospels and once in Revelation. In the New Testament numphios is used both literally and figuratively. In John 2:9 and Revelation 18:23 numphios literally denotes “bridegroom.” In John 3:29 the “bridegroom” is called aside by the master of the banquet in order to comment on the quality of the wine. In Revelation 18:23—at the fall of Babylon—the voice of the “bridegroom” will be heard no more in the city. Figuratively, the two numphios usages (Matthew 9:15 with parallel passages and Matthew 25:1-13) offer a fulfillment of an Old Testament concept in the New Testament. However, the Old Testament references of the bride and bridegroom are to Israel and God (Isaiah 62:5), whereas the New Testament uses this imagery in referring to the community of believers and Christ. This use of “bridegroom” as it relates to the Messiah is unique to the New Testament. Surrounding the imagery of the “bridegroom” are other important aspects that further study brings into focus. In John 3:29 reference is made to ho philos tou numphiou, “the friend of the bridegroom,” who played a key role in the marriage picture. Further imagery of this concept of Christ as the “bridegroom” and the Church as the “bride” is found in the writings of Paul in 2 Corinthians 11:2 and Ephesians 5:22-32. Although numphios is not specifically found in these passages the picture is clearly one of the marriage relationship. (Complete Biblical Library)

Related Resources:

- Baker Evangelical Dictionary Fast, Fasting - recommended article by Eugene Merrill
- Torrey Topical Textbook Fasting
- Christian fasting - what does the Bible say? | GotQuestions.org
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia Fast
- American Tract Society Fasting
- Bridgeway Bible Dictionary Fasting
- Easton's Bible Dictionary Fast
- Fausset Bible Dictionary Fasting
- Holman Bible Dictionary Fasting
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible Fasting
- Hastings' Dictionary of the NT Fasting (2) Fasting
- Hawker's Poor Man's Dictionary Fasting Fast
- Smith Bible Dictionary Fasts
- Vines' Expository Dictionary Fast, Fasting Fast
- Wilson's Bible Types Fast
- Webster Dictionary Fasting
- Watson's Theological Dictionary Fasting
- Fasting - Article by Archibald Alexander
- 1911 Encyclopedia Britannica Fasting
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia Fasts and Feasts Fast; Fasting Feasts, and Fasts
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopedia Fasts
- The Jewish Encyclopedia Fasting and Fast-Days
- How to fast—what does the Bible say? | GotQuestions.org
- Why don't Christians fast the same as Muslims? | GotQuestions.org
- Why did Jesus fast? | GotQuestions.org
- What are the different types of fasting? | GotQuestions.org
- What is Ramadan? | GotQuestions.org
- What is Tisha B'Av?

Luke 5:35 "But the days will come; and when the bridegroom is taken away from them, then they will fast in those days."

Hendriksen - But days will arrive when the bridegroom will be taken away from them; then, during those days, they will fast.”

NET Luke 5:35 But those days are coming, and when the bridegroom is taken from them, at that time they will

fast."

GNT Luke 5:35 λε σονται δ μ ραι, κα ταν παρθ π α τ ν νυμφ ος, τ τε νηστε σουσιν ν κε ναις τα ς μ ραις.

NLT Luke 5:35 But someday the groom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast."

KJV Luke 5:35 But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days.

ESV Luke 5:35 The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast in those days."

NIV Luke 5:35 But the time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them; in those days they will fast."

ASV Luke 5:35 But the days will come; and when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, then will they fast in those days.

CSB Luke 5:35 But the time will come when the groom will be taken away from them-- then they will fast in those days."

NKJ Luke 5:35 "But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them; then they will fast in those days."

NRS Luke 5:35 The days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast in those days."

YLT Luke 5:35 but days will come, and, when the bridegroom may be taken away from them, then they shall fast in those days.'

- **when**: Lu 24:17-21 Da 9:26 Zec 13:7 Joh 12:8 13:33 14:3,4 16:4-7,16-22 Joh 16:28 17:11-13 Ac 1:9 3:21
- **then** : Isa 22:12 Mt 6:17,18 Ac 13:2,3 14:23 1Co 7:5 2Co 11:27
- J C Ryle's Comments on Luke 5 - clear, devout, and accurate
- Luke 5:33-39 The Uniqueness of the Gospel - John MacArthur
- Luke 5:33-6:5 Avoiding Gospel Killjoys - Steven Cole
- Luke 5 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Parallel passages: Mt. 9:14–17; Mk 2:18–22; Lk 5:33–39

Matthew 9:15+ And Jesus said to them, “The attendants of the bridegroom cannot mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them, can they? But the days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast.

Mark 2:20+ “But the days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast in that day.

FASTING FOLLOWS BRIDEGROOM'S DEPARTURE

But the days will come; and when the bridegroom (numphios) **is taken away** (apairo) **from them** - Who is **them**? Jesus is speaking directly of the "attendants of the Bridegroom" in context an allusion to the disciples of Jesus. When would He be taken away? His crucifixion, burial, resurrection and ascension would be the most reasonable answer.

NET Note says "The statement when the bridegroom is **taken** from them is a veiled allusion by Jesus to his death, which he did not make explicit until the incident at Caesarea Philippi in Lk 9:18-21, 22+."

MacArthur comments on the **bridegroom** being **taken away** - When that happened they would be overcome with fear and grief; the prophecy of Zechariah 13:7+, “*strike the Shepherd that the sheep may be scattered*” would be fulfilled (cf. Matt. 26:31; Mark 14:50). The disciples did not understand Jesus’ repeated predictions of His death (cf. Mark 9:31–32+), since it did not fit into their preconceived notion that the Messiah would conquer Israel’s enemies and set up His kingdom....what Isaiah had predicted centuries earlier concerning the Messiah, “*By oppression and judgment He was taken away*” (Isa 53:8), would come to pass. After Jesus was taken from them, His disciples did fast (cf. Mt. 6:16–18; Acts 13:2–3; 14:23). (See Luke Commentary)

Then they will fast (nesteuo) **in those days** - When is "**then**?" When the bridegroom is taken away, when Jesus is crucified. How will they react? They will "**fast**" with mourning **in those days** (cf Mt 9:14-15 where "**fast...mourn...fast**" are paralleled). This is the first time in Luke's gospel that Jesus alludes to His crucifixion.

Stein on **fast in those days** - The contrast is not between the time of Jesus' ministry and the time of the church after the resurrection, as in 22:35–36, but between the period of Jesus' ministry and the time between his arrest and resurrection (Lk 24:17–20; cf. also John 16:20; 20:11–13). The period after the resurrection was not characterized by sorrowful fasting but rather by joy (Luke 24:41, 52; Acts 8:8; 13:52). (See Luke: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition)

Barclay on **but the days will come** - At the same time Jesus knew there would come a day when the bridegroom would be taken away. He was not caught unawares by death. Ahead he saw the cross; but even on the way to the cross he knew the joy that no man can take away, because it is the joy of the presence of God (cf Heb 12:2+). (Luke 5)

Taken away (522)(**apairo** from from **apo** = from + **airo** = to take away) means to lift off, carry off, take away, to remove from, snatched away. **Apairo** conveys the idea of a sudden, violent removal. Ellis says the verb means "to take away, implying rejection and violent death." Only uses are in Jesus' description of the Bridegroom taken away! - Matt. 9:15; Mk. 2:20; Lk. 5:35. This verb was prophetic of the Crucifixion and Ascension.

> **Apairo in the Septuagint** - Gen. 12:9; 13:11; 26:21-22; 33:12,17; 35:16; 37:17; 46:1; Exod. 12:37; 16:1; 17:1; Num. 9:17-18,20-23; 14:25; 20:22; 21:4,10,12-13; 22:1; 33:3,5ff,41ff; Deut. 1:7,19; 2:1,13,24; 10:6-7,11; Jos. 3:1,3,14; 9:17; Jdg. 5:4; 18:11; 1 Ki. 20:9; 2 Ki. 3:27; 19:8,36; Ps. 78:26,52; Ezek. 10:4; Nah. 3:18

Luke 5:36 And He was also telling them a parable: "No one tears a piece of cloth from a new garment and puts it on an old garment; otherwise he will both tear the new, and the piece from the new will not match the old.

> NET Luke 5:36 He also told them a parable: "No one tears a patch from a new garment and sews it on an old garment. If he does, he will have torn the new, and the piece from the new will not match the old.
>
> GNT Luke 5:36 λεγεν δ κα παραβολ ν πρ ς α το ς τι Ο δε ς π βλημα π ματ ου καινο σχ σας πιβ λλει π μ τιον παλαι ν· ε δ μ γε, κα τ καιν ν σχ σει κα τ παλαι ο συμφων σει τ π βλημα τ π το καινο .
>
> NLT Luke 5:36 Then Jesus gave them this illustration: "No one tears a piece of cloth from a new garment and uses it to patch an old garment. For then the new garment would be ruined, and the new patch wouldn't even match the old garment.
>
> KJV Luke 5:36 And he spake also a parable unto them; No man putteth a piece of a new garment upon an old; if otherwise, then both the new maketh a rent, and the piece that was taken out of the new agreeth not with the old.
>
> ESV Luke 5:36 He also told them a parable: "No one tears a piece from a new garment and puts it on an old garment. If he does, he will tear the new, and the piece from the new will not match the old.
>
> NIV Luke 5:36 He told them this parable: "No one tears a patch from a new garment and sews it on an old one. If he does, he will have torn the new garment, and the patch from the new will not match the old.
>
> ASV Luke 5:36 And he spake also a parable unto them: No man rendeth a piece from a new garment and putteth it upon an old garment; else he will rend the new, and also the piece from the new will not agree with the old.
>
> CSB Luke 5:36 He also told them a parable: "No one tears a patch from a new garment and puts it on an old garment. Otherwise, not only will he tear the new, but also the piece from the new garment will not match the old.
>
> NKJ Luke 5:36 Then He spoke a parable to them: "No one puts a piece from a new garment on an old one; otherwise the new makes a tear, and also the piece that was taken out of the new does not match the old.
>
> NRS Luke 5:36 He also told them a parable: "No one tears a piece from a new garment and sews it on an old garment; otherwise the new will be torn, and the piece from the new will not match the old.

- **No one:** Mt 9:16,17 Mk 2:21,22
- **Will not match**: Lev 19:19 De 22:11 2Co 6:16

- J C Ryle's Comments on Luke 5 - clear, devout, and accurate
- Luke 5:33-39 The Uniqueness of the Gospel - John MacArthur
- Luke 5:33-6:5 Avoiding Gospel Killjoys - Steven Cole
- What is the meaning of the parables of fasting at the wedding feast, the old cloth, and the wineskins?
- Luke 5 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Parallel passages: Mt. 9:14–17; Mk 2:18–22; Lk 5:33–39

> Matthew 9:16+ "But no one puts a patch of unshrunk (A raw piece of woollen cloth that will shrink when wet and tear a bigger hole than ever) cloth on an old garment; for the patch pulls away from the garment, and a worse tear results.
>
> Mark 2:21+ "No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment; otherwise the patch pulls away from it, the new from the old, and a worse tear results.

Lk 5:33-39 gives four illustrations using pairs of things that do not mix, all pointing out that the old way of Judaism does not mix with the new way of the Gospel.

1. First Illustration -- Feasting and Fasting (Lk 5:33-35)
2. Second Illustration -- New patch on Old garment (Lk 5:36)
3. Third Illustration -- New wine in Old wineskins (Lk 5:37-38)
4. Fourth Illustration -- New wine and Old wine (Lk 5:39)

SECOND ILLUSTRATION:
NEW PATCH ON OLD GARMENT

As alluded to earlier, John MacArthur says that Jesus is telling them this parable (and the following two illustrations which are also "parables") to illustrate the uniqueness of the Gospel and how it could not be mixed with the rituals and tenets of Judaism without destroying its efficacy to save.

And He was also telling them a parable (parabole) (cf Lk 6:39, 12:16, 13:6, 18;1, 21:29) - "Then Jesus gave them this illustration" (NLT) What is He illustrating? He is showing them the futility of their desire to hold on to ways of Judaism with all their rituals (Lk 5:33). And He is doing this with three analogies to the attendants of the bridegroom, the old patch on a new garment and the new wine in an old wineskin. This should have been patently clear to his critics, but for the most part it just increased their desire to do away with Him. One would have thought that they would have grasped at least one of His analogies but self-righteousness is blind to spiritual truth. Jesus is saying, "I didn't come to patch up the old religious system. I came to do something entirely new." (Courson)

Robertson on **parable** (parabole)- There are three parables here in the answer of Jesus (the bridegroom, the patch on the garment, the wineskin). They are not called parables save here, but they are parables and Luke's language means that.

Wikipedia says a **parable** is "a succinct, didactic story, in prose or verse, which illustrates one or more instructive lessons or principles. It differs from a fable in that fables employ animals, plants, inanimate objects, or forces of nature as characters, whereas parables have human characters.A parable is a type of analogy.

Stein adds that "The term **parabolē** has a large semantic range and can include proverbs (Lk 4:23), metaphorical or figurative sayings (Mark 7:14–17), similitudes (Luke 13:18–19), story parables (Lk 14:16–24), example parables (Lk 12:16–21), and allegory (Lk 20:9–19). Here it describes a metaphorical or figurative saying." (See Luke: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition)

William Barclay on the **parable** of **new** and **old** - There is in religious people a kind of passion for the old. Nothing moves more slowly than a church. The trouble with the Pharisees was that the whole religious outlook of Jesus was so startlingly **new** they simply could not adjust to it (ED; THE FACT IS THEY ABSOLUTELY DID NOT DESIRE TO ADJUST AND THUS TOTALLY REJECTED HIS NEW WAY!). The mind soon loses the quality of elasticity and will not accept new ideas. Jesus used two illustrations. "You cannot put a new patch on an old garment," he said, "The strong new cloth will only rip the rent in the old cloth wider." Bottles in Palestine were made of skin. When new wine was put into them it fermented and gave off gas. If the bottle was new, there was a certain elasticity in the skin and it gave with the pressure; but if it was old, the skin was dry and hard and it would burst. "Don't," says Jesus, "let your mind become like an old wineskin. People say of wine, 'The old is better.' It may be at the moment, but they forget that it is a mistake to despise the new wine, for the day will come when it has matured and it will be best of all." The whole passage is Jesus' condemnation of the shut mind and a plea that men should not reject new ideas.

No one tears (schizo) **a piece of cloth from a new garment and puts it on an old garment**- Everyone knew this truth as Barclay explains above. The new garment would be ruined, the patch would not match the old garment and the patch would eventually tear

with washed (the unshrunk patch from the new garment would shrink and tear from the old garment). Matthew 9:16 says "and a worse tear results."

No one tears a piece of cloth from a new (kainos) **garment (**Mk 2:21 = "unshrunk cloth"**) and puts it on an old** (palaios) **garment; otherwise he will both tear the new** (kainos)**, and the piece from the new** (kainos) **will not match the old** (palaios) - The **new** cloth speaks of the New Covenant of grace and the old garment speaks of Judaism and its ceremonial rituals and legalistic practices. One might say Judaism was "worn out" (palaios) and in need of something brand new (kainos), the Gospel. In fact the **old garment** of the legalistic system of rabbinic tradition had actually obscured the law of God (e.g. Mt. 15:3-6+). Jesus was not interested in mending the largely humanly fabricated legalistic religion of the Pharisees. The good news of salvation by grace through faith in Jesus could not be intermingled with the works-righteousness system of the Judaism of Jesus' day.

As **MacArthur** says "Jesus did not come to patch that system, but to replace it with the **garment of salvation** (Isa. 61:10+)—the good news of salvation by faith in Him. No works-righteousness system can be patched into the gospel of grace and faith." (See Luke Commentary)

Vincent comments on **will not match the old** - In Matthew and Mark there is only a single damage, that, namely, to the **old** garment, the rent in which is enlarged. In Luke the damage is twofold; first, in injuring the **new** garment by cutting out a piece; and second, in making the **old** garment appear patched, instead of widening the rent, as in Matthew and Mark.

John MacArthur summarizes the significance of Jesus' teaching on old and new garments - The Lord's point is that the Gospel cannot be patched into Judaism (or any other system of salvation by work). His teaching was completely at odds with that of the Jewish leaders. They viewed themselves as righteous (Luke 16:15+); He preached the necessity of repentance (Luke 5:32; cf. Matt. 4:17+). They were proud of their supposedly exalted religious status (Luke 20:46–47+); He proclaimed the need for humility (Matt. 5:3). They focused on external ceremony, ritual, and outward observance of the law; He focused on the heart (Mt. 15:7–9; Luke 11:39–52+). They loved the approval of men; He offered the approval of God (Mt. 23:5–7; Jn 12:43).The old garment in the Lord's illustration is not the Old Testament (ED: OR "OLD COVENANT"). It is not God's eternal law, for "the Law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good." (Ro 7:12+), and (THE LAW WAS WHAT) Jesus came to fulfill, not to replace (Mt 5:17-19+). Rather, it is the ritualistic, legalistic religion based on rabbinic tradition, with its man-made regulations (Mt 15:3–6) that obscured the Law of God. (See Luke Commentary)

Parable (symbol) (3850)(**parabole** from **para** = beside, near + **ballo** = throw, cast; English "parable") is literally a throwing beside or placing of one thing by the side of another (juxtaposition as of ships in battle in classic Greek). The metaphorical meaning is to place or lay something besides something else for the purpose of comparison. (Mt 24:32, Mk 13:28, Mk 3:23, Lk 14:7). An illustration (Mt 13:3). In Hebrews 9:9 the idea is of something (OT Tabernacle) that serves as a model or example pointing beyond itself for later realization and thus a type or a figure. A parable is an illustration thrown alongside truth to make latter easier to understand. A parable is an earthly story used to illustrate or teach a spiritual truth. Rhetorical figure of speech - setting one thing beside another to form comparison or illustration. In Mark 2:21, Jesus describes a patch of unshrunk cloth being stitched into an old garment, while in Luke He depicts a patch cut out of a new garment. In Mark's account, the foolishness of the act comes from the fact that the unshrunk cloth will shrink and pull away; whereas in Luke's version, the foolishness is both in spoiling a new garment and in not effectively mending the old (cf. Mark 2:21-22).

> Matt. 13:3; Matt. 13:10; Matt. 13:13; Matt. 13:18; Matt. 13:24; Matt. 13:31; Matt. 13:33; Matt. 13:34; Matt. 13:35; Matt. 13:36; Matt. 13:53; Matt. 15:15; Matt. 21:33; Matt. 21:45; Matt. 22:1; Matt. 24:32; Mk. 3:23; Mk. 4:2; Mk. 4:10; Mk. 4:11; Mk. 4:13; Mk. 4:30; Mk. 4:33; Mk. 4:34; Mk. 7:17; Mk. 12:1; Mk. 12:12; Mk. 13:28; Lk. 4:23; Lk. 5:36; Lk. 6:39; Lk. 8:4; Lk. 8:9; Lk. 8:10; Lk. 8:11; Lk. 12:16; Lk. 12:41; Lk. 13:6; Lk. 14:7; Lk. 15:3; Lk. 18:1; Lk. 18:9; Lk. 19:11; Lk. 20:9; Lk. 20:19; Lk. 21:29; Heb. 9:9; Heb. 11:19

Old (3820)(**palaios** from **pálai** = in the past, long ago) antique, not recent, not new, old in the sense of worn out and decrepit. (see discussion of old self = old man -- "**old** self" in Ro 6:6+, Eph. 4:22+ and Col. 3:9+) **Palaios** is the antonym of **kainos** which means brand new. **Palaios** brings out the idea of "worn out", the result of the wear and tear of time, the old as outworn and clearly is not something to be desired.**Palaios** means in existence for a long time, and in a number of contexts conveys the sense of being obsolete, antiquated or outworn. Worn out from use is the idea in the synoptic parallel parables in Mt 9:16, 17 Mk 2:21, Lk 5:36. Palaios is used in 2 Cor 3:14 to describe the "**Old** covenant." The related verb palaioo is used in Hebrews 8:13 to describe the Old Covenant "becoming obsolete (palaioo)." Think of the illustration of an acorn whose purpose is fulfilled when it grows into an oak tree. There is a sense in which the acorn (OLD COVENANT) is gone, but its purpose is has been fulfilled (cf purpose of Law = Gal 3:19-24+). So too the Law is now fulfilled in the work of Christ on the Cross and in His resurrection. As Jesus said "Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill." (Mt 5:17+, see parallel truth in Ro 10:4+). In addition in the New Covenant not only is the Law not abolished, but in (Jer 31:33+) God actually says ""I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it." And then He gives us the Spirit Who will enable us to keep the Law as He promises in Ezekiel

36:27+ "I will put My Spirit within you and cause (SPIRIT GIVES US THE DESIRE AND THE POWER TO OBEY) you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe (OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO OBEY) My ordinances."

> **Palaios** - 19x in 15v - Matt. 9:16; Matt. 9:17; Matt. 13:52; Mk. 2:21; Mk. 2:22; Lk. 5:36; Lk. 5:37; Lk. 5:39; Rom. 6:6; 1 Co. 5:7; 1 Co. 5:8; 2 Co. 3:14; Eph. 4:22; Col. 3:9; 1 Jn. 2:7

Tears (4977)(**schizo** gives us English schism) means to split, rend, divide. To separate or cause to separate violently or abruptly. Used of splitting the veil in the Temple from top to bottom (Mt 27:51, Mk 15:38. Lk 23:45), of tearing Jesus' garments (Jn 19:24), of tearing a net (Jn 21:11). Schizo is used figuratively of the heavens opening in (Mk 1:10). In Acts 14:4 and Acts 23:7 **schizo** is used of a division between men or parties (factions), much like the meaning of our English word schism.

Schizo - 11x in 9v - Usage: divided(2), opening(1), split(1), tear(2), tears(1), torn(4).

> Matthew 27:51 And behold, the veil of the temple was **torn** in two from top to bottom; and the earth shook and the rocks were split.
>
> Mark 1:10 Immediately coming up out of the water, He saw the heavens opening, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon Him;
>
> Mark 15:38 And the veil of the temple was **torn** in two from top to bottom.
>
> Luke 5:36 And He was also telling them a parable: "No one **tears** a piece of cloth from a new garment and puts it on an old garment; otherwise he will both **tear** the new, and the piece from the new will not match the old.
>
> Luke 23:45 because the sun was obscured; and the veil of the temple was **torn** in two.
>
> John 19:24 So they said to one another, "Let us not **tear** it, but cast lots for it, to decide whose it shall be"; this was to fulfill the Scripture: "THEY DIVIDED MY OUTER GARMENTS AMONG THEM, AND FOR MY CLOTHING THEY CAST LOTS."
>
> John 21:11 Simon Peter went up and drew the net to land, full of large fish, a hundred and fifty-three; and although there were so many, the net was not **torn**.
>
> Acts 14:4 But the people of the city were **divided**; and some sided with the Jews, and some with the apostles.
>
> Acts 23:7 As he said this, there occurred a dissension between the Pharisees and Sadducees, and the assembly was **divided**.

Mattoon - Jesus illustrated with parables the fact that His coming introduced a radical break with the former religious customs of the Jewish people. The natural man likes his old ways. He likes his old wine—that is, his old religion. Some conclude that the old ways are better because they are old. This was particularly true of the Jewish religious leaders who regarded Jesus' teaching as new and inferior to what was old. The important thing is to recognize that our Lord brought something new to mankind—the gospel of God's free and saving grace. The first illustration is taken from the custom of patching clothes. If a piece torn from a new garment is used to patch an old one, both garments are ruined. Why? The new one is ruined because it has now been torn and the old one is ruined because it has received a patch that does not match it. Jesus did not come into the world to do any patching of the old garment with new garments. In other words, He did not come to patch up the Old Testament Law with the new garment of God's redeeming grace. They are incompatible. Any attempt to mix the Old Testament Law and God's grace results in a spoiling of both teachings. (Mattoon - Treasures from the Scriptures)

Luke 5:37 "And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the new wine will burst the skins and it will be spilled out, and the skins will be ruined.

> Hendriksen - And no one pours new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the new wine will burst the skins and will be spilled, and the skins will be ruined
>
> NET Luke 5:37 And no one pours new wine into old wineskins. If he does, the new wine will burst the skins and will be spilled, and the skins will be destroyed.
>
> GNT Luke 5:37 κα ο δε ς β λλει ο νον ν ον ε ς σκο ς παλαιο ς· ε δ μ γε, ξει ο νος ν ος το ς σκο ς κα α τ ς κχυθ σεται κα ο σκο πολο νται·
>
> NLT Luke 5:37 "And no one puts new wine into old wineskins. For the new wine would burst the wineskins, spilling the wine and ruining the skins.

KJV Luke 5:37 And no man putteth new wine into old bottles; else the new wine will burst the bottles, and be spilled, and the bottles shall perish.

ESV Luke 5:37 And no one puts new wine into old wineskins. If he does, the new wine will burst the skins and it will be spilled, and the skins will be destroyed.

NIV Luke 5:37 And no one pours new wine into old wineskins. If he does, the new wine will burst the skins, the wine will run out and the wineskins will be ruined.

ASV Luke 5:37 And no man putteth new wine into old wine-skins; else the new wine will burst the skins, and itself will be spilled, and the skins will perish.

CSB Luke 5:37 And no one puts new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise, the new wine will burst the skins, it will spill, and the skins will be ruined.

NKJ Luke 5:37 "And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; or else the new wine will burst the wineskins and be spilled, and the wineskins will be ruined.

NRS Luke 5:37 And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the new wine will burst the skins and will be spilled, and the skins will be destroyed.

YLT Luke 5:37 'And no one doth put new wine into old skins, and if otherwise, the new wine will burst the skins, and itself will be poured out, and the skins will be destroyed;

- **old wineskins**: Jos 9:4,13 Ps 119:83
- J C Ryle's Comments on Luke 5 - clear, devout, and accurate
- Luke 5:33-39 The Uniqueness of the Gospel - John MacArthur
- Luke 5:33-6:5 Avoiding Gospel Killjoys - Steven Cole
- Luke 5 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries.

Parallel Passages Mt. 9:14–17; Mk 2:18–22; Lk 5:33–39

Matthew 9:17+ “Nor do people put new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the wineskins burst, and the wine pours out and the wineskins are ruined; but they put new wine into fresh wineskins, and both are preserved.”

Mk 2:22+ “No one puts new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the wine will burst the skins, and the wine is lost and the skins as well; but one puts new wine into fresh wineskins.”

Lk 5:33-39 gives four illustrations using pairs of things that do not mix, all pointing out that the old way of Judaism does not mix with the new way of the Gospel.

1. First Illustration -- Feasting and Fasting (Lk 5:33-35)
2. Second Illustration -- New patch on Old garment (Lk 5:36)
3. Third Illustration -- New wine in Old wineskins (Lk 5:37-38)
4. Fourth Illustration -- New wine and Old wine (Lk 5:39)

Ancient Wineskin

NEW WINE
IN OLD WINESKINS

And no one puts new wine (oinos) **into old** (palaios) **wineskins** (akso) - This is a fact everyone knew. The new wine would ferment, expand the wineskin and cause it to burst! Remember that Jesus is using illustrations of pairs of things that do not mix, all pointing out that the old way of Judaism does not mix with the new way of the Gospel. Jesus came to bring new life to all who trust Him.

As an aside it is fitting that Jesus' first miracle was turning water into **wine** at a wedding feast (Jn 2:11+), foreshadowing that He had come to earth to inaugurate the "new wine, " the "good (best) until last" wine (John 2:1+), the "new wine" of the New Covenant, the Gospel of grace, which would replace the "old wine" of the Old Covenant (cf Heb 8:13+).

The natural man likes his old ways.
He likes his old wine -- that is, his old religion.
-- J. Vernon McGee

ESV Study Bible note on **no one** - **No one** is best understood as an ironical condemnation of the Pharisees, who favored the past and rejected the arrival of the kingdom and the “new covenant” (Lk 22:20) it brought. The point of these two metaphors is that one cannot mix the old and the new covenant, and that the new covenant era inaugurated by Jesus’ coming will require repentance (Mt. 4:17), regeneration (cf. John 3:3), and new forms of worship (cf. John 4:24). **New wine** is either recently pressed grape juice, either ready for fermentation or having just begun to ferment. Just as **new wine** could not be placed in old wineskins without bursting them, Judaism was not compatible with the "**new wine**" of the Gospel, for the result would be neither true Judaism or the true Gospel. Any attempts to mix the glorious Gospel with other religious systems will result in an inferior, ineffective Gospel, which is really no "good news" at all (see comments on Galatians 1:6-7+)! (See ESV Study Bible) (See also MacArthur's notes above on the Gospel).

J Vernon McGee - The natural man likes his old ways. He likes his old wine—that is, his old religion. The important thing is to recognize that our Lord brought something new to mankind—the gospel. He did not come into the world to do any patching of the old garment. He did not come to patch up the Law. He came to pay the penalty of sin by dying on the cross. But He did more than that. He arose from the dead so that He could place upon us His robe of righteousness. He gives us the new wine of the gospel. The new wine of the gospel must be placed in the new wineskin of grace, not into the old one of law. “And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit” (Eph. 5:18). This is the message that the Lord gives out today. He came to give us something new. He came to save us by faith in Him.This entire chapter points in one direction, and that is to present the glorious gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ in as many ways as possible so that men might hear and have an opportunity to choose whether they will accept Him or reject Him. All of us must make this decision for ourselves. (See The natural man likes his old ways. He likes his old wine—that is, his old religion)

> **THOUGHT** - Are you adding anything to the Gospel in your walk of faith? Do you think that you can merit God's favor tomorrow by performing some "good work" today? E.g., are counting on your quiet time in the mornings to earn you favor with God?, etc, etc. That is a "syncretistic Gospel" and will produce futility and frustration in your sanctification process because it will grieve/quench the Spirit Who is our Sanctifier. As Paul wrote to the Galatians "This is the only thing I want to find out from you: did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith (OBVIOUSLY BY FAITH)? Are you so foolish? (YOU ARE IF YOU THINK YOU WILL BE SANCTIFIED BY THE FLESH!) Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected (BEING SANCTIFIED) by the flesh? (see Gal 3:2-3+). Are you keeping a list of do's and don'ts? Jesus would say "DON'T!" You cannot mix the old wine of works with the new wine of grace!

Robertson on **old wineskins** - Not glass “bottles” but **wineskins** used as bottles as is true in Palestine yet, goatskins with the rough part inside. “Our word bottle originally carried the true meaning, being a bottle of leather. In Spanish bota means a leather bottle, a boot, and a butt. In Spain wine is still brought to market in pig-skins” (**Vincent**). The new wine will ferment and crack the dried-up old skins

Otherwise the new (neos) **wine** (oinos) **will burst** (rhegnumi) **the skins** (akso) **and it will be spilled out and the skins** (akso) **will be ruined** (apollumi) - The process of fermentation would increase the pressure in the skins and they would burst. Everyone knew this as a true statement, an established fact. Jesus laid this truism down (or "threw it down" - ballo) beside ("para") spiritual truth (thus called a parabole or parable). Only those with eyes to see and ears to hear could understand what He was intending by using this well known truth about new wine and old wineskins. It is notable that the verb **ruined** (apollumi) is also used by Paul to contrast "those who are being saved" with "those who are **perishing** ("ruined" - apollumi)." (2Cor 2:15+). Like the useless (ruined) wineskins, tragically their lives also will be *ruined* eternally, never able to achieve the purpose for which they were created, which is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever and ever. Amen.

Herbert Lockyer - The Parable of Old Garments and Old Bottles (Matthew 9:16–17) (Borrow All the parables of the Bible)

Speaking to the same people, with a reference to the same people with whose policies He had no sympathy, Jesus used the figures of mended garments and wine skins, in order to make plain His teaching of the nature of the Kingdom. “To those who objected to the merriment of His disciples He replied that the very merriment was inevitable while He was with them; and the whole system He was creating, was not something crowded into the old, but was something new.” Ellicott suggests that there is a closer connection between the parabolic illustrations used here than at first appears: “The wedding-feast suggested the idea of the wedding-garment, and of the wine which belonged to its joy. We may even go a step further and believe that the very dress of those who sat at meat in Matthew’s house, coming as they did from the lower and less decently-habited classes, made the illustration all the more palpable and vivid. How could those worn garments be made meet for wedding-guests? Would it be enough to sew on a patch of new cloth where the old was wearing into holes? Not so He answers here; not so He answers again when He implicitly makes the king who gives the feast the giver also of the garment” (Matthew 22:2).

The bottles of which Jesus spoke were “wineskins,” seeing animal skins or hides were shaped into the form of a living animal and

used as bottles. No one would think of putting new wine into an old skin, one already stretched to the utmost. “Wine intended to ferment would burst any bottle, whether new or old. Unfermented wine must be put into new bottles. Wine, when fermentation is complete, can be put into any bottle, whether new or old, without harming the bottle, and without harm to the wine.” Dry with age, and liable to crack, old skins would be unable to resist the pressure of fermenting liquor. So new wine required new skins.

The interpretation of this part of the parable is not hard to seek.**Christ virtually abrogates the old Levitical Law and offers a charter of a new freedom. To force His new teachings into the old formulae would bring decomposition and ruin. To take His truth and try to press it into some other form than His, would be to make it deteriorate, as unfermented wine.** The new energies and gifts of the Spirit, given on the Day of Pentecost, are likened unto new wine (Acts 2:13). The Pharisees of old, however, persisted in believing that the old wine of the Law was better (Luke 5:39).

The same principle applies to sewing new cloth on to old, frayed garments. Mending, of course, is usual, as every mother knows. But here the normal mode of repair does not apply. The old garment of our sinful, selfish life cannot be mended. Christ excludes any repair work. It must be regeneration, or the production of a new garment or creation. By “new cloth” we are to understand a piece of unshrunken cloth, cloth that has not passed through the fuller’s hands, new and undressed, in its freshness and strongest state. Because such a piece of cloth agrees not with the worn out garment to patch it on to such would, on the first strain, tear the cloth around it, and result in a worse rent.

Did not Christ teach that life must not be a mixture, resulting from following two opposing principles? Did He not illustrate singleness of principle and motive which Paul later on emphasized when he said, “To me to live is Christ”? We must be simple and single in all our motives. We cannot serve two masters (have two strings to our bow, trust for salvation in Christ and in our own works, mix law and grace, follow the world and Christ at the same time). If the “new wine” represents the inner aspect of the Christian life, then the “new cloth” illustrates its outward life and conversation. Belief is reflected in behavior. The old garment is the common life of sinful men—the new garment is the life of holiness, which the new man in Christ wears. In the narrative, fasting of which the Pharisees made much, was an old garment, for which a piece of new cloth was useless. The whole system Jesus came to create was not something to be crowded into an old order, but was something new. Therefore He could not crowd into an outworn formula the new truths He came to teach. **Is it not blessed to know that His transforming ministry will continue till old things are passed away, and all things are become new?** (Borrow All the parables of the Bible)

Wine (3631)(**oinos** - for more discussion of wine see **oinos**) means **wine** and is translated that way in all 32 uses in the NT with most having the literal meaning of wine for drink. **Oinos** describes recently pressed grape juice, either ready for fermentation or just having begun to ferment. The mention of the bursting of the wineskins (Mt 9:17; Mk 2:22; Lk 5:37), implies fermentation (see bubbling of fermentation). Distillation had not yet been developed, so wine could only achieve a certain level of alcoholic content, and it was always consumed with meals watered-down. The alcoholic content was a necessary antiseptic in the water of that day which was not always potable like modern treated drinking water. In a very clear spiritual analogy Paul compares being drunk with wine with being filled with (controlled by, "drunk with") the Holy Spirit (Eph 5:18-note). **Oinos** is used figuratively to refer to the abominations associated with the future kingdom of Babylon (Rev 14:8, 16:19, 17:2). **Zodhiates** comments on the Revelation uses (Rev 14:8, 16:19, 17:2) "From the intoxicating effects of wine and the idolatrous use of it among the heathen, wine signifies communion in the intoxicating idolatries of the mystic Babylon." (cf similar figurative use in the Lxx of Jer 51:7). **Thayer** says this is " fiery wine, which God in his wrath is represented as mixing and giving to those whom he is about to punish by their own folly and madness (Rev. 14:10; 16:19; 19:15)." While the word **oinos** is not used in Mt 26:27-29, clearly it is the wine which is symbolic or illustrative of the blood of Christ.

> **BDAG** on **oinos** - (1) "a beverage made from fermented juice of the grape, wine; the word for ‘must’, or unfermented grape juice, is trus....used medicinally... the Egyptians in mourning for their kings abstain from wheat bread and from wine.... Abstinence fr. wine and meat for the sake of ‘weak’ Christians (Ro 14:21)....(2) punishments that God inflicts on the wicked, wine fig. ext. of 1, in apocalyptic symbolism, to ‘drink’ as wine."
>
> **TDNT** - The vine was cultivated from prehistoric times, and wine comes into early use both socially and cultically. The god Dionysus is equated with wine, and it has a special place in his cult. Noah cultivates the vine in Gen. 9:20. Many OT texts praise wine (Judg. 9:13; Ps. 104:15). Fullness of wine is a divine blessing (Gen. 27:28). The Rechabites abstain from wine (Jer. 35), and Hos. 2:10ff. links it to Baal worship. There are also warnings against overindulgence (Is. 5:11-12; Prov. 20:1). Wine has cultic significance in the OT (Ex. 29:38ff.).
>
> **Vine** on **oinos** - The drinking of "wine" could be a stumbling block and the Apostle enjoins abstinence in this respect, as in others, so as to avoid giving an occasion of stumbling to a brother, Romans 14:21 . Contrast 1 Timothy 5:23 , which has an entirely different connection. The word is used metaphorically (a) of the evils ministered to the nations by religious Babylon, Revelation 14:8 ; 17:2 ; 18:3 ; (b) of the contents of the cup of Divine wrath upon the nations and Babylon, Revelation 14:10 ; 16:19 ; 19:15 . (Wine)

Friberg on **oinos** - (1) literally, of the juice of grapes, usually fermented (Lk 1.15); (2) figuratively, in apocalyptic symbolism; (a) as indicating the wrath of God outpoured in judgment (Rev 14.10); (b) as an enticement to immorality, like a love potion (Rev 17.2) (Analytical Lexicon)

Holman Bible Dictionary - Beverage made from fermented grapes. Grapes grew throughout ancient Palestine. Even in areas with limited rainfall, enough dew fell at night to support thriving vineyards. Wine was produced by pressing the juice from the grapes in large stone vats with a small drain at one end. The juice was collected in troughs, poured into large jars, and allowed to ferment while stored in cool, rock cisterns. In New Testament times, wine was kept in skin flasks and often diluted with water. It was also used as a medicine and disinfectant. Scripture condemns drunkenness and overindulgence, but pictured wine as a part of the typical ancient meal. (Reference)

In the **Rabbinical writings** (extra-Biblical) wine was sometimes used metaphorically - In metaphorical usage, wine represents the essence of goodness. The Torah, Jerusalem, Israel, the Messiah, the righteous— all are compared to wine. The wicked are likened unto vinegar, and the good man who turns to wickedness is compared to sour wine. Eleazar b. Simeon was called "Vinegar, the son of Wine" (B. M. 83b). The wine which is kept for the righteous in the world to come has been preserved in the grape ever since the six days of creation (Ber. 34b).

Oinos - 34x in 26v - Matt. 9:17; Matt. 27:34; Mk. 2:22; Mk. 15:23; Lk. 1:15; Lk. 5:37; Lk. 5:38; Lk. 7:33; Lk. 10:34; Jn. 2:3; Jn. 2:9; Jn. 2:10; Jn. 4:46; Rom. 14:21; Eph. 5:18; 1 Tim. 3:8; 1 Tim. 5:23; Titus 2:3; Rev. 6:6; Rev. 14:8; Rev. 14:10; Rev. 16:19; Rev. 17:2; Rev. 18:3; Rev. 18:13; Rev. 19:15

Oinos - 189x in 179v in the Septuagint beginning with the sad saga of Noah becoming drunk with wine - Ge 9:21,24; 14:18; 19:32-35; 27:25,28,37; 49:11-12; Ex 23:25; 29:40; 32:18; Lev. 10:9; 23:13; Nu 6:3-4,20; 15:5,7,10; 18:12; 28:14; Dt. 7:13; 11:14; 12:17; 14:23,26; 18:4; 28:39,51; 29:6; 32:14,33,38; 33:28; Jos. 9:4,13; Jdg. 9:13; 13:4,7,14; 19:19; 1 Sa 1:11,14-15,24; 10:3; 16:20; 25:11,18,37; 2 Sa 13:28; 16:1-2; 2 Ki. 18:32; 1 Chr. 9:29; 12:40; 27:27; 2 Chr. 2:10,15; 11:11; 31:5; 32:28; Ezra 6:9; 7:22; Neh. 2:1; 5:11,15,18; 10:37,39; 13:5,12,15; Est. 1:7; 4:17; Job 1:13; Ps. 4:7; 60:3; 69:12; 75:8; 78:65; 104:15; Prov. 3:10; 4:17; 9:2,5; 12:11; 20:1; 21:17; 23:30-31; 27:9; 31:4,6; Eccl. 2:3; 9:7; 10:19; Song 1:2,4; 2:4; 4:10; 5:1; 7:9; 8:2; Isa. 1:22; 5:11-12,22; 16:10; 22:13; 24:7,9,11; 25:6; 28:1,7; 29:9; 36:17; 49:26; 51:21; 55:1; 62:8; Jer. 13:12; 23:9; 25:15; 31:12; 35:2,5-6,8,14; 40:10,12; 48:33; 51:7; Lam. 2:12; Ezek. 16:49; 27:18-19; 44:21; Da 1:5,8,16; 5:1,23; 10:3; Hos. 2:8-9,22; 3:2; 4:11; 7:5,14; 9:2,4; 14:7; Joel 1:5,10; 2:19,24; 3:3; Amos 2:8,12; 5:11; 6:6; 9:14; Obad. 1:16; Mic. 2:11; 6:15; Zeph. 1:13; Hag. 1:11; 2:12; Zech. 9:15,17; 10:7

Related Resources:

- Torrey's topic - Wine - interesting
- Nave Topical Bible Wine
- The Jewish Encyclopedia - Wine - interesting, insightful article
- American Church Dictionary Wine
- American Tract Society Wine
- Bridgeway Bible Dictionary Wine
- Easton's Bible Dictionary Wine
- Fausset Bible Dictionary Wine
- Holman Bible Dictionary Wine
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible Wine and Strong Drink
- Hastings' Dictionary of the NT Wine Wine
- Smith Bible Dictionary Wine
- 1911 Encyclopedia Britannica Wine
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia Wine; Wine Press
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopedia Wine - interesting comments

Wineskins (779)(**akso**) refers to an animal skin that forms a bag, usually for holding and dispensing wine or other liquids. Akso gives us the word ascidium, botanical term for pitcher-shaped plants or leaves. Wineskins were dehaired skins of small animals, such as goats, which were sewn together to hold water (Gen 21:15), milk (Judg 4:19), and wine (Josh 9:4, 13). See picture and description of ancient "skin bottle." See also ancient bottles

Louw - A number of translators have attempted to substitute 'bottles' for '**wineskins**,' but this has not been satisfactory, since fermenting wine does not normally break glass bottles, while it would break old **wineskins**.

Liddell-Scott - asko, a leathern-bag, a wine-skin, Hom.; the bag of ox-skin in which Aeolus bottled up the winds, Od.; a bag made of the skin of Marsyas, Hdt.:-a bladder, Eur. 2. paunch, belly, Archil.72; in oracular language, E.Med.679, Plu.Thes.3. 3. bellows, Plb.21.28.15, Ath.10.456d. 4. bagpipes, Gal.4.459. 5. Proverb, wineskin, of a toper, flay alive, hence, abuse, maltreat,

Vine — Noun Masculine — askos — as-kos' - "a leather bottle, wineskin," occurs in Matthew 9:17 (four times); Mark 2:22 (four times); Luke 5:37 (three times),38; in each place, RV, "wineskins" or "skins," for AV, "bottles." A whole goatskin, for example, would be used with the apertures bound up, and when filled, tied at the neck. They were tanned with acacia bark and left hairy on the outside. New wines, by fermenting, would rend old skins (cp. Joshua 9:13 ; Job 32:19). Hung in the smoke to dry, the skin-bottles become shriveled (see Psalm 119:83).

Job 32:19 "Behold, my belly is like unvented wine, Like new wineskins (Lxx = akso) it is about to burst.

Akso - 12x in 4v - Usage: skins(4), wineskins(8). Mt. 9:17 (4x); Mk. 2:22 (4x); Lk. 5:37 (3x); Lk. 5:38

Akso - 15x in 14v in the Septuagint first 3 times of Hagar with skin for water - Gen. 21:14; Gen. 21:15; Gen. 21:19; Jos. 9:4; Jos. 9:13; Jdg. 4:19; 1 Sam. 10:3; 1 Sam. 16:20; Job 13:28; Job 32:19; Ps. 33:7; Ps. 78:13; Ps. 119:83; Jer. 13:12;

Will burst (4486)(**rhegnumi**) means to separate or cause to separate abruptly. To rend, to tear, to burst from external or internal action, often suddenly and with force. Figuratively to break forth in rejoicing and praise (Gal 4:27). In classical Greek **rhegnumi** has a variety of meanings much like the various usages of the English word break. It is used of breaking through a battle line, of a ship being broken up or wrecked at sea, of a river breaking over its banks, of breaking out into song, and of infants beginning to speak. **Friberg's** Analytical Lexicon - (1) tear (in pieces), rip, burst (Mk 2.22); passive be torn, burst (Mt 9.17); of an attack by rabid animals tear in pieces (with their teeth) (Mt 7.6); of a demonic attack on a demon-possessed person throw into a fit, dash to the ground (Mk 9.18); (2) absolutely burst into a shout, break forth in a cry of joy and freedom (Gal 4.27)

Some of the uses in the **Septuagint** are interesting and enlightening - "all the fountains of the great deep **burst open** (rhegnumi)" in (Ge 7:11,cf Pr 3:20), "lift up your staff and stretch out your hand over the sea and **divide** (rhegnumi) it, (Ex 14:16, cf Neh 9:11), "the ground that was under them **split open** (rhegnumi); (Korah's rebellion - Nu 16:31), (the Gibeonite deception of Joshua) - "These wineskins which we filled were new, and behold, they are **torn** (rhegnumi); (Jos 9:13), (after Solomon's sin of 1 Kings 11:1-11) = "'Behold, I will **tear** (rhegnumi) the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon and give you ten tribes (1Ki 11:31); "Then the city was **broken** (rhegnumi) into (2 Ki 25:4); (When his friends saw Job) = "And each of them tore (rhegnumi) his robe (Job 2:12). "A time to **tear apart** and a time to sew together; (Ecc 3:7), (Describes the Millennium when...) "waters **will breath forth** (rhegnumi) in the wilderness and streams in the Arabah." (Isa 35:6).

Rhegnumi - 7x in 7v - Usage: break forth(1), burst(3), slammed(1), slams(1), tear...to pieces(1).

Matthew 7:6 "Do not give what is holy to dogs, and do not throw your pearls before swine, or they will trample them under their feet, and turn and **tear** you **to pieces**.

Matthew 9:17 "Nor do people put new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the wineskins **burst**, and the wine pours out and the wineskins are ruined; but they put new wine into fresh wineskins, and both are preserved."

Mark 2:22 "No one puts new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the wine will **burst** the skins, and the wine is lost and the skins as well; but one puts new wine into fresh wineskins."

Mark 9:18 and whenever it seizes him, it **slams** him to the ground and he foams at the mouth, and grinds his teeth and stiffens out. I told Your disciples to cast it out, and they could not do it."

Luke 5:37 "And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the new wine will **burst** the skins and it will be spilled out, and the skins will be ruined.

Luke 9:42 While he was still approaching, the demon **slammed** him to the ground and threw him into a convulsion. But Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed the boy and gave him back to his father.

Galatians 4:27 For it is written, "REJOICE, BARREN WOMAN WHO DOES NOT BEAR;**BREAK FORTH** AND SHOUT, YOU WHO ARE NOT IN LABOR; FOR MORE NUMEROUS ARE THE CHILDREN OF THE DESOLATE THAN OF THE ONE WHO HAS A HUSBAND."

Rhegnumi - 36x in 36v in the Septuagint - Gen. 7:11; Exod. 14:16; Exod. 28:32; Num. 16:31; Jos. 9:13; Jdg. 15:19; 1 Ki. 1:40; 1 Ki. 11:31; 1 Ki. 12:24; 1 Ki. 13:3; 1 Ki. 13:5; 2 Ki. 25:4; Neh. 9:11; Job 2:12; Job 6:5; Job 15:13; Job 17:11; Job 26:8; Job 28:10; Job 31:37; Job 32:19; Prov. 3:20; Eccl. 3:7; Isa. 5:27; Isa. 33:23; Isa. 35:6; Isa. 49:13; Isa. 52:9; Isa. 54:1; Isa. 58:8; Isa.

59:5; Jer. 39:2; Ezek. 13:11; Ezek. 13:13; Ezek. 38:20; Hab. 3:9

Will be ruined (622)(**apollumi** from **apo** = away from or wholly + **olethros** = state of utter ruin) basically describes that which is no longer usable for its intended purpose. Sadly this word describes every soul who rejects salvation by grace through faith in Christ (cf Mt 10:28 = **destroy**; Mt 16:25 = **will lose**; etc). They will **NOT** be annihilated (contrary to what even some "evangelical" teachers say)! The will exist forever and forever be unable to fulfill the purpose for which they were created which is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever! Luke uses apollumi in Luke 19:10 ""For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."

> **Uses in Luke's Gospel** - Lk. 4:34; Lk. 5:37; Lk. 6:9; Lk. 8:24; Lk. 9:24; Lk. 9:25; Lk. 9:56; Lk. 11:51; Lk. 13:3; Lk. 13:5; Lk. 13:33; Lk. 15:4; Lk. 15:6; Lk. 15:8; Lk. 15:9; Lk. 15:17; Lk. 15:24; Lk. 15:32; Lk. 17:27; Lk. 17:29; Lk. 17:33; Lk. 19:10; Lk. 19:47; Lk. 20:16; Lk. 21:18;

Luke 5:38 "But new wine must be put into fresh wineskins.

> NET Luke 5:38 Instead new wine must be poured into new wineskins.
>
> GNT Luke 5:38 λλ ο νον ν ον ε ς σκο ς καινο ς βλητ ον.
>
> NLT Luke 5:38 New wine must be stored in new wineskins.
>
> KJV Luke 5:38 But new wine must be put into new bottles; and both are preserved.
>
> ESV Luke 5:38 But new wine must be put into fresh wineskins.
>
> NIV Luke 5:38 No, new wine must be poured into new wineskins.
>
> ASV Luke 5:38 But new wine must be put into fresh wine-skins.
>
> CSB Luke 5:38 But new wine should be put into fresh wineskins.
>
> NKJ Luke 5:38 "But new wine must be put into new wineskins, and both are preserved.
>
> NRS Luke 5:38 But new wine must be put into fresh wineskins.
>
> YLT Luke 5:38 but new wine into new skins is to be put, and both are preserved together;

- Eze 36:26 2Co 5:17 Ga 2:4,12-14 4:9-11 5:1-6 6:13,14 Php 3:5-7 Col 2:19-23 1Ti 4:8 Heb 8:8-13 13:9,10 Rev 21:5
- J C Ryle's Comments on Luke 5 - clear, devout, and accurate
- Luke 5:33-39 The Uniqueness of the Gospel - John MacArthur
- Luke 5:33-6:5 Avoiding Gospel Killjoys - Steven Cole
- Luke 5 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Parallel passages:

> Matthew 9:17+ "Nor do people put **new wine** into old wineskins; otherwise the wineskins burst, and the wine pours out and the wineskins are ruined; but they put new wine into fresh wineskins, and both are preserved."
>
> Mark 2:22+ "No one puts **new wine** into old wineskins; otherwise the wine will burst the skins, and the wine is lost and the skins as well; but one puts new wine into fresh wineskins."

NEW WINE NEEDS NEW WINESKINS

But new (neos) **wine** (oinos) **must be put into fresh** (kainos) **wineskins** (akso) - The good wine of the Gospel of grace cannot be placed into old **wineskins** of ritual Judaism. **Fresh** is kainos which describes that which is brand new, that which has never existed before, that which is in essence a new creation even as used in Paul's description of believers writing "Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a **new** (kainos) creature; the old things (like "old wine" or "old patches") passed away; behold,**new things** (kainos) have come." (2Co 5:17+) And so in a very real sense believers in the Gospel are like "fresh wineskins!"

> **THOUGHT** - Have you had a taste of the new wine of the Gospel, but you have not yet truly drunk it completely? (cf Heb 6:4-5+) As Jesus said ""Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and **drink His blood,** you have no life in yourselves. "He who eats My flesh and**drinks My bloo**d has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. "For My flesh is true food, and **My blood is true drink**." (Jn

6:53-55)

Brian Bell - Jesus died to place a New Garment of His righteousness on us. Jesus rose to give us the New Wine of the gospel, which must be placed in the New Wineskin of Grace, not into the old wineskin of the law. Like the wedding tradition that says, "Something **old**, something **new**, something **borrowed**, something **blue**!" In this section we had something **old** (old religion); something **new** (new life); but truly nothing **borrowed** (we own eternal life); nothing **blue** (only Joy!)

Constable has an interesting comment that this "illustration adds the fact that the new order that Jesus had come to bring has an inherently expanding and potentially explosive quality. The gospel and Christianity would expand to the whole world. Judaism simply could not contain what Jesus was bringing since it had become too rigid due to centuries of accumulated tradition." (Expository Notes)

J Vernon McGee - The important thing is to recognize that our Lord brought something new to mankind -- the gospel. He did not come into the world to do any patching of the old garment. He did not come to patch up the Law. He came to pay the penalty of sin by dying on the cross. But He did more than that. He arose from the dead so that He could place upon us His robe of righteousness. He gives us the new wine of the gospel. The new wine of the gospel must be placed in the new wineskin of grace, not into the old one of law. "And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit" (Eph. 5:18). This is the message that the Lord gives out today. He came to give us something new. He came to save us by faith in Him. (See Thru the Bible)

Wiersbe - The **new** life of the Spirit could not be forced into the old wineskins of Judaism. Jesus was revealing that the ancient Jewish religion was getting old and would soon be replaced (see Heb. 8:13+). Most of the Jews preferred the old and refused the new. It was not until A.D. 70, when the Romans destroyed Jerusalem and the temple, and scattered the people, that the Jewish religion as described in the Law came to an end. Today, the Jews do not have a priesthood, a temple, or an altar; so they cannot practice their religion as their ancestors did (see Hosea 3:4). The things in the ceremonial Law were fulfilled by Jesus Christ, so there is no need today for sacrifices, priests, temples, and ceremonies. All of God's people are priests who bring spiritual sacrifices to the Lord (1 Peter 2:5, 9+). The tables of Law have been replaced by the tables of the human heart, where God's Spirit is writing the Word and making us like Jesus Christ (2 Cor 3:1–3, 18+). Jesus Christ still offers "all things new" (Rev. 21:5+). As the **Physician**, He offers sinners new life and spiritual health. As the **Bridegroom**, He brings new love and joy. He gives us the robe of righteousness and the wine of the Spirit (Eph. 5:18+; also see Acts 2:13+). Life is a feast, not a famine or a funeral; and Jesus Christ is the only one who can make that kind of a difference in our lives. (Borrow the Bible Exposition Commentary)

Robert Stein on **new wine must be put into fresh wineskins** - This saying emphasizes the need for compatibility in both the metaphorical picture (new wine cannot be placed in old wineskins) and the reality (the "new" Gospel cannot be placed within the "old" Pharisaic Judaism). (See Luke: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition)

New (3501) (**neos**) signifies new **in respect to time** (contrast **kainos** = new in respect to quality) and describes that which has recently come into existence but for a relatively short time (eg, "new wine" Mt 9:17). **Neos** can also refer to one who is in the **early stages of life** (i.e., young) and this use accounts for many of the NT occurrences. '**New** [self]" ("self" is added by translators) describes who believers are by virtue of their union with Christ. The **new self** continually being **renewed** describes the process of **sanctification**. (Click here to compare the "three tenses of salvation") **Vine** says that the use of **neos "**stresses… the fact of the believer's new experience, recently begun and still proceeding. (Collected writings of W. E. Vine)

Fresh (2537) kainos probably from root **ken** [qen] = freshly come, or begun) is an adjective which refers to that which is new kind (unprecedented, novel, uncommon, unheard of). It relates to being not previously present. Compare the related noun **kainotes** translated **newness** (Freiberg defines it as "depicting something not only recent and different but **extraordinary**"!) in Ro 6:4+ and Ro 7:6+. Believers now have a brand new life with a brand new source of power (the Spirit) to live out that life to the full (cp Jesus' desire for all believers - Jn 10:10b)! Beloved in Christ, may this (His) "**extraordinary**" life be a genuine reality in our day to day experience in Christ. Amen! **R. C. Trench** distinguishes **neos** and **kainos** as follows "Contemplate the new under aspects of time, as that which has recently come into existence, and this is **neos**... . But contemplate the new, not now under aspects of time, but of quality, the new, as set over against that which has seen service, the outworn, the effete or marred through age, and this is **kainos.** (New - Trench's Synonyms of the New Testament) **Vine** adds that **kainos** "denotes "new," of that which is unaccustomed or unused, not "new" in time, recent (Greek = "neos"), but "new" as to form or quality, of different nature from what is contrasted as old. As **Vincent** says in his discussion of **kainos** "All the elements of festivity in the heavenly kingdom will be of a new and higher quality. **The Open Bible** notes that **kainos** "can be used with reference to something that has not been used before (Mt 9:17). **Kainos** is also used with the connotation of "**remarkable**" as a designation of something that is "new" and not known previously (Mk 1:27; Jn 13:34). The same word qualifies something as "**new**" in the sense of a replacement for something that is old and obsolete—as in the "**new covenant**" (Heb 8:8). Converts are "**new persons**" (2Co 5:17+; Ep 4:24). **Kainos** is used in an eschatological sense to describe the "**new**" heaven and earth (2Pe 3:13; Rev 21:1).

Compare the related noun **kainotes** translated **newness** (Freiberg defines it as "depicting something not only recent and different but **extraordinary**"!) in Ro 6:4-note and Ro 7:6-note. Believers now have a brand new life with a brand new source of power (the Spirit) to live out that life to the full (cp Jesus' desire for all believers - Jn 10:10b)! Beloved in Christ, may this (His) "**extraordinary**" life be a genuine reality in our day to day experience in Christ. Amen!

R. C. Trench distinguishes **neos** and **kainos** as follows "Contemplate the new under aspects of time, as that which has recently come into existence, and this is **neos**... . But contemplate the new, not now under aspects of time, but of quality, the new, as set over against that which has seen service, the outworn, the effete or marred through age, and this is **kainos.** (New - Trench's Synonyms of the New Testament) In sum, **Kainos** signifies qualitatively new in contrast to **neos** which indicates temporally new or new with respect to age.

Vine adds that **kainos** "denotes “new,” of that which is unaccustomed or unused, not “new” in time, recent (Greek = "neos"), but “new” as to form or quality, of different nature from what is contrasted as old.

Vincent on **kainos** "All the elements of festivity in the heavenly kingdom will be of a new and higher quality.

The Open Bible notes that **kainos** "can be used with reference to something that has not been used before (Mt 9:17). **Kainos** is also used with the connotation of “**remarkable**” as a designation of something that is “new” and not known previously (Mk 1:27; Jn 13:34). The same word qualifies something as “**new**” in the sense of a replacement for something that is old and obsolete—as in the “**new covenant**” (Heb 8:8). Converts are “**new persons**” (2Co 5:17-note; Ep 4:24). **Kainos** is used in an eschatological sense to describe the “**new**” heaven and earth (2Pe 3:13; Rev 21:1). (The Open Bible : New King James Version. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers)

> **Kainos - 36v** - fresh(3), new(37), new things(1), things new(1). Matt. 9:17; Matt. 13:52; Matt. 26:29; Matt. 27:60; Mk. 1:27; Mk. 2:21; Mk. 2:22; Mk. 14:25; Mk. 16:17; Lk. 5:36; Lk. 5:38; Lk. 22:20; Jn. 13:34; Jn. 19:41; Acts 17:19; Acts 17:21; 1 Co. 11:25; 2 Co. 3:6; 2 Co. 5:17; Gal. 6:15; Eph. 2:15; Eph. 4:24; Heb. 8:8; Heb. 8:13; Heb. 9:15; 2 Pet. 3:13; 1 Jn. 2:7; 1 Jn. 2:8; 2 Jn. 1:5; Rev. 2:17; Rev. 3:12; Rev. 5:9; Rev. 14:3; Rev. 21:1; Rev. 21:2; Rev. 21:5

John Courson applies this section to the modern church - When people try to put something of a new moving of the Lord into an old structure, they end up not only quenching the wine of the Spirit, but blowing apart the structure in the process. This applies to people individually as well as to churches corporately, for here's what happens: When people are touched by the Lord and filled with the Spirit, the new wine of joy and vitality begins to bubble within them. But they will often discover that, as happened with Jesus following His own baptism, they will be driven into the wilderness, into a battle, into hard times. And it is at this point that, unwilling to face the difficulty or challenge, the temptation or trial, they burst, give up, and go back to the predictability of their previous ways where they can go to church occasionally, put a dollar in the offering, and play the game. Does this mean we are doomed to become hardened old wineskins that cannot contain the new work of the Lord at any given time? I don't think so. You see, the Greek word translated "**new**" in relation to wine is neos. But the word translated "**new**" in relation to wineskins is kainos and literally means "renewed." In Bible days, wineskins were relatively expensive, so when they began to get hard, he who didn't have money for a new one would soak the old one in water until the elasticity and the flexibility returned. I find the analogy interesting because the Scriptures are likened unto water (John 15:3; Ephesians 5:26). How do we stay flexible, usable, and contemporary in whatever the Lord might be doing both corporately and personally? We soak ourselves not in traditionalism or denominationalism, but in the Word. If we make the Word the priority of our life, the emphasis of our ministry, it will have a softening, renewing effect on us. But when the Bible no longer has predominance or priority in the life of a church or an individual and is instead replaced by programs, traditions, or denominational expectations, rigidity is sure to follow. The entire Bible can be read aloud in seventy-one hours—or twelve minutes a day for a year. Most of us spend more time than that simply brushing our teeth or combing our hair. The question is not whether we have time to read the Word. The question is, do we choose to do it? There is only one place a believer cannot stay. He cannot stay put. That is, he is either growing and expanding in his walk, or he is shrinking and weakening in his walk. Your faith is either more radical today than it was last year, or it is less so. If we are determined together to soak in the Word, we will experience a continuing renewing—new discoveries, new understanding, constant softening. And the Lord will be able to pour new wine into our vessels. (See Jon Courson's Application Commentary:)

Luke 5:39 "And no one, after drinking old wine wishes for new; for he says, 'The old is good *enough*.'"

> Hendriksen - And no one, after drinking old (wine) wants new, for he says, ‘The old is good.’
>
> NET Luke 5:39 No one after drinking old wine wants the new, for he says, 'The old is good enough.'"

GNT Luke 5:39 [κα] ο δε ς πι ν παλαι ν θ λει ν ον· λ γει γ ρ, παλαι ς χρηστ ς στιν.

NLT Luke 5:39 But no one who drinks the old wine seems to want the new wine. 'The old is just fine,' they say."

KJV Luke 5:39 No man also having drunk old wine straightway desireth new: for he saith, The old is better.

ESV Luke 5:39 And no one after drinking old wine desires new, for he says, 'The old is good.'"

NIV Luke 5:39 And no one after drinking old wine wants the new, for he says, 'The old is better.'"

ASV Luke 5:39 And no man having drunk old wine desireth new; for he saith, The old is good.

CSB Luke 5:39 And no one, after drinking old wine, wants new, because he says, 'The old is better.'"

NKJ Luke 5:39 "And no one, having drunk old wine, immediately desires new; for he says,`The old is better.'"

NRS Luke 5:39 And no one after drinking old wine desires new wine, but says, 'The old is good.'"

YLT Luke 5:39 and no one having drunk old wine, doth immediately wish new, for he saith, The old is better.'

- Jer 6:16 Mk 7:7-13 Ro 4:11,12 Heb 11:1,2,39
- J C Ryle's Comments on Luke 5 - clear, devout, and accurate
- Luke 5:33-39 The Uniqueness of the Gospel - John MacArthur
- Luke 5:33-6:5 Avoiding Gospel Killjoys - Steven Cole
- Luke 5 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

NEW WINE AND OLD WINE

One might subtitle this passage is old habits and ways of thinking die hard!

And no one, after drinking old wine wishes for new; for he says, 'The old is good*enough*. - This passage is a bit of a paradoxical statement to modern ears, where **old wine** is usually considered the premium wine, the best tasting and the most expensive. Jesus of course is not speaking of literal wine but of a living Gospel. The Jews had become "*inebriated*" (so to speak) with the **old wine** of ritualistic Judaism, legalism and works righteousness and had no taste for the**new** wine of the Gospel of Grace and Christ's righteousness. And so it was very difficult for orthodox Jews to accept an entirely new system of **righteousness**, one that they did no control nor earn, but which God graciously provided for them in Christ. Indeed, the book of Hebrews repeatedly deals with Jews who while attracted to the new wine of the Gospel of Jesus, where continually being drawn back to the old wine of Judaism. We see this is the first of 5 crucial "warning passages in the book of Hebrews (Hebrews 3:7-4:13; Heb 5:11-6:12; Heb 10:19-39; Heb 12:14-29) the writer reasoning with his readers "For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away from it. For if the word spoken through angels proved unalterable, and every transgression and disobedience received a just penalty, **how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?** After it was at the first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard." (Hebrews 2:1-3+)

Christianity is not a patch for Judaism.
It is the replacement...
-- Hampton Keathley

Hampton Keathley explains "The problem was that the Pharisees liked the old system. They were at the top and didn't want it to change. They had the power, prestige, praise, etc. It sort of reminds me of our government. Everyone in America knows things are getting worse and worse with government getting bigger and bigger. But those at the top don't want to change it. They are getting rich off of the system. The Pharisees had written the Talmud and the Mishnah which were huge books filled with rules and their own interpretations of the Scriptures. They gave more emphasis to their writings than the Word of God (**ED**: SOUNDS LIKE THE DECEPTIVE FALSE TEACHING OF PAPAL INFALLIBILITY).Why isn't it possible to make repairs on the old system of Judaism? Time and again, Israel was disciplined and brought back to the land and given another chance. But not this time. Christianity is not a patch for Judaism. It is the replacement of *Pharisaic* Judaism because *Pharisaic* Judaism cannot contain Christianity. In what way? There was no place for Gentiles, Samaritans, blind, sick, lame, etc in *Pharisaic* Judaism. The law was no match for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. I say *Pharisaic Judaism* because Christ was the fulfillment of Judaism, but it had been twisted into something evil. This is not teaching a **permanent replacement of Israel by the church** as the Reformed theologians teach. Remember that the parables say something about a subject but not everything about the subject. We have to look elsewhere to see what the future holds for the Jews." (The Parabolic Sayings)

> **THOUGHT :** Jesus did not come into my life to patch up the old man and just give me a new lifestyle. He came to give me a whole new life. He came to give me a new way to approach God.

And no one, after drinking old wine wishes for new - No one is targeting those who do not eyes to see nor ears to hear and understand Jesus paradoxical parabolic saying of Jesus. Can you understand what He is saying? Neither Matthew nor Mark have this description, which is unique to Luke. This analogy explained why some people in Israel had trouble turning to Jesus and the Gospel of the Kingdom. They had been **drinking old wine** all of their lives. They were loath to give up the old wine of lifelong Judaistic false beliefs (especially that one can merit righteousness), empty rituals, men's traditions and useless practices. The paradox is that the world likes the old, "fine" wines, thinking they are the best, but Jesus, speaking spiritually, says the new wine is the best. It is the only wine that you can drink that will give you eternal life!

James Brooks sums up the parables of patch/garment and wine/wineskin - The twin parables teach the incompatibility of the old (scribal Judaism) and the new (Christianity). Judaism is the old garment and the old wineskin. Christianity is the new garment (implied), the new wineskin, and the new wine (on the last cf. John 2:1–11, especially Jn 2:10). The point is not that the "old" is wrong or evil but that its time has passed. As Acts shows, the Twelve were slow to learn this truth (cf Acts 10:1-2ff+). (See Mark: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture)

MacArthur explains that "Like the first illustration (new patch on old garment), this one also highlights the futility and impossibility of mixing the gospel of grace with any system of works-righteousness. Grace is antithetical to and not compatible with any such system (Ro 11:6; Gal 5:4). The Lord's final illustration describes the tragedy of those who reject the Gospel of grace (Acts 20:24) and cling to their false system of works-righteousness. Jesus likened such people to those who are content with the **old wine** they have been **drinking**, and have no desire to taste the **new**....Like wine drinkers sloshing their familiar drink, people stubbornly cling to their comfortable religious traditions, and have little or no interest in the **new**, fresh saving truth of the Gospel. For those unwilling to leave their false religions and embrace the Gospel, there is no hope of salvation (Jn 14:6; Acts 4:12+)." (See Luke Commentary)

Robertson comments "It is the philosophy of the obscurantist (one opposed to spread of knowledge), that is here pictured by Christ. "The prejudiced person will not even try the new, or admit that it has any merits (ED: WE ALL KNOW FOLKS LIKE THIS TODAY. THEY THINK THEY ARE SAVED, HAVE A GOOD "FIRE INSURANCE POLICY" AND DON'T WANT TO HEAR THEY ARE A SINNER WHO NEEDS TO REPENT AND BELIEVE IN JESUS). He knows that the old is pleasant, and suits him; and that is enough; he is not going to change" (Plummer). This is Christ's picture of the reactionary Pharisees."

For (term of explanation explains why they don't want the new wine of the Gospel) **he says, 'The old is good enough**- This declaration reflects the degree of deception of the Jews. They thought they had the "best" wine and stubbornly refused the "new wine" Jesus offered, not realizing that each time they refused His offer to come and drink, their hearts became progressively harder to the truth of the Gospel.

This reminds me of the passage in Isaiah which says

> "Therefore, thus says the Lord GOD, "**Behold**, My servants (THE FAITHFUL REMNANT) will eat, but you will be hungry. **Behold**, My servants will drink ("THE NEW WINE," SO TO SPEAK), but you will be thirsty. **Behold**, My servants will rejoice, but you will be put to shame. 14 "**Behold**, My servants will shout joyfully with a glad heart, But you will cry out with a heavy heart, And you will wail with a broken spirit. 15" You will leave your name for a curse to My chosen ones, And the Lord GOD will slay you. But My servants will be called by another name ("SONS OF THE LIVING GOD" - Ro 9:26+). (Isa 65:13-15)

Wishes (2309)(**thelo** see study of derivative **thelema**; see synonyms **boule** and **boulomai**) refers to exercising of one's will with the underlying sense of to be willing or to desire, to want. **Thelo** "expresses not simply a desire, but a determined and constant exercise of the will." (Vine), this definition presenting quite a picture of the determination of the Jews to not even take a sip of "Jesus wine!"

> Thelo in Luke - Lk. 1:62; Lk. 4:6; Lk. 5:12; Lk. 5:13; Lk. 5:39; Lk. 6:31; Lk. 8:20; Lk. 9:23; Lk. 9:24; Lk. 9:54; Lk. 10:24; Lk. 10:29; Lk. 12:49; Lk. 13:31; Lk. 13:34; Lk. 14:28; Lk. 15:28; Lk. 16:26; Lk. 18:4; Lk. 18:13; Lk. 18:41; Lk. 19:14; Lk. 19:27; Lk. 20:46; Lk. 22:9; Lk. 23:8; Lk. 23:20;

Good (5543)(**chrestos** from **chráomai** = furnish what is needed or from **chresteuomai** = to act kindly) has a basic meaning being well adapted to fulfill a purpose and so describes that which is useful, suitable, excellent, beneficial. The tragic irony is that the Jews thought of as aged "chrestos" "wine" would in the final day be shown to be as if one had drunk wined laced with "spiritual hemlock!"

THOUGHT FROM Pastor Gene Brooks applying these truths of the new and the old - As we let the Gospel message infuse our lives, it gives us a fresh, new shape, chosen by God's Spirit, in which the new wine of God's work within us matures toward beauty and holiness. Jesus must be accepted on His own terms. He is a transformer, not a reformer. He doesn't come to your life simply to

help you live better. He comes to revolutionize it. He does not come to you to be a part of your life. He comes to be your life (Col 3:4). He does not come to augment your ego and strengthen your self-esteem. He comes to crucify your sinful self and teach you replace it with His Christ Life. He is not interested in entertaining you. He comes to take over. He comes to lead. He comes to rule. He comes to reign. In surrender to Him lies true joy. (Luke 5:27-39 - Common Sinners & New Wine)

D L Moody - FAITH REWARDED
Sermon on Luke 5:17-20

> "And it came to pass on a certain day, as He was teaching, that there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, which were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judæa and Jerusalem; and the power of the Lord was present to heal them. And, behold, men brought in a bed a man which was taken with a palsy; and they sought means to bring him in, and to lay him before Him. And when they could not find by what way they might bring him in, because of the multitude, they went upon the house-top, and let him down through the tiling with his couch into the midst before Jesus. And when He saw their faith, He said unto him, 'Man, thy sins are forgiven thee.' " (Lk 5:17-20)

All the three evangelists, Matthew, Mark and Luke, record this miracle. I have noticed that when any two or three of the Gospel writers record a miracle it is to bring out some important truth. It seems to me that the truth the Lord would teach us here is this: **The honor He put upon the faith of these four men who brought the palsied man to him for healing.** Whether the palsied man himself had any faith we are not told; it was when He saw "their faith" that His power was put forth to cure the sick of the palsy.

I want to say to all Christian workers, that if the Lord sees our faith for those whom we wish to be blessed, He will honor it. He has never disappointed the faith of any of His children yet. You cannot find an instance in the Bible, where any man or woman has exercised true faith in God, where it has not been honored. Nothing that the Savior found when He was on this sin-cursed earth pleased Him so much as to see the faith of His disciples; nothing refreshed His heart so much.

We read in the Gospel narrative that there was a great stir in the town of Capernaum at this time. A few weeks before, the Savior had been cast out of his native town of Nazareth. He had come down to Capernaum, and the whole country was greatly moved. His star was just rising, and His fame was being spread abroad. Peter's wife's mother had been healed by a word. The servant of an officer in the Roman army had been raised up from a sick bed, and the Savior had performed many other wonderful miracles. Men had come to Capernaum from every town in Galilee, and Judæa, and from Jerusalem. They had gathered together to look into these wonderful events that were occurring. The voice of John the Baptist had been ringing through the land, proclaiming to the people that a Prophet would soon make His appearance, whose shoe latchet he was not worthy to unloose. While the Baptist was telling out this message the Prophet Himself made His appearance in the northern part of the country, and all these wonderful things were transpiring.

The Pharisees and doctors (scribes) of the law had come to Capernaum to look into the reports that were spread abroad. The house where they were gathered was filled to overflowing, and these (ostensibly) "wise" men were listening to the Savior's teaching. Many of them hardly believed a word that He said. It may be there were some believing ones among these wise men. Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea may have been there: if so, they were not yet known as disciples of Jesus.

The writer of the Gospel says: "**The power of the Lord was present to heal them**" We are not told, however, that one of them was healed. So it is very often now. The power of the Lord may be present to heal in these gatherings; yet many will come and go, wondering what it all means, and without being healed of their spiritual diseases. What we need is to have the power of God in our midst....

These four men were real workers. They were worth more than a houseful of these Pharisees and doctors of the law who came merely to criticise and look on. I do not know who the four men were, but I have always had a great admiration for them. It may be one of them had been blind and the Lord had given him his sight. The other may have been lame from his birth; when the Master restored him to strength, he thought he would like to use it in bringing some one else to be healed. The third man may have been a cured leper, and he wished to help in getting some other afflicted one cured. Perhaps this palsied man was his next-door neighbor. The fourth man, it may be, had been deaf and dumb, and he thought he would employ his hearing and his speech in helping some one else. These four young converts said to themselves: "Let us bring our sick neighbor to Christ." The palsied man may have said he had no faith in Christ. But these four friends told him how they had been cured, and if the Master could heal them surely He could heal a palsied man.

Now it seems to me nothing will wake up a man quicker than to have four persons after him in one day. People are sometimes afraid

that they will entrench on each other's ground if more than one worker happens to call at the same house. For my part, I wish that every family had about forty invitations to each meeting.

> I lately heard of a man, a non-churchgoer, who did not believe in the Bible or religious things. Someone who was distributing tickets asked him if he would go to the meetings. He got quite angry. No, he would not go; he did not believe in the thing at all; he would not be seen in such a crowd. A second man came along, not knowing that any one had been before him, and asked if he would accept a ticket for the meetings. The man was still angry, and, as we would sometimes say, he "gave him a piece of his mind." He told him to keep his tickets. By-and-by a third man called and said: "Would you take a ticket for these meetings?" The man by this time had got thoroughly waked up, but yet he declined to receive the ticket. He went into a shop to buy something. The man in the shop put a ticket for the meetings into the packet; when the customer got home and opened it, lo and and behold there was a ticket! He got so roused up that he went, not to our meeting, but to a neighboring church. I do not know that he has come clean out, but I believe he is, at any rate, in a hopeful condition.

If one visit does not wake up a man whom you want to reach, send a second visitor after him; if that has no effect, send a third, and a fourth, and a fifth, and a sixth, and a seventh; go on in that way day after day. It is a great thing to save one man, to get him out of the pit, to have his feet set fast on a rock, and a new song put in his mouth. Nothing will rouse an indifferent man quicker than to have a number of friends after him. If you cannot bring him yourself, get others to help you.

These four men found an obstacle in the way. The door of the house was blocked and they could not get near the Master. They may have asked some of these philosophers to stand aside; but no, they would not do that. They would not disturb themselves about a sick man. Many people will not go into the kingdom of God themselves, and they will throw obstacles in the way of others. After trying probably for some time to get in, these four men began to devise another plan. If it had been some of us, most likely we would have got quite discouraged, and carried the man back to his home.

These men had faith, and perseverance too. They are going to get their friend to Christ some way. If they cannot get him through the door, they will find a way through the roof! "Zeal without knowledge," people say. I would a good deal rather have that than knowledge without zeal. You can see them pulling and tugging away at the burden. If you have ever tried to carry a wounded man up a flight of stairs you will know it is not an easy matter. But these four men were not to be defeated, and at last he is up there on the roof.

Now, the question was, "How can we get him down?" They began to tear up the tiling. I can see those wise men looking up and saying to one another: "This is a strange performance; we have never seen anything like this in the temple or in any synagogue we were ever in. It is altogether out of the regular order. These men must be carried away with fanaticism. Why, they have made a hole large enough to let a man through. Suppose a sudden shower were to come, it would spoil the house."

But these four workers were terribly in earnest. They let the bier, on which the man was lying, down into the room. They laid their friend right at the feet of Jesus Christ; a good place to lay him, was it not? Perhaps some of you have a sceptical son or an unbelieving husband, or some other member of your family, that scoffs at the Bible and sneers at Christianity. Lay them at the feet of Jesus, and He will honor your faith.

"**When He saw their faith.**" I suppose these men were looking down to see what was about to take place. Christ looked at them, and when He saw their faith He said to the palsied man: **"Son, be of good cheer; thy sins are forgiven thee.**" That was more than they expected; they only thought of his body being made whole. So let us bring our friends to Christ, and we shall get more than we expect. The Lord met this man's deepest need first. It may be his sins had brought on the palsy, so the Lord forgave the man's sin first of all.

The wise men began to reason within themselves: "**Who is this that forgiveth sins?**" The Master could read their thoughts as easily as we can read a book. "**Is it easier to say, 'Thy sins be forgiven thee,' or 'Rise up and walk?' But that ye may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins, He said unto the sick of the palsy, 'I say unto thee, arise; take up thy bed and go into thine house.'** " The man leaped to his feet, made whole. He rolled up the old bed, swung it across his shoulders, and went to his house. Depend upon it these philosophers who would not make way in order to let him in stood aside pretty quick to let him go out. No need for him to go out by way of the roof; he went out by the door.

Dear friends, let us have faith for those we bring to Christ. Let us believe for them if they will not believe for themselves. It may be there are those here who do not believe in the Bible, or in the Gospel of the Son of God. Let us bring them to Christ in the arms of our faith. He is unchangeable—"the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." Let us look for great things. Let us expect the dead to be raised, the harlots reclaimed, the drunkards saved, and the devils cast out. I believe men are possessed of evil spirits now, just as much as when the Son of God was on earth. We want to bring them right to the Lord Jesus Christ, that He may heal

and save them. Let this cursed unbelief be swept out of the way, and let us come to God as one man, looking for and expecting signs and wonders to be done in the name of Jesus. He can perform miracles to-day, and He will if we ask Him to fulfill His promises. “He is able to save to the uttermost.

And let me say to any unsaved man that God has the power to save you from your sins today. If you want to be converted, come right to the Master as did the leper of old. He said, “Lord, if Thou wilt Thou canst make me clean.” Christ honored his faith, and said, “I will; be thou clean.” Notice—the man put “if” in the right place. “If Thou wilt.” He did not doubt the power of the Son of God. The father who brought his son to Christ said, “If Thou canst, have compassion upon him.” The Lord straightened out his theology then and there; “If thou canst believe.” Mother, can you believe for your boy? If you can, the Lord will speak the word, and it shall be done.

It will a good thing for us to get right down at the feet of the Master, like the poor woman who went to Elisha and told him of her dead child. He asked his servant to take his staff and lay it upon the dead child. But the mother would not leave the prophet. He wanted her to go with the servant, but she would not be satisfied with the prophet’s staff, or even with his servant; she wanted the master himself. So Elisha went with her; it was a good thing he did, for the servant could not raise the child.

We want to get beyond the staff and beyond the servant, right to the heart of the Master Himself. Let us bring our palsied friends to Him. It is said of Christ that in one place He could not do many mighty works there because of their unbelief. Let us ask Him to take away from us this cursed unbelief, that hinders the blessing from coming down, and prevents those who are sick of the palsy of sin from being saved.

“The faith that works by love,
And purifies the heart,
A foretaste of the joys above
To mortals can impart;
It bears us through this earthly strife,
And triumphs in immortal life.”