

DAILY BIBLE STUDIES

“Jesus Calls His Fishers of Men”

Mark 1:16-20

JULY 12 –18, 2009

THE LORD'S DAY –This week we come to **Mark 1: 16-20** where we find Sacred Scripture detail for us the events surrounding Jesus calling His first four disciples. We find that Mark later on in **Mark 3:13-19** fills in our understanding with a record of the complete list of the 12 disciples after their call and selection by Jesus. Christ called these common men to an uncommon task and Mark speaks of this task and summarizes the call in these verses. Read **Mark 1:16-20**.

Suggestion for prayer: *Father, teach me from Your Word this week.*

MONDAY –We mentioned that this passage of Sacred Scripture focuses on the call of the first 4 of Jesus’ disciples; who where commercial fisherman by trade. Remember the verses which precede this in our text find Christ “*preaching the gospel of the Kingdom of God*” and saying, “*The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe in the gospel.*” Now in our text we see Jesus moves right into the selection of “His staff” if you will as He draws to Himself a band of souls that He can unload the great burden of His mission and write on their very hearts and minds His mission and message. Mark gets to the details in **verse 16** where we find that Jesus “*walked by the Sea of Galilee...*” Fishing was big business at this time in history and the Sea of Galilee was a big time fishery. Josephus, the Jewish historian who lived AD 37 – 100 tells us that in his days there where about 330 fishing boats that sailed the waters of the lake. The food staple as far as meat was concerned in the days of Jesus was fish (**Luke 11:11, Luke 24:42**). Fresh fish was seemingly a delicacy as “salt fish” was the more standard fare as it could have some shelf life due to its salt preservative. There were “salteries” if you will back then one of which was in Magdala, home of Mary Magdalene on the Sea of Galilee. Fish were caught and salted by a layering process and then they could be kept for considerable time before needing to be eaten. The Sea of Galilee goes by many names, several of which are found in Scripture. The Sea of Galilee is the lowest freshwater lake on earth at approximately 700 feet below sea level. The lake measures about 13 miles by 7.5 miles and it is about 140 feet deep. The very names of the towns around this lake speak to the importance of fish and fishing in the life of these people. One name we recognize used in Scripture that can serve as an example would be Bethsaida which means “House of Fish”. It is here Jesus “*walked*” and called His men. It is said that the rabbis declared of the Sea of Galilee, “Although God has created seven seas, yet He has chosen this one as His special delight.” Quite possibly Jesus felt the same way. Read **Nehemiah 9:6**.

Suggestion for prayer: *Thank and praise God for His marvelous creation.*

Praise & Prayer	ADORATION Hallowed be Your name. (6:9)	AUTHORITY Your Kingdom come... (6:10)	APPEAL Give us this day... (6:11)	AQUITAL Forgive us our debts... (6:12)	ASSISTANCE Deliver us from evil. (6:13a)	ADMIRATION For Yours is the Kingdom... (6:13)
Lord's Day						
Mon						
Tue						
Wed						
Thu						
Fri						
Sat						

Matthew 9:13

TUESDAY –There is much more we could say about the interesting details of The Sea of Galilee and the fishing industry that was there both in Jesus time and today. I trust we recognize the point of the importance and significance of fish and fishing in this place and time in history as well as in the lives of those people. Our text points out in **verse 16** that Christ saw, “*Simon and Andrew his brother...for they were fisherman*”. Then in **verse 19** we are introduced to two more fishermen; namely, “*James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother...*” We notice that as Jesus begins to assemble His “*fishers of men*”, He selects 4 men from very ordinary and common walks of life. These men fished for a living. These fisherman beloved, are the men who would be the Apostles of Christ, incredibly important instruments in God’s plan for the continued establishment of the Church and the propagation of the gospel; men whose names, as the “*twelve Apostles of the Lamb*”, adorn the foundation of the walls of the “*New Jerusalem*” (**Revelation 21:14**). Here in our text of **Mark 1**, Jesus literally in a visible space and time manner begins to lay the foundation for this era of redemptive history. This outworking of the Apostles role as it were, reaches a culmination or realization as it is described by John the Revelator in the imagery of God’s people, His city, the New Jerusalem being seen in all her glory and fullness in **Revelation 21**. We must understand that according to Scripture, God’s plan of redemption was set before the world began (**Ephesians 1:4, 2 Timothy 1:9, 1 Peter 1:20, Revelation 13:8**), but it here in the events of life outlined in Scripture, it is coming to pass in space and time before our very eyes as it were.

Suggestion for prayer: *Father, thank You for Your grace in choosing us as sinful undeserving men and women to be Your people.*

WEDNESDAY –I would now like to continue on with yesterday’s topic and provide a bit more explanation by way of an excerpt from an article by Tony Warren of “The Mountain Retreat”. **Revelation 13:8** “*And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.*” In Revelation chapter thirteen, verse eight, Jesus is referred to as, “*The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.*” Since Christ went to the cross at an appointed and specific place in time (which was about 2000 years ago), some Christians are unsure just what this phrase actually means. This is understandable, as the language there is somewhat difficult. When the verse is carefully studied and all things are considered, it becomes clear that God is speaking about the ‘eternal election of Grace,’ which spans time. Note that God is defining those unsaved who do not have their names written in the Lamb’s book of life. This ‘book of Life’ signifies God’s record of those who will be regenerated or raised up unto new life in Christ Jesus. In Him are these Saints under the immutable purpose of God for his Elect. Christ being slain from the foundation of the world illustrates not only that He was foreordained to be slain, but also that the efficacy, or the beneficial effects of that death, is the same as if that sacrifice had been made before the creation of the world. Thus, Old Testament saints are washed clean in Christ’s blood the same as we are today. In other words, the efficacy of Christ’s sacrifice is not limited by time. God had already chosen who He would Save before creation, and had thus already ordained the Savior to shed His blood for them, to make this possible. Their Salvation

wasn’t something which could be thwarted; it was something which was as good as ‘done’ from the time that God ordained it.

Suggestion for prayer: *Thank You God that NOTHING can thwart Your eternal plan to save Your elect. We praise You o god for such grace.*

THURSDAY – We have seen in our text that these 4 of Christ’s disciples were merely simple “fishermen”. In the words of the patristic Eusebius: “Reflect on the nature and grandeur of the one Almighty God who could associate himself with the poor of the lowly fisherman’s class. To use them to carry out God’s mission baffles all rationality. For having conceived the intention, which no one ever before had done, of spreading his own commands and teachings to all nations, and of revealing himself as the teacher of the religion of the one Almighty God to all humanity, he thought good to use the most unsophisticated and common people as ministers of his own design. Maybe God just wanted to work in the most unlikely way. For how could inarticulate folk be made able to teach, even if they were appointed teachers to only one person, much less to a multitude? How should those who were themselves without education instruct the nations? When he had thus called them as his followers, he breathed into them his divine power, and filled them with strength and courage. As God himself he spoke God’s true word to them in his own way, enabling them to do great wonders, and made them pursuers of rational and thinking souls, by empowering them to come after him, saying: “Come, follow me, and I will make you fish for people.” With this empowerment God sent them forth to be workers and teachers of holiness to all the nations, declaring them heralds of his own teaching.” Read **Acts 4:13** and see what was obvious about Peter & John.

Suggestion for prayer: *Jesus, help me live in such a way that others see You.*

FRIDAY –Both groups of men in our text, when called, “*immediately*” left their nets and followed Christ. It is as if they could no longer be concerned with anything pertaining to this earthly life as it may run contrary to the calling of the Lord Jesus. All worldly resources are to be left behind in response to the call and Kingdom of God. James and John left their father Zebedee and the very boat upon which their whole livelihood depended. The call to follow Christ is not a call for “half-hearted” commitment. **Matthew 9:9, 10:37-39, Luke 9:59-60.**

Suggestion for prayer: *O God, help me to answer the call to follow Jesus.*

SATURDAY –Now concerning Jesus’ statement, “*I will make you fishers of men*”. This summarizes the primary responsibility and central mission of those who would follow Jesus—evangelism, spreading the gospel message & seeking the lost. This is our business, fishing for souls. Matthew Henry said, “Ministers, in preaching the gospel, *cast the net* into the waters; some are enclosed and brought to shore, but far the greater number escape.” Let us be always casting the net into the sea. Read **Matthew 13:47-50, 1 Corinthians 9:16.**

Suggestion for prayer: *God, use me to preach the gospel to this lost world.*