

Thursday, February 23, 2023
Season of Lent
Day 2

Matthew 4:18–22

¹⁸ As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. ¹⁹ “Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will send you out to fish for people.” ²⁰ At once they left their nets and followed him.

²¹ Going on from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John. They were in a boat with their father Zebedee, preparing their nets. Jesus called them, ²² and immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.

Reflection

To begin with, we have to come to terms with the action of this story. Simon (Peter), Andrew, James, and John did not walk away from jobs the way we might leave being a greeter at Walmart. These are two sets of sons who are each working their family’s business. There is some risk in their work, they work hard, and they have been doing it father to son for generations. When these men (teens?) heed Jesus’s call to follow him they are leaving father, mother, sisters, and brothers. Perhaps also more extended family.

So, what was it about Jesus and his call that led them to abandon the most important people that made up their lives? “Come, follow me and I will send you out to fish for people” calls Jesus to these working men. Was he so charismatic? Did he already have a reputation as a powerful preacher and miracle worker? Were they somehow able to discern at some level that he was the Messiah who was ushering in God’s kingdom and restoring Israel? We don’t know. And, the way Matthew tells the story, we don’t need to know. Matthew wants us to see one thing so clearly he gives us two back to back examples. When the kingdom comes near and the king calls, the only appropriate response is to become disciples. Nothing else is as important. Nothing must hold us back from entering that kingdom.

Of course, this is a challenge. It was a challenge for the people of Jesus’s day and it continues to be a challenge for us in our own day. No terms? No guarantees? No limits? Just abandon what you know and give me your self and your gifts for the cause of the kingdom that has come. That’s right; discipleship is costly. In his book, *Discipleship*, Dietrich Bonhoeffer says “When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die.” These terms are unacceptable to the world because it appears to be the loss of everything which is suicide. However, for those who have eyes and ears to see and hear the things of the kingdom, nothing is truly lost; it is simply transformed from lower to higher. True costly discipleship is the gaining of life, not the loss of it.

Additionally, Christ’s call to discipleship is not the work of a single moment. He calls again and again. Every time we learn obedience in one part of our walk he calls us to abandon another part of our decaying, sinful self. Discipleship is a lifetime of learning obedience, conversion, and transformation. This is why the season of Lent is an important discipline to engage in. It is an annual recall into our discipleship commitment. A time when we intentionally, once again, leave everything to follow Jesus—to the cross.

Prayer

Lord, give us the ears to hear and the eyes to see you. Holy Spirit, instill in us the courage to give up all, even our own selves, to follow Jesus. Produce in us an appetite for the kingdom such that nothing else will satisfy. Amen.



Sea of Galilee Boat. (2023, January 23). In Wikipedia.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sea_of_Galilee_Boat