

Luke 5

SPEAKER	Binyam Gebrehanna
DATE	Sunday, August 18, 2024
PASSAGES	Luke 5; Mark 1; Mark 2; Matthew 28
MESSAGE	Begins at 1:30:37 in the service

THE BIG IDEA

Jesus borrowed a tired fisherman's boat, taught from it, and then told him to fish in the wrong water at the wrong hour. Peter obeyed anyway — and when the nets broke, he did not celebrate, he fell down and asked Jesus to leave. He had understood the miracle correctly: it was not a gift of fish, it was a call to a life he did not feel qualified for.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ◆ The men Jesus called were working class. They had no theological training and no credentials, and Binyam kept returning to that: Jesus saw what they could become rather than what they already were.
- ◆ Peter's obedience came before his confidence. He did not expect a catch. "Because you said so, I will let down the nets" is respect and obedience running ahead of belief.
- ◆ Fishing was night work, and the nets had already been washed — a long, laborious job. Jesus' instruction cost Peter the one thing he had left, which was rest.
- ◆ Peter's response to the miracle was fear, not delight, because he saw where it was heading. He would be doing what Jesus was doing.
- ◆ "Do not be afraid" is the answer Jesus gives to that fear, and it comes attached to a promise: from now on you will be catching people.
- ◆ To follow Jesus, in Binyam's definition, is to obey his commands, listen to his voice, and serve God by serving others. It is not an idea you hold; it is what you do with your Monday.

- ◆ The gospel is why the fishing story matters at all: the one who knew no sin became sin so that we might become the righteousness of God — righteousness received by faith, not achieved — and the Spirit comes to dwell in everyone who receives him.
- ◆ God grows his kingdom from small things on purpose — a mustard seed, twelve men, one obedient act of dropping a net.

► 1:30:37

Binyam introduced himself before he introduced his text — Ethiopia, seventeen years in the United States, citizenship ten years ago, seminary in 2016, his wife Eden, and thirteen years at Hope Chapel. “I am blessed,” he said. “I have been very much blessed. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve.” Then he read the whole of [Luke 5:1–11](#) aloud and prayed that the word would bring fruit, healing and restoration, and only then began to teach.

Before the miracle: what Mark fills in

► 1:36:01

Binyam’s first move was to step out of Luke and into Mark, because Mark gives the detail Luke compresses. This is early in Jesus’ ministry, in and around Galilee, and it is not the first time these men have met him.

“Passing alongside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew the brother of Simon casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. And Jesus said to them, ‘Follow me, and I will make you become fishers of men.’ And immediately they left their nets and followed him.”

MARK 1:16–20 ↗

► 1:38:06

Then the sequence: Jesus teaches in the synagogue and the people are astonished, because he teaches with authority ([Mark 1:21–22](#)). He goes to Peter’s house and heals Peter’s mother-in-law, who gets up immediately and starts serving them ([Mark 1:29–31](#)). A crowd gathers at the door. Early the next morning he is gone to a solitary place to pray, and when they find him he says they are going on to the next towns, because that is what he came to do ([Mark 1:35–38](#)). Along the way he calls [Levi off the tax collector’s booth](#), and then eats at Levi’s house with a crowd of Levi’s friends — people, Binyam pointed out, who were not going to the synagogue and would never have heard Jesus teach anywhere else.

► 1:41:11

The pattern keeps widening. Jesus tells his followers to ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers, and then he answers that prayer with them — sending the twelve, and later seventy more. The promise made on the shore is being kept in stages: he said he would make them fishers of people, and making them is the work of equipping, empowering and transforming them.

Why Jesus taught from a boat

► 1:41:54

Back in Luke 5, the crowd is pressing in — Luke says Jesus was being pushed toward the water. Two boats are at the shoreline and one belongs to Peter, who is cleaning his nets after a night that produced nothing. Jesus asks to borrow it, sits down, and teaches from a few feet offshore.

Binyam gave two practical reasons, and he liked the second one. Sitting in the boat Jesus could be seen and could teach without being crushed. And there was no sound system — so the water itself did the work. “Jesus also wanted to use the lake as a loudspeaker,” he said, “so that the crowd could hear him.” The voice carried across the surface to the people on the bank.

“Because you said so”

► 1:44:10

This is where Binyam slowed down, and it is the heart of the message. In those days men fished at night or very early morning. Peter had worked all night and caught nothing. The nets were already washed — and washing was not a rinse. They had to be cleaned, stretched, unfolded. It was, in his words, a laborious task, and it was finished.

“And when he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, ‘Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch.’ And Simon answered, ‘Master, we toiled all night and took nothing! But at your word I will let down the nets.’ And when they had done this, they enclosed a large number of fish, and their nets were breaking. They signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink.”

LUKE 5:4-7 ↗

► 1:44:58

Notice what Peter does not say. He does not argue and he does not agree. He explains, accurately, why there will be no fish — and then he goes anyway. “Master” is a polite word, Binyam said; Peter was being respectful, kind and obedient, honoring Jesus and doing exactly what he was told to do. He did

not think he would catch anything when he threw the net. That is the point worth carrying out of the room: the obedience was real before the evidence arrived.

Nets breaking, boats sinking

► 1:45:44

Peter had to signal the other boat. Both boats filled until they started to go under. And Binyam pressed on who was standing there watching it happen: not a tourist, but a professional who had fished that lake for years and had never once seen his net break under a catch. This was a miracle, and it was a specific kind — Jesus demonstrating authority over nature itself.

“Go away from me, Lord”

► 1:46:26

“But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus’ knees, saying, ‘Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.’ For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish that they had taken... And Jesus said to Simon, ‘Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching men.’ And when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed him.”

LUKE 5:8–11 ↗

► 1:47:26

“Go away from me’ was not an appropriate response after catching that much fish,” Binyam said. “Why did Peter say that? Jesus knew Peter said that because he was afraid.” Afraid of what? Peter had been watching Jesus teach, heal and call people. He put it together. The catch was not a bonus at the end of a bad shift — it was the shape of the rest of his life. He was going to be doing what Jesus was doing.

Jesus does not correct the sense of unworthiness. He answers the fear, attaches a promise to it, and lets the men decide. They pulled the boats up, left everything, and went. Following, Binyam said, means obeying his commands, listening to his voice, being his disciples — and it means serving God by serving other people.

Why this is more than a good day on the water

► 1:48:21

Here the message widened out. What Peter had glimpsed on the boat is what the church confesses: that Jesus is the incarnate God who came for the redemption of humanity, fully human and fully divine, and that he went to the cross for the forgiveness of our sins. Binyam ran through it plainly — whoever believes in him has eternal life; humanity, distant from God because of sin, has been reconciled to God through Christ; the righteousness is received by faith, not achieved.

► 1:49:10

He would not let that stay abstract, and he said the uncomfortable half of it out loud. “Jesus came to this world because we are in need of the Savior,” he said. “We are in need of God’s grace.” And the one who came was not a lesser envoy: “Jesus Christ, who is the creator of the universe, holy and righteous, chose to come to this world” and became the sacrifice for our sins.

“For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.”

2 CORINTHIANS 5:21 ↗

► 1:50:00

And it does not stop at forgiveness. “When we receive Christ Jesus as the Lord and the Savior of our lives,” he said, “the Spirit of God comes to dwell within us, and we have eternal life.” Hold onto that sentence — it is the mechanism for everything he says next. It is the answer to Peter on his knees. What makes an untrained fisherman into a fisher of people is not talent or training; it is God moving in.

How a kingdom grows

► 1:50:48

“It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when sown on the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth, yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes larger than all the garden plants and puts out large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade.”

MARK 4:30–32 ↗

Jesus told that parable, Binyam said, “to teach how the kingdom of God grows, and how God uses a small thing and turns it into a great thing.” Jesus started a ministry, his disciples kept preaching, and today “a multitude of people around the world proclaim Jesus as the Lord and the Savior of their lives.” The instruction that carried it is the one given to everybody, not to a professional class:

► 1:51:38

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.”

MATTHEW 28:19–20 ↗

And he came back one last time to the men in the boats — ordinary, untrained, inexperienced, and by their own assessment unqualified. Jesus looked at them and named what they would become: you are the light of the world. To this one, still wet and still apologizing: you are the rock, and on this rock I will build my church.

The invitation, and what he asked us to do with it

► 1:52:37

Before the ask, he named the machinery. “God advances his kingdom through preaching and teaching and missions” — the word is preached, people hear it, they receive Christ as Lord and Savior, the Spirit of God comes to dwell within them, and God is glorified. Then the turn that puts the room inside the sentence: “God also uses people like you and me to advance his kingdom.”

So he ended with a question rather than a summary. “The question I have for you today,” he said, “is how are you planning to respond to Jesus’ invitation today?”

► 1:53:27

He made it concrete on purpose, and small on purpose — mustard-seed sized. Come early on a Sunday morning and pray, or walk and pray in the neighborhood. Join the prayer team that prays through the service. Share the word of God with a friend — the hope we have in Jesus. Take time to pray for missionaries. Pray for revival in the cities. Whatever the service, whatever the ministry God has called you to, the promise is not that you will be adequate: “Jesus promises to give you strength. He promises to give you his grace, and help us become the fishers of people.”

► 1:54:25

Then he did not dismiss the room. He put us in groups of two and three for five minutes to pray by name for people who do not know the Lord — families, loved ones, friends — and said that if anyone wanted to receive Christ, today is the day of salvation, with the prayer team waiting at the front after the service.

Which is the only ending this text allows. He did not send us out with a summary of Luke 5; he had us do the thing the passage is about — put a net down on his word, in water we have already worked

without result, with the names of actual people in it. Peter did not feel qualified either. He let the net down anyway, and that was the whole of his part.

FOR FURTHER STUDY**SCRIPTURE IN THIS MESSAGE**

- [Luke 5:1–11](#)
- [Mark 1:16–20](#)
- [Mark 1:21–22](#)
- [Mark 1:29–31](#)
- [Mark 1:35–38](#)
- [Mark 2:13–14](#)
- [Matthew 9:37–38](#)
- [Luke 10:1–2](#)
- [Luke 5:4–7](#)
- [Luke 5:8–11](#)
- [John 3:16](#)
- [2 Corinthians 5:21](#)
- [Mark 4:30–32](#)
- [Matthew 28:19–20](#)
- [Matthew 5:14](#)
- [Matthew 16:18](#)
- [2 Corinthians 6:2](#)

FOR YOUR HOPE GROUP

1. Where has Jesus asked you to let down a net in water you have already worked without result? What did you do?
2. Peter obeyed while still expecting nothing. Where in your life is obedience running ahead of your confidence right now — or where has your lack of confidence stopped the obedience?
3. Peter's first reaction to the miracle was "go away from me." What is it about being called that frightens you?
4. Binyam said Jesus saw in untrained fishermen what they could become. Who has seen that in you, and who are you seeing it in?
5. Of the responses he named — praying early, walking the neighborhood, joining the prayer team, telling a friend, praying for missionaries — which one are you doing this week, and when?

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Binyam Gebrehanna is originally from Ethiopia. He came to the United States about seventeen years ago, became a citizen about ten years ago, and graduated from Austin School of Theology in 2016. He and his wife Eden have been part of Hope Chapel for roughly thirteen years, and he has led a Sunday evening service here for more than a year. Introducing him, Hope's staff described him simply as a humble man who serves faithfully and quietly.

Watch the full message:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gDrvnQVxkfo&t=5437s>

These notes summarise a message preached at Hope Chapel in Austin, Texas. They are a reader's aid, not a transcript — scripture references link to the full passage so you can read it in context.