



Small Group Study Guide for February 9, 2025

Our Savior Lutheran Church and School

Theme: Peter knew he was completely unworthy to follow Jesus. Yet Jesus blessed him with a great catch and called him to catch people for the Lord. We get to join Jesus on His mission, purely by grace! It is an adventure of faith that makes a difference for eternity.

Getting Started: (sharing with each other)

1. Do you have or know of any “fish stories”?
2. Share if there are any people lately that you are praying would know the Lord.

In the Word: Read Luke 5:1-11

3. Look at some of the events that took place in the previous chapter, Luke 4, and discuss *why* Jesus has such a large crowd in 5:1 that he needs to get in a boat so he can preach to the people on the shore.
4. The Sea of Galilee (also called the Lake of Gennesaret), is about 14 miles long, six miles wide, and sits 680 feet below sea level. In Jesus’ day it was a densely populated area with large cities around the shoreline, such as Capernaum, Bethsaida, and Magdala. Simon Peter and his brother Andrew, along with James and John the sons of Zebedee, were fishermen. Professionals as they were, they had caught nothing the night before (night was the best time to fish). How do you think Peter felt when Jesus told him to put off a ways from shore and let down their nets? And then – why did Peter comply? (see his response in verse 5).
5. Jesus’ miracle was overwhelming to Peter, and to the others mentioned in verse 9 (James and John, presumably Andrew could have been there too). Why do you think Peter told Jesus to leave him in verse 8?
6. The command God gives in the Bible most often is “Do not be afraid.” We may see it as law, telling us what to do (or not to do). But it can also be a word of Gospel. How is Jesus telling Peter “Don’t be afraid” a word of comfort, absolution, and hope?

7. The disciples may have encountered Jesus several times before. There are other stories of how Jesus called them and interacted with them. These fishermen had gone out to see John the Baptizer and met Jesus there, too. But this is the moment when they finally leave their jobs to follow Jesus full time as apostles. **Read Luke 6:12-16** to read about this special group of leaders.

Putting it all Together (what do we believe or do as disciples?)

8. Jesus did a miracle as He called Peter to follow Him, to show Peter what the Christian mission would be about. Imagine that the lake is the world, and the fish are people. The boat is the Christian church. Jesus is calling His disciples to let down their nets for a catch, to 'catch people alive' and the boats will be overflowing there will be so many! In this analogy, what are the "nets" that bring people from the world into the church?
9. Similar to the Apostles, pastors and professional church workers serve full time for the Christian mission, and may leave other careers behind. Most disciples are not full-time church workers, and yet can still be full-time disciples. How can you be a full-time disciple even if you are not in professional church work?
10. The disciples caught fish without hooks. They used nets that didn't damage the fish. In the same way, as we are "fishers of men" we want to fish without hooks. We don't want to injure or damage people just to get them in the church. We don't want to "bait and switch." We don't want to be sharp and forceful. What is the proper method for us to catch people and bring them into the boat of the church?
11. What is the difference between inviting someone to church and inviting someone to 'believe in and follow' Jesus? We hope they have the same result, but how might this distinction help us to be fishers of men?

Prayer: Ask if there are any prayer requests. Be sure to pray for the people you mentioned in #2 above. Ask that the Holy Spirit would work through our witness and invitation to bring about an amazing harvest of people 'caught alive' – without hooks – and rescued from the deep darkness of this world.

Next Week: In whom do we place our trust? Jeremiah gives us two options, ourselves or the Lord. One is unstable while the other is likened to a tree firmly planted. May we seek to trust in the Lord no matter what comes our way.