

Jesus' Unlikely Followers

Luke 5:1-11, 27-32

Dave Geldart | Feb 24, 2019

1. Intro, Recap

- a. Welcome kids!
- b. Luke – Our King and Kingdom
 - i. The Upside down kingdom

2. FOLLOW THE LEADER game

- a. Start with inviting anyone who wants to come up to play follow the leader
 - i. some kids will come up. Lead them around sanctuary. Silly. Fun.
 - ii. illustrates how all are called, but only those who actually choose to get up become followers. Heart of a child.

3. Today we're going to look at 2 stories where some people follow Jesus and some don't

- a. **It's not always who you'd expect!**
- b. Today we're in Luke 5, looking at JESUS' UNLIKELY FOLLOWERS
- c. Kids, **if Jesus came to Manhattan**, and went around and called folks to follow him, who do you think would be the first to join his team?
 - i. The church pastors and church staff?
 1. Ben and I? Mrs Elisha? Mr Dilan?
 - ii. What about the folks in jail for committing crimes?
 - iii. What about folks who go to the principal's office? Get their name on the board every day?
 - iv. What about other folks in town who don't go to church, who throw wild parties at night and get in fights in aggieville?
 - v. We'll see
- d. Today we're in Luke 5, looking at JESUS' UNLIKELY FOLLOWERS

4. PRAY --- adults, pray for the kids, kids pray for adults

5. 1st Story: (give out 1st coloring sheet)

- a. V 1-11
- b. **V1 Jesus teaching a large crowd** by the Lake of Gennesaret, also called the Sea of Galilee. The same sea where he'll calm the storm later. And also where he'll walk on water.
 - i. **WHICH PIC IS the REAL SEA OF GALILEE? (#4)**
- c. **V2-3 They start pushing in on him**, so he looked around and saw some guys by their fishing boats nearby
 - i. He just climbs in one and asks one the men, Simon Peter, to push out a little into the water so he could keep teaching the crowds w/o them squishing him
- d. **WHICH BOAT IS RIGHT? (#2)**
 - i. Here's what one of those boats would have looked like
- e. Actually found one of these from the time of JC buried in mud of Sea of Galilee
 - i. Popularly Called the Jesus Boat, discovered in 1986
 - ii. 27ft long, about as long as a London , double decker bus
 - iii. Can go see it in museum there – Ben saw it
- f. **Then, after he was done teaching the crowds, v4, JC turned to Simon and said go out into the deep water and try to catch more fish.**
 - i. Wait, is Jesus a fisherman?
 - ii. **V5 Simon says, we just got done fishing all night.** And we know what we're doing. There won't be any fish out there.

- iii. But I'll do it if you say so.
 1. **Do you see what Simon did here?**
 2. Its like when you talk to your parents. And you think they don't know what they're talking about.
 3. But at the end, you have to decide to obey them or not.
 4. **Simon Peter decided to obey Jesus, even though he thought he knew better.**
 5. THAT'S THE BEGINNING OF FAITH YALL!
 6. Jesus LOVES that
 7. Let's see what happens
- g. **V6-7 Well then they immediately catch so much fish that their nets start to break and their boats start to sink!!!!**
 - i. That's a LOT of fish
 1. --- **PASS OUT GOLDFISH**
 - ii. Simon was wrong... Jesus was right! Good thing Simon obeyed JC!
- h. **Then Simon does something strange**
 - i. In the middle of his boats starting to sink and the fish spilling out everywhere and the other men freaking out trying to save it all, What does peter do?
 1. Does he go help them with the fish?
 2. Nope
 3. What does he do
- i. **V8 He goes and bows down in front of Jesus and tells him he's not worthy to be close to JC**
 - i. In that culture, saying go away from me, wasn't because he didn't like JC and didn't want to play
 - ii. It's because he realized who JC was... at least in part
 1. That JC was clearly a man with power from God
 2. And that he, Simon, was a sinful man.... And shouldn't be close to a holy God
- j. **What does JC say?**
 - i. Is he mad at Simon?
 - ii. Does he say, you're right, you're a sinner, move back a little?
 - iii. **Nope, he kindly says, v10, Don't Be afraid**
 - iv. You're a good fisherman. But from now on, if you want to follow me, I'll teach you to do something even GREATER with your life..... I'll teach you to catch men
 1. **Another metaphor reversal here**
 - a. *Normally, catching fish is somewhat negative for the fish*
 - i. *Its to pull them from their real home and cut them open so they can be consumed*
 - b. *Instead, he flips it into a positive sense! You'll catch men so that you can help them come to their TRUE home, and so that they might live and rejoice*
- k. **Theres one final part here that's important.**
 - i. Last week we learned about Jesus' teaching about loving our enemies. And at the end of that Jesus says **it's not enough to just hear my words, you have to obey them.** It's not enough to just hear my call, my invitation for you to follow me, you have to actually come follow him.
 - ii. JC just specifically invited Simon Peter to follow him.
 1. WHAT'S PETER GOING TO DO?
 - iii. **V11, THEY (not just peter... also James and John, brothers who worked with him) left EVERYTHING and followed JC.**

1. THAT'S when it happened.
2. That would have been a pretty scary decision. To leave their jobs and livelihoods to follow JC

I. OK so in summary, Jesus meets some blue collar fishermen and said I WANT YOU ON MY TEAM

- i. And these because the first followers of Jesus!
- ii. Not influential men.
- iii. Not much power or money
- iv. Not too impressive
- v. Not much obvious ministry skills
- vi. And they smelled like fish
- vii. But JC saw something deeper.... Saw Simon humble himself rightly before Jesus. He knew he was a sinful man... didn't try to deny it. But JUMPED at the opportunity to follow JC anyways.
 1. THAT'S the kind of human God loves to use

6. Story #2 – Jesus does something CRAZY (hand out 2nd coloring sheet) ch 5:27-32

- a. **V 27 some time after this, JC was walking around and saw a tax collector named Levi (also called Matthew), sitting at his tax booth.**
- b. Do you all know anything about tax collectors?
 - i. Do you parents ever talk about paying taxes? Do they like it?
 - ii. In those days taxes were way way worse.
 - iii. The people of Israel were under Roman occupation. And Rome required them to pay taxes to Caesar.
 1. Jews HATED this:
 - a. 1 because it reminded them they were not free
 - b. 2 because they believed they were only supposed to pay taxes to GOD through their temple tax. It felt WRONG to pay to Caesar (who thought he was a god!)
 - c. And 3 because the taxes were super high
 2. Rome collected these taxes through tax collectors. These were JEWS! Who betrayed their people and worked for their oppressors.
 - a. And what's more, they would collect WAY WAY more money than they needed to. So they'd give some to Rome and then just keep the rest.
 - iv. So **tax collectors were perhaps the most hated people in all Israel.** Normal Jews HATED tax collectors. Though they were the worst of all criminals. Wanted them dead. They'd never want to be friends with someone like this. They'd reject him every chance they got.
- c. And here JC sees a tax collector at his booth. IN THE MIDDLE OF taking money from people.
- d. **What's JC going to do?**
 - i. His band of followers with him, watching.
 - ii. HOPING JC will let him HAVE IT!
 - iii. Maybe JC will chew him out! Yell at him and tell him how terrible he is.
 - iv. Or Maybe JC will fight him. Kill him! Show everyone what happens to Jews who betray God and do evil to others.
 1. **JC does something NO ONE expects.**
 - v. **He moves toward him and invites him to become one of his followers!**
 1. WHAT?
 2. This guy?
 3. The worst most hated of all people around here?

4. He could NEVER follow God's Messiah.
 5. Why would God even want him???
 6. Isn't God MAD at him?
 - vi. What comes next is equally amazing and important: immediately **Levi stands up, leaves everything behind, and follows JC.**
 1. **EXACTILY as Peter had done!**
 - e. Can you imagine what JC's followers were thinking? Were they excited about JC's new pick?
 - i. Did they slap him on the back and welcome him in to the group?
 - ii. I bet not.
 - iii. I bet they moved far away, shot him angry looks.
 - f. **But then, to make matters worse, Levi throws JC a huge party!** He's so excited! And he invites ALL his tax collector sinner friends to come meet JC!
 - i. JC, you've got to draw the line here. Right?
 - ii. You can't go there. Maybe you'll let him hang around, follow you. But you won't follow HIM into his house and join his sinners party, effectively telling EVERYONE that you're his friend and that you like him. Right?
 - g. Nope, **JC surprises everyone again, including his disciples, by happily accepting this invitation, and going to this sinners party.**
 - i. More pharisees come by and grumble with the disciples outside, HOW CAN YOUR MASTER be here at this party, with THESE bad people?
 - h. JC overhears and says he's the Great Doctor, who came to call everyone who KNOWS THEY'RE SICK to him so he can heal them.
 - i. **It's a not-so-subtle jab at these pharisees who DON'T THINK THEY NEED JC.** DON'T know about their sick sinful hearts. And how greatly they need healing on the inside.
 - i. **JC loves to have folks follow him who know they need JC.** Who recognize their sin and are willing to humble themselves in repentance before JC.
7. What a crew JC is rounding up! What a ragtag group of UNLIKELY FOLLOWERS!
- a. **By the next chapter 6: 12-16, we have JC picking an inner circle of his disciples to learn closest to him. Choose 12 them to be apostles. (HAND OUT 3rd COLORING SHEET)**
 - i. In this group we have:
 1. 8 regular guys from backwater Galilee
 2. 7 blue collar fishermen
 3. 3 Zealots – fervent, violent religious fanatics who wanted to overthrow Roman oppression
 4. 1 hated tax collector, a Jewish traitor with Rome (who would be HATED by the zealots)
 5. 1 Jew who would become the worst traitor of all times
 6. And 0 religious elite
 - b. **Later in Ch 8 1-3: And the twelve were with him, ²and also some women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out, ³and Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's household manager, and Susanna, and many others, who provided for them out of their means.**
 - i. Not just men, but women too!
 - ii. Not just any women, but women who used to be possessed by lots of demons!
 - iii. Women married to the household manager of Herod (who executed JtB and later handed JC back to Pilate to be executed)

8. **That's not quite the A Team folks** would have expected the God of the Universe become a man to choose for his Ministry Team.
- a. **Yet it's THEM who choose to follow JC**
 - b. It's THEM who recognized their great need for JC, for his healing and forgiveness
 - c. It's THEM who God would use to reach the entire world with his great message of love
 - i. God's CRAZY love that would lead him to die for his enemies.
 - d. ITS THEM who learned to love and forgive one another. Who formed the foundation of the early church
 - e. Who would take the message out from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth
 - f. With the exception of Judas Iscariot, the traitor who sold JC to be executed for money, all of these would encounter VIOLENT opposition for their message of Jesus
 - i. And of these, all excited John would be martyred for their faith in JC. And John would be imprisoned on a prison island.
9. **Who follows JC isn't always who you'd expect**
- a. Often its those who you'd dismiss who end up being GREAT in the kingdom of God.
 - i. The awkward annoying girl who God uses for incredible things!
 - ii. The walking dead rag tag group of sickies who end up leading everyone to safety
 - b. That's the church!
 - i. **A group of messy, messed up, sinner folks, many of whom HATE each other.**
 - ii. Diverse folks who don't normally mesh:
 1. Jocks and nerds! (which do you think I'd be??? :)
 2. Rich and poor
 3. Singles and Married folks
 4. Married couples with no kids, Married couples WITH tons of kids
 5. Homeschool families, public school families, Christian School fams
 6. Folks who cant eat dairy, folks who will pound 3 milkshakes and not even burp
 7. Republicans and democrats
 - a. Folks who voted for Trump!
 - b. Folks who voted for Hillary!
 - c. Libertarians, folks who didn't vote!
 8. Religious Conservatives, liberals
 9. Foreigners, locals
 10. Ascetics and Hedonists
 11. Folks who engage with culture, folks who want to protect themselves from culture
 12. Folks who watch the 720 club, and folks who love Breaking Bad
 13. Goodie goodies and blatant sinners
 14. Folks who come from all over the map in their understanding of their own identities and what really matters
 - iii. **But we're all gathered together into a family because we are all following Jesus.**
 - iv. **And he's teaching us to love our enemies.**
 1. Starting with one another
 2. And on out into every corner of our world.
 - c. **Jesus loves to love the unlovable (repeat) ← SLIDE**
 - i. The ones other people just love to hate
 - ii. The outcast
 - iii. The sick and dirty

- iv. The criminals and evildoers
- v. The oppressed and downtrodden
- vi. The poor, the unpopular, the uncool, the dorks
- vii. And also the rich and powerful who know how dead they still are inside.
 - 1. The popular kid who knows deep down that no one really knows him or loves him for who he really is
- viii. Those with secrets, dark pasts, hidden sins
 - 1. Those who KNOW HOW NEEDY THEY ARE

d. That's who JC wants on his team

- i. And he's AMAZING at taking folks like that, and making them shine like stars
- ii. Taking the weak and helpless and the forgotten and lifting THEM up, building his Kingdom on THEIR shoulders.

e. Blessed are you, he says, for YOURS is the KINGDOM of Heaven.

10. Folks our churches should be filled with THESE kind of people

- a. Folks who are MESSED UP and know it.
- b. Folks who are holding on to Christ for dear life.
- c. Folks who are PAINFULLY in process
- d. Folks who step on other peoples toes. Rub you the wrong way.
 - i. Folks who annoy the HECK out of you
- e. Because God is still drawing the sick to himself for healing
 - i. And he's still teaching his followers to love their enemies.
- f. We long to be a church that's real and messy like this.**
 - i. Diverse!
 - ii. Were to be a hospital for sinners.
 - iii. Where folks don't need to put on airs when we come together
 - 1. Pretend everything's going fine
 - 2. Pretend they're not struggling with life
 - 3. Pretend they're better than they are
 - iv. But where we can all be freed by Christ to be honest about who we are and what we're struggling with
 - v. To be a place where we can risk really knowing and being known.
 - vi. Where we can practice loving one another like HE does.
 - 1. Where His special brand of grace can play out
 - 2. Where a lifestyle of repentance can be really lived out

g. Who do you hope comes to our church? ←

- i. Wealthy folks who can help us meet budget?
- ii. Good solid Christian families who are all put together and can teach a kids class?
- iii. Or are we hoping for messy, broken, sinful folk who will need a LOT of help?

h. How does God want to recalibrate your "They might want to follow Jesus" radar?

- i. At the end of the day, Jesus says it's the folks who realize their need who are most primed to come to Him
- ii. And those who are doing pretty well, who are least in tune with the deep illness who are often least apt to come to Christ for treatment.

i. Which of your friends, classmates, coworkers, neighbors, might seem least interested in the Gospel, but might actually be close to the Kingdom? Who do you need to see differently?

11. Jesus loves to flip things on their heads. His is truly the upside down kingdom. The Great there are often those who seem last in line here.
 - a. Lets continue to follow Him with open eyes for those HE has eyes for. Those on the outside, those who don't have much, those who are really messy.
 - b. Who knows what God might do as we move toward people like THAT with the Good News of Christ?

12. Call to response:

As we close, perhaps you're hearing the call to follow Jesus tonight and have never decided to do so.

- a. **Remember, its not enough to hear of Jesus' love and his invitation to follow him, you have to actually accept that invitation.**
- b. The scriptures assure us that God wants all to be saved
 - i. John 3:16
 - ii. 1 Tim 2:2
- c. Whether you're young or old, whether you've grown up in church, or maybe this is your first time in a church meeting
 - i. But never really responded to Jesus' call for you to follow Him for your life.
 - ii. To come to HIM for salvation, forgiveness, and healing
- d. **Maybe you've never really understood the Good News of the Gospel**
 - i. That even though we're all sinners, separated from God and utterly unable to save ourselves
 - ii. God moved toward us IN CHRIST, and offers us forgiveness and adoption! in to his family because of what Jesus did on the Cross.
- e. **If that's you why wait?**
 - i. **Respond now to Jesus. All you have to do is believe in Him.**
 1. That he is who he says he is
 2. And that you need him as bad as he says you do
- f. **Tell God in a prayer what you believe about him and about your need.**
- g. Many find it helpful to talk with and pray with others for this.
 - i. **We've got a few folks in the back** who would love to talk with you and pray with you if you'd like. – Ricky and Amalie
 - ii. So if that's you, we'd encourage you to head to the back during our time of singing.

13. Pray and invite band up

CHOPPING BLOCK

14. These next 2 stories we'll go through a bit quicker
15. #2: v 12-16 – JC meets a man who's VERY sick.
- a. Full of leprosy – skin and nervous system conditions
 - b. Very catchy! - so folks did NOT want to be around them
 - i. They were outcasts.
 - ii. Always alone
 - iii. No one to care for them. No one to touch them.
 - iv. When they would come close to anyone, they were required to announce UNCLEAN UNCLEAN! So everyone could run away.
 - c. Can you imagine what it might have been life for them?
 - d. Anyways, someone like this came to JC and bowed down humble in front of JC (just like PETER did)
 - i. I know you can heal me! Would you heal me please!?
 - ii. He's BEGGING Jesus to heal him. He KNOWS he's sick. Has NO OTHER HOPE
 - iii. And what does JC do?
 1. Does He run away?
 2. Does he cover his nose and talk to him from a safe distance?
 - iv. Nope, Jesus stays close to him, and reaches out his hand, and touched him.
 1. Something no one had done for him in years
 - e. And he says to the man, I'd LOVE to heal you. BE CLEAN!
 - f. And IMMEDIATELY the man was healed.
 - g. And the man went and told EVERYONE HE KNEW about what JC had done for him
 - h. We know from other stories that Jesus' disciples included many whom JC had healed of their diseases.
 - i. So this man is most likely one of those who decided to follow His Great Doctor!
 - i. In summary: We see JC moving toward a social outcast, a dirty diseased man. And he touches him with compassion and invites him in to his kingdom.
 - i. Really? A dirty sicko? Are you sure that's who you want, JC?
16. #3: Jesus heals another man
- a. This time it's someone who couldn't walk. His legs were broken, and wouldn't ever heal.
 - b. JC was teaching another big crowd in someone's house
 - c. And everyone knew about it.
 - d. There was a group of friends in that town, and one of them was a cripple. He couldn't walk. His legs wouldn't work. So he had to be carried everywhere. Couldn't work. Couldn't feed himself. And most folks thought it's because God was mad at him (or maybe his parents) for something really bad they did.
 - i. We don't know his name, so let's call this crippled man Zach.
 - e. Zach's friends ran to his house, and picked up the four corners of his mat, and began carrying him as fast as they could to Jesus.
 - i. Wouldn't you like GOOD friends like that??
 - f. Anyways when they got close the crowd was so big they couldn't get anywhere near JC inside the house.
 - i. So did they come to their senses, realize it was hopeless, and head back home?
 - ii. No way!
 - iii. They did something bold, brash, even maybe a little bad
 - g. They climbed up on top of the house (many back then actually had built in stairs on the outside so family could climb up and rest on their cool flat roofs at night, and watch the stars)

- i. They climbed up, carried their friend up.
- ii. And broke open a hole in the roof!!!!
 - 1. Can you imagine that????
- iii. They knew they'd get in trouble for this. But they were willing to take whatever consequence might come if it just meant they could get their friend to JC... get him healed.
- h. So as the crowd looked up and Jesus stopped teaching, as clay and straw fell from the ceiling, they slowly lowered their friend down through the roof on his mat..... and plopped him right in front of Jesus.
 - i. WHATS JESUS GOING TO DO?
 - ii. Is he going to be mad?
 - iii. Is he going to politely ask them to wait outside like everyone else?
- i. Nope, when he saw their faith (all of them!), how much they really believed that JC could heal their friend, he did something incredible.
 - i. He not only healed Zach's legs, so that he stood up IMMEDIATELY,
 - ii. But he also forgave his sins.....
 - 1. JC knew that Zech was sicker than just his legs. His heart was sick with sin.
 - 2. So his greatest need for healing was in his HEART!
 - iii. So he was a great doctor. Didn't just heal his legs, he healed his heart too.
- j. ISNT THIS INCREDIBLE!
 - i. JC heals Zech, physically AND spiritually, and honored the friends in front of everyone!
- k. But there's one more part of the story folks often miss:
 - i. There were a bunch of Pharisees in the audience. These were the Jewish religious leaders of that day. The preachers. The church staff.
 - ii. The folks most people would expect would be FIRST IN LINE to follow Jesus.
 - iii. But these guys are MAD at JC
 - 1. They didn't believe in him. Didn't want to follow him.
- l. So in summary, we see it's the bold faith of a group of friends, including a paralyzed man who most folks thought did something bad, its THEM who receive JC's healing and rejoice in his kingdom, while the religious leaders just get mad

Upside-Down Disciples/Citizenship (w/ kids in CG)

2019-2-24

5:1-6:16

5:1-11 Jesus Calls Peter, catcher of men, James and John come too

5:12-16: JC cleanses a leper FULL of leprosy (an outcast)

5:17-26: JC heals paralytic (thru ceiling), crowds glorified God, Religious leaders angry

5:27-32 JC Calls Levi (Matthew), sinners party at Levi's house, religious leaders angry

6:6-11: JC heals man w/ withered hand, Religious leaders furious

6:12-16: JC calls 12 apostles (Matthew name changed), includes mixed crowd, blue collar w/ rich tax collector, violent zealots (w/ roman collaborator, Matthew), and Judas, who would become traitor!

Jesus' band not who you'd expect. Instead of religious leaders (who continually reject and despise JC), we have a motley crew of misfits. Some of them hated each other. Rich and poor. Political extremes. And one who would invite Satan into his heart and become the greatest traitor of all time. Also assume broader disciples band included those he healed and cleansed: demonically possessed, outcasts w/ leprosy, paralytic (popular thought is his infirmity is a result of his or his parents sin)

These are NOT the rocking and rolling elite of society. The poor, the marginalized, the outcast, and sinners. These are who Jesus called. These are who chose to follow JC.

It's THESE who Jesus placed together in a family (initially as his band of disciples, and later in the body of Christ, the church). These who have nothing in common. Who often hated one another. Were rejected and despised by their society. And they had to learn to actually, really, love one another.

Said another way, it's THESE rejects who he invites INTO HIS KINGDOM. Citizens together in a NEW KINGDOM that's already and not yet. Here and Still Coming.