

# The Gospel According to St. Luke

## Middle school Ministry



# Introduction

**The 4 Gospels comparison**

	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
To whom it was written	Jews	Romans	Greeks	Christians
Subject	The Messiah the king	The Messiah the conqueror of Satan	Christ the lover of mankind	Christ the Incarnate Word
Main message of Jesus	Fulfills the Law	Performs wonders	Saves mankind	Dwells among us
Gospel content	Focuses on prophecies	Focuses on deeds	Focused on history	Focused on theology
Symbol	The human face	The lion	The Ox	The Eagle

**Symbols of the Four Gospels**

**Matthew**  
Winged Man  
**Mark**  
Winged Lion  
**Luke**  
Winged Ox  
**John**  
Eagle

## 1- Servant's preparation:

- 1) Explanation of the gospel of St Luke chapters 1-12 and an introduction for Bishop Yousef  
<https://www.suscpts.org/diocese/bishop/bible-study/holy-gospel-according-to-st-luke/>
- 2) A link for Fr. Doud Lamei 's bible study in Arabic  
[https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLHedjI0\\_e2nk5yEwV9kLxOBn-oJwCt5OK](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLHedjI0_e2nk5yEwV9kLxOBn-oJwCt5OK)
- 3) The reference book for Fr. Tadros Malaty → see separate attachment
- 4) Upper room app → Sermons → Bible study → Luke , you will find sermons for each chapter, links provided at the beginning of each lesson below.
- 4) Two illustrative videos that could be used by servants to prepare or to show at the beginning of each unit.
  - Part 1 [chapter 1-9]  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XIb\\_dClxzo0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XIb_dClxzo0)
  - Part 2 [10-24]  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=26z\\_KhwNdd8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=26z_KhwNdd8)

## 2- Book introduction:



### A- Who is St. Luke?

- ❖ The word “Luke” is probably an abbreviation of the Latin word “Lucanus” or “Lucuis”, which means ‘the carrier of the light’ or ‘the enlightened’.
- ❖ He is the only one among the writers for the Testament who was not a Jew, but a Gentile
- ❖ St. Luke was a doctor, a painter, and a Gentile from Antioch. He accepted Christianity at the hands of St. Paul the apostle and became his companion on his numerous journeys.
- ❖ He met St. Paul on his second missionary journey in Troas and accompanied him to Philippi. Then, he joined him again on his third journey heading to Jerusalem. It appears that he may have stayed in Palestine during the two years’ imprisonment of St. Paul in Caesarea. They also travelled to preach in Rome together (Acts 28:30).
- ❖ He was not one of the disciples, nor one of the apostles.
- ❖ It came by oral tradition that he had painted the first picture of the Virgin Mary.
- ❖ He departed in Bithynia at an old age. Some say that he was martyred during the reign of Nero at age 84.

### B- Characteristics:

- ❖ He wrote this Gospel and the Book of Acts to an Alexandrian nobleman named **Theophilus** (Luke 1:3), calling him “most excellent”, which is a special title for one who holds an important position within the Roman Empire. Some say that Theophilus is one of these three:
  1. He might be someone whose name the apostles did not want to mention, instead, calling him Theophilus which means ‘he who loves God’ in order not to reveal his identity and cause him harm.
  2. Or someone who truly bore this name. The apostle wrote him the Gospel of truth (the Gospel of St. Luke) to understand the Church and its mission (the Acts), in order to attract him to the faith rather than resist the Church.
  3. Luke was a doctor and a servant; he may have treated his own master before setting him free. In order to show his gratitude and give the most precious thing he could offer; he wrote him the gospel of our Lord Jesus and the history of the first Church
- ❖ St Luke did not meet Jesus in person but believed later when he met St Paul. In order to record accurate details about the whole story of Jesus, he interviewed eyewitnesses like St Mary and the disciples and may be main characters he wrote about like the Samaritan and Zacchaeus to be able to collect accurate and reliable understanding of all things and document them for all generations in a perfectly historical way.
- ❖ Picture a scientist going about some great work. He or she is searching for the cure for some horrible disease or making some marvelous new discovery. First the scientist digs for facts, looking deeply, studying carefully, investigating every clue, relentlessly hunting for any and every fact that will make the discovery deeper, richer, and more accurate.

- ❖ Similarly, in this study, we are going to look at Jesus through the eyes of those who actually witnessed Him, and then told their story. That is what a witness is: a person who sees or experiences something, then tells others what he or she has seen.

### C- The Time for his writing

- There is no sure tradition regarding the time of this writing or its site. St. Irianus thinks it was written before the martyrdom of St. Paul.
- Since the gospel was written before the book of Acts, and the book of Acts was written before the martyrdom of St. Paul the apostle, therefore many believe that it was written between the **year 63 and 67 AD.**

### D- Its Aim:

- ❖ ***This Gospel was recorded for the Greeks***, who are known for their own philosophy and literature, which is why it was written in a refined and poetic style.
- ❖ ***He offered Jesus to the Greeks as a Lover of mankind***, who cares for the educated and uneducated, the philosopher and the unwise, the rich and the poor, the Jew and the Gentile, the man, the woman and the child. St. Luke presented Christ to the Gentile world as a Mean to find their inner happiness and joy. He began the Gospel with joy with announcing [the birth of Jesus] and concluded it with joy [Jesus rose from the dead]; something the Greek legends and philosophies lacked.
- ❖ Jesus Christ came as a Friend to support us; praying in many places: (3:21; 6:12; 9:18, 29; 22:39-46), and teaching about praying (Our salvation is not philosophy).



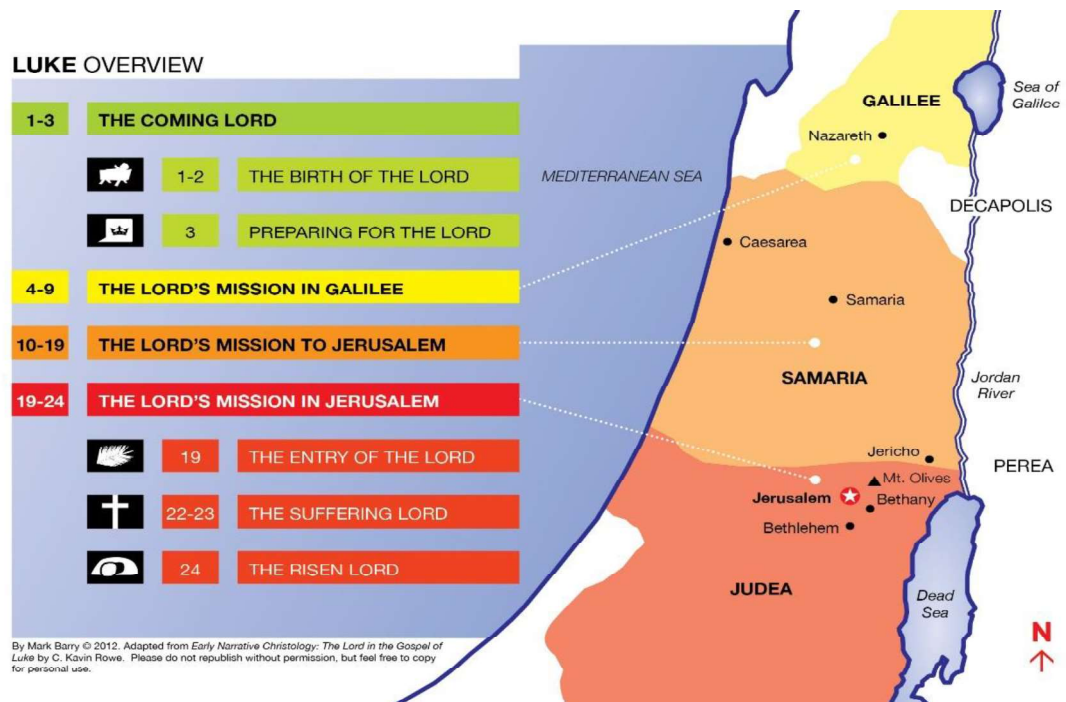
### E- Why do we symbolize this gospel as an OX?

The ox associated with the Gospel of Luke fits well since it speaks to the great sacrifice of Jesus, and the ox was an important animal for sacrifice as required in the Torah.

### 3- Book outline

Its sections:

1. Unit 1: Our Friend became like us and was tempted like us, **chapters 1-4**
2. Unit 2: Our Friend feels our suffering, **chapters 5-18**
3. Unit 3: Our faithful Friend, **chapters 19-23**
4. Unit 4: Our Friend, the Risen from the dead, **chapter 24**



## Unit 1: [3 lessons]

### Our Friend became like us and was tempted like us chapters 1-4

St Luke presents the Son of God as a Friend, One that we can befriend not fear.

1. Introduction (**Chapter 1** v 1-4).
2. The promise of the Baptist to Zachariah and Elizabeth (v.5-25).
3. Meeting Elizabeth (v.26-38).
4. The birth of John (v.57-80).
5. The birth of Christ (**Chapter 2**)
6. The shepherds meet Him (v.8-20).
7. The circumcision of Jesus (v.21).
8. His entrance to the temple (v.22-40).
9. Jesus challenging the Jewish elders (v.41-52).
10. His baptism (**Chapter 3**) and the genealogy of Christ (v.23-37).
11. Jesus was tempted before beginning His ministry at Galilee (**Chapter 4**)

# Chapter 1

## Servant's preparation:

A sermon from Upper room app bible study about chapter 1

<https://subsplash.com/upperroommedia/lb/mi/+nkahjqy>

## Brief introduction:

At the beginning of each lesson, please mention this book overview.

- ✓ Who is St. Luke? He was a doctor, a painter, and a Gentile from Antioch. He accepted Christianity at the hands of St. Paul the apostle later after resurrection.
- ✓ Who did he write his gospel to? The Greek after collecting testimonies from eyewitnesses to accurately record all details of Jesus's life.
- ✓ What is the main message of the book? ***St Luke offered Jesus to the Greeks as a Lover of mankind***, who cares for the educated and uneducated, the philosopher and the unwise, the rich and the poor, the Jew and the Gentile, the man, the woman and the child.

## Main points in the Chapter:

1. An introduction to the book 1-4
2. The good news to Zacharias of John's birth 5-17
3. Zacharias' dumbness 18-25
4. The Annunciation of the Divine Incarnation 26-38
5. Mary's Encounter with Elizabeth 39-45
6. The Virgin's hymn of Praise 46-56
7. John's Birth and the Circumcision 57-66
8. Zacharias the priest's Prophecy 67-80

## Lesson overview:

Please go over main events of the chapter briefly as follows

The gospel of St. Luke started with a short introduction that mentioned how, why and to whom was the book written. We explained that in the previous introduction.

### **John the Baptist's birth: 1-25**

- Because St. Luke was a man of science, being a physician, he clearly defined the date of the event of John's birth
- Even though that time, there was corruption and there were no prophecies for 3 centuries, God saw Zacharias and Elizabeth, noticed their righteousness, and honored them to get John the forerunner before the Christ.

- In this conversation that occurred between the archangel Gabriel and Zacharias the priest inside the Altar, we notice that Zacharias did not believe the angel's words, in spite of seeing the angel and listening to the angelic voice in a tangible way which made him blameworthy of it, particularly because the holy history mentions living examples of elderly people who begot children whereas their wives was barren, such as Sarah, Abraham's wife for not having children.
- In (Luke 1: 17) "And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah". The Scholar Oreganus comments on this statement saying, "He did not say in the soul of Elijah, but rather 'in the spirit of Elijah and his power'. The spirit that dwelt in Elijah also dwelt in John, and the power in Elijah was also in John.
- The archangel declared himself that he is Gabriel, he came carrying the divine promise and the good news, but he also had to discipline Zacchaeus with dumbness as God commanded.

### **The Annunciation of the Divine Incarnation 26-38**

- God chose a virgin who is betrothed to a man [engaged but for the Jews, it is like married without physical union]. God's choice was perfect because Jesus had to come from a virgin but if she were seen pregnant without being married, people would stone her thinking she was a sinner.
- The Holy Spirit came on her to sanctify her womb and start her conception, this happened the minute she agreed to accepting the assignment of being the mother of God. Her obedience opposes Eve's disobedience. She was more obedient than Zacchaeus who questioned the angel.

### **Mary's Encounter with Elizabeth 39-45.**

- The virgin St. Mary has now carried in herself He who carries the burdens of the world, and He who provides for everything, she did not worry about what is hers, but rather in the receiving spirit, she hastened to the hills to the city of Judah, so as to serve Elizabeth.

### **The Virgin's Hymn of Praise 46-56**

- When Elizabeth's tongue was released in blessings to the Virgin because she has believed the promises and has carried the Word of God in her womb; likewise did the Virgin's tongue began do praise God.

### **John's Birth and the Circumcision 57-66**

- John's birth became a preaching sermon, though it had begun mysteriously, but the Lord has become a companion to him so as to support him; for God took John to the wilderness while young, and there He took care of him and raised him, so that he appears to Israel at the appropriate due time.

### **Goal we learn: [Submit to God's will]**

In this chapter, we have many points to learn from, but we will focus on St Mary and her submissive response to the angel. **"Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word."** Luke 1:38

## Unit 2: Our Friend Feels Our Suffering [10 lessons]

### Chapters 5-18

Christ came to us as a Friend, aware of our weaknesses and feeling our pain:

1. He is the Friend and the Lover of all mankind, and not just the Jews. Healing the ten Samaritan lepers (17:11). Healing the Roman officer's servant (7:1-10). The parable of the good Samaritan, who was more compassionate than the priest.
2. Friend to both genders: He highlighted the role and significance of women in our Church (St. Mary, Elizabeth, the sinner woman, etc.)
3. His friendship is filled with kindness and compassion for:
  - a. The sick (4:38-40; 5:12-14; 6:6-10, 19; 7:1-10 etc.).
  - b. Those bound by the devil (4:33-37; 6:18; 8:26-36).
  - c. The sorrowful (raising the son of the widow of Nain) (7:11-16).
  - d. The sinners (calling the tax collectors (Ch. 5) and receiving the sinful woman (Ch. 7).
4. He corrects the fallacies such as: not doing good on the Sabbath (Ch. 6), answering those who criticized the Baptist (Ch. 7), the meaning of brotherhood (Ch. 10), taking time to meditate, (Ch. 10), escaping hypocrisy (Ch. 11), from literalism of the Law (Ch. 11), from attachments to all that is material (Ch. 14), and loving the sin, but not sinners (Ch. 15).
5. He ascends with His friends to the top of Mount Tabor to reveal to His disciples His glory, and grant them unity with those who died in God (Ch. 9) and show them the inner glory and grace of the heart (17:21).
6. The Heavenly rejoice in the return of His friends to His embrace: there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than for ten righteous persons who need no repentance." (Luke 15:7)





# Chapter 5

## Servant's preparation:

A sermon from upper room app about Luke 5

<https://subsplash.com/upperroommedia/lb/mi/+zqq6pmu>

## Brief introduction:

At the beginning of each lesson, please mention this book overview.

- ✓ Who is St. Luke? He was a doctor, a painter, and a Gentile from Antioch. He accepted Christianity at the hands of St. Paul the apostle later after resurrection.
- ✓ Who did he write his gospel to? The Greek after collecting testimonies from eyewitnesses to accurately record all details of Jesus's life.
- ✓ What is the main message of the book? ***St Luke offered Jesus to the Greeks as a Lover of mankind***, who cares for the educated and uneducated, the philosopher and the unwise, the rich and the poor, the Jew and the Gentile, the man, the woman and the child.

## Remember:

Last lesson focused on the concern of Jesus Christ for the poor, the helpless, and the outcasts. Let us learn from Him how to accept others and invite the untouchable. Jesus chose to spend most of His time among the common people, including the poor, the sick, and the outcasts of society. He intervened in these people's lives, touching, and healing them. We saw Jesus' love for the poor and oppressed and His activity on their behalf. We learned how to welcome others into church and engage those who have no one to talk to in our friend's groups.

## Main points in the Chapter:

1. The fish Catch 1 - 11
2. Cleansing the Leper 12-16
3. Healing of the Paralytic 17- 26
4. Calling Levi, the Tax Collector 27-32
5. Declaring the New Wine 33-39

## Lesson overview:

Please go over main events of the chapter briefly as follows

- ❖ St. Luke has many short stories in this chapter, he starts by the Jesus in Peter's boat and miracle of catching fish which we will talk about in details.
- ❖ Jesus then met a leper who gave us a great lesson in prayers, he asked Jesus "Lord, if You are willing, you can make me clean". The leper taught us that when we request something in prayer, we should

ask if it is according to God's will, then we would be happy to get our request otherwise we don't need it because we understand that God knows what is best for us.

- ❖ Jesus touched the leper who no one could ever touch as it is a highly contagious disease, Jesus showed him extreme love and care.
- ❖ Next miracle was Jesus healing the paralytic man who was brought down from the ceiling by his friends, Jesus declared His deity and that it is much harder to forgive sins than to heal a sick person but He could do both.
- ❖ Levi the tax collector was among a group of people that everyone hated. Jesus again showed us that He came on earth for those who are rejected by everyone. He saw through Levi's heart and found a repentant person that He called him to be one of His closest disciples, who we know as Matthew.
- ❖ Jesus stressed on the fact that He has come as a physician to those who were sick, and not a judge to the sinners. That is why He went to Levi's house among his friends.
- ❖ Finally, answering their question about fasting, He said He has not come to put more load in worshipping. He came first to wipe out what is old and establish what is new. He is crucifying the old man, and is granting a new and spiritual one, that is why we should not put a piece of new garment on an old one. Jesus came to renew the brains that were stuck at the Law of Moses. He did not come to patch the law but renew it with a new law.

### **Goal we learn: [Obedience makes a difference from wastefulness to usefulness]**

In this chapter, we focus on the obedience of Peter when Jesus called him to be a disciple. We learn that following rules is the real freedom not breaking rules. We notice Peter obeyed the small request to throw the net, so he was entrusted with the bigger assignment, to be a fisher of men. We notice many things could keep us from obeying Godlike friends or distractions but yet we should see how wonderful the blessings we get when we obey God, so we know how to keep our lives worth a lot more than we think.



### **Lesson delivery idea**

#### **Introductory story:**

- ❖ She wanted to help, and so, because she was a nurse, she joined eighteen other medically trained people and journeyed to a poverty-stricken third-world country to help alleviate suffering.
- ❖ After working sixteen hours every day for two weeks, the clinic doors closed. Utterly exhausted, she headed toward the bus for home. Glancing up, she saw hundreds upon hundreds of sick and injured people waiting outside the clinic for treatment they would never receive. She began to weep.
- ❖ "What's wrong?" asked the nurse walking along with her.
- ❖ "We haven't even made a dent in the need. What's the use? Have we done any good at all?"
- ❖ As she turned to enter the bus, a hand tugged at her sleeve. There stood a man she scarcely recognized. Several days before his face had been distended and grotesque from a number of abscessed teeth, his feet so swollen with edema that he couldn't put on his shoes. They'd given him antibiotics and later pulled the abscessed teeth. Now he stood before her - smiling, pain free, with shoes on his feet. He smiled widely, thrust a small bouquet of flowers into her hand, and said simply, "Thank you for saving my life."
- ❖ As the two nurses boarded the bus, the one said to the one who had been crying, "It looks like you made a difference for that one."
- ❖ On the bus, the young nurse glanced out at the now dark harbor and God whispered to her heart, "This is how you make a difference - by treating my little ones - one person at a time."
- ❖ Everyone wants to be useful - to be helpful, to make a difference, to make an impact, to leave the world better than we find it. No one wants to squander their life. To waste it in foolish and trivial pursuits. We want to make that investment that will make an eternal difference. To champion a cause. To bring a little kindness. To promote a needed change. Even if it is only one person at a time, we want to make a difference.

### **I. A story of obedience**

- ❖ Simon was no different. He had been out on the Sea of Galilee all night fishing. As his boat lumbered in from the fishing expedition and his stomach was empty. It had been a frustrating night of much work but no luck. He and the others stretched the nets out on the beach to clean out the sea weeds and debris. He hurried because he was frustrated and ready to go home dreaming of a better tomorrow and hoping for a bigger catch.
- ❖ The cove where Simon and his partners, James, and John, docked their boats was a picturesque site. This serene, little inlet protected the boats from the winds. Simon was fortunate that his family had claimed years before this ideal location.
- ❖ As the fishermen were placing the now cleaned and dried nets back onto their boats, Simon looked up as a throng of people were walking toward the boats. And out in front was a slender, yet ruggedly handsome man, walking with a steady gait. As the crowd got closer, Simon recognized the leader of the pack as Jesus. Earlier Simon had met Jesus. He had witnessed this young prophet heal his mother-in-law of a high fever. There was something special about this man. He was a difference maker.
- ❖ As Jesus arrived at the water's edge he turned and addressed the crowd. He taught them with authority, not as the Pharisees. His explanations of the Scriptures brought the words to life. His message was articulate and captivating. He had a unique way of making the common and ordinary into significant meaning. People were inspired and moved by his message.

- ❖ So much so that the crowd grew larger and larger on this cool morning. As they pressed for room to hear this teacher the crowd was now forcing Jesus into the shallow water at the edge of the cove. Simon and the others had perfect seats, in their boats, away from the crowds. Jesus seeing an opportunity asked Simon if he use his boat as a platform. "Simon, if you row out a way, then everyone can see and hear." Simon agreed. From this vantage point Jesus continued the lesson.
- ❖ Picture in your minds the scene: The crowd on the beach and banks that enclose this harbor while Jesus is setting in a boat teaching. Where was Simon? Simon was in the boat with Jesus. Simon was a captive audience.
- ❖ Was that the only reason for making the request of Simon? Why had Jesus come to this cove, at this time of the morning? Jesus wanted an audience with Simon. Jesus wanted Simon to hear this message. The crowd was bystanders. While they did not know it, there was a conference between Simon and Jesus.
- ❖ As Simon sat there spell bound, Jesus quickly brought his talk to a stirring conclusion and said to Simon, "Let's go fishing. Launch out into the deep and let down the nets." Notice that Jesus is not suggesting obedience; he is demanding it.
- ❖ "Jesus," Simon hesitated, "we've been fishing all night. But, because you say so, I will do it."
- ❖ Notice what Simon did not say. He did not say, "Jesus, don't you tell me how to fish. I'm a professional. You're an amateur." He didn't say, "Jesus you stick to preaching and I'll do the fishing. I know the best fishing spots and the most favorable conditions for making a big catch." He didn't say, "Don't you know that the night is the best time to catch fish on the Sea of Galilee. And the best fishing is in the shallow water along the Sea's edge, not in the deep water." He didn't ask any questions. He didn't listen to his feelings. I'm sure he was dog-tired and ready for a hot breakfast and a warm bed. Simon simply, obeyed.
- ❖ Jesus was still teaching a lesson. Simon did not realize it. But it was a lesson on obedience and difference making. While there are certain rules for fishing, there are rules that are higher. These are God's rules. I believe that all of God's rules are designed to protect us from harming ourselves, to keeping us from hurting others, or to rescue us from wasting our lives. This lesson in usefulness was to keep Simon from wasting his life. It was a test to see if he had what it took to make a difference. In a phrase, God was calling Simon to be a difference maker in the world.
- ❖ Out of respect for the one he knew as "Master," he did as he was asked. And the catch was so large that the other boat had to be summoned for help. In fact, the catch was of such massive proportions that both boats began to sink. The fishermen worked in slack-jawed amazement at what they were viewing. These men had witnessed a miracle. They were in the presence of a true God. Simon knew it. This was no mere man. This Jesus was not simply a preacher with the power to heal; he was Lord of the sea and the fish. Simon threw himself down at the feet of Jesus in fear and trembling.
- ❖ Jesus said to him, "There is no reason to be afraid. But do you want to spend the rest of your life catching fish, or do you want to invest your life in something bigger? You have only one chance to make your life count. You can make a difference in this broken world. What will you do?" Simon pulled his boat to shore still stuffed with the largest catch of fish in his life and walked away from it to follow Jesus. What a story!

## II. Moving beyond wastefulness to usefulness

Found in this story are some truths and insights that will help us to move beyond wastefulness to usefulness, to make a difference in our world. The key is obedience.

### A. *The ticket to freedom is obedience*

- ❖ It's a hard one to swallow. We think we know all there is to know about freedom. We want to believe that we are a liberated people. We learned a long time ago that freedom comes from avoiding the rules, changing the rules, even breaking the rules. But, obedience, following the rules, violates everything we have taught.
- ❖ But for the Christian, freedom comes through yielding our will to God and obeying a set of rules. Jesus stated it clearly, "If you love me, you will obey what I command" (John 14:15). Jesus did not mince words. Obedience to Christ and his words is one of the most distinguishing marks of a Christian. As with Simon, Jesus is not suggesting obedience; he demands it. Following Christ involves another kingdom, the kingdom of God. A kingdom has a king, and a follower is obedient to that king - Jesus. Throughout the Bible there are written commandments, notice very clearly those are commandments not suggestion.

### B. *Obedience demands action*

- ❖ Allow me to state that negatively, never let mere listening substitute for action. Peter had heard the message of Jesus. He was a captive audience. But Jesus as with all of his listeners desired for him to do more than simply listen. He wanted him to act.
- ❖ Remember the story of the tightrope walker who was rolling a wheelbarrow back and forth across Niagara River on a tightrope. Thousands of people were shouting at him on. He put a two-hundred-pound sack of dirt in the wheelbarrow and rolled it over, and then he rolled it back. Then he turned to the crowd and said, "How many of you believe that I can roll a man across?"
- ❖ Everybody shouted! One man in the front row was very excited in his professed belief. The tightrope walker pointed to his excited professor and said, "You're next!"
- ❖ However, the man actually didn't believe it. He said he believed it, he thought he believed it - but he was not willing to get in the wheelbarrow and take the risk.
- ❖ Peter sat in the boat with Jesus. He listened to his words. He believed in him. But now it was time to act. And contrary to the tightrope walker he obeyed.
- ❖ Obedience is faith in action. It is transposing the promises and provisions of Christ's words into service and obedient behavior.
- ❖ Have you ever noticed that in the New Testament that Jesus never said to his hearers believe me? He always urged them "Follow me." In other words, he commands his hearers to get in the wheelbarrow. Don't just say you believe me, don't just say you know me, don't just say "I love you," get in the wheelbarrow and follow me.

BUT BECAUSE  
YOU SAY SO,  
I WILL...  
{LUKE 5:5}



### *C. Obedience calls for moving out of comfort zones*

- ❖ Peter was comfortable fishing at night along the shoreline. But to launch out into the deep during the day, that's another story.
- ❖ Most people live in the shallow waters of life. They simply exist on a superficial level. There's little depth to their lives because they're content to just play around the edge, never going out into deeper water. Why? Because it's safer in shallow water. They think, "If I get out into the deep water there might be some waves. They might rock my boat, and it might overturn. So, I'll just stay back here where it's safe and comfortable and piddle around.
- ❖ God's call to obedience always involves risks, to leave our comfort zones, to step out into the deep. Only those people who are willing to follow their Lord's lead into the deep where the waters are over their heads ever really make a difference.

### *D. Obedience means doing things because Jesus says so, even when it doesn't make sense*

- ❖ There was nothing logical about returning to the open sea and fishing again for Peter. It was absurd. But Jesus say go and Peter said, which I think is the key phrase in this narrative, ". . . because you say so, I will let down the nets" (Luke 5:5).
- ❖ Why can we take Jesus at his word and do what he asks simply because he says so? Because Jesus' perspective is greater than our perspective. God grants to us a limited perspective. Like the headlights reach on a car driven at night. He can see ahead, but only for a short way. Whereas God sees the whole road. Where we've been, where we are now, and where we are going. I can obey him because he sees all and knows all.
- ❖ The most powerful test of obedience is do those things that don't make sense simply because Jesus says so.

### *E. Obedience in a little, leads to opportunity in the big*

- ❖ The fact is Simon had obeyed Jesus. He obeyed him when Jesus asked to use his boat for a pulpit. He obeyed him when Jesus asked him to launch out into the deep. Now, he was in a position for greater

usefulness and difference making by obeying Jesus to catch men for Christ. Jesus was calling Peter to the greatest task of all - sharing the good news of Jesus with other people.

- ❖ Many people want to do something really big for God - the glamorous and attention getting jobs but are unfortunately not obeying God where they are - the menial and behind-the-scenes tasks. Until we are obedient in the little things God can't use us in the big things of life. The reality is that if we are not making a difference for God where we are then in all likelihood, we will not make a difference for God wherever we are.
- ❖ A baseball player knows that one has got to possess the skills to play in the minor leagues before they can play in the big leagues. Any manager knows that an employee must pay the price and perform the job at the entry level before they will be promoted to an upper level.

### III. What's keeping you from obeying?

Peter was kept back from Jesus because he was fishing for food, and he thought that spiritual life should be separated from daily life. However, Jesus taught him that this is not correct. He should be obedient and serve God through his daily life and be a fisher of man and make a big difference.

What about you? What's keeping you from a life of usefulness? A job, a relationship, friends' group or feeling that being a fully devoted follower of Christ is not exciting enough or would hurt your status? Come on be honest, what is standing between you and a life of obedience? What's preventing you from making a difference for eternity's sake?

When it comes to obedience there is no middle ground. Once we have heard the Lord speak, we either act on it or we don't. We either obey or we disobey. What will you do?

### Take home Prayer

Dear Lord, I know you are calling me to follow your commandments every day in my life, I really wish to do just like Peter and say, "at your word, I will let down the net". Let me learn to obey you even if things do not seem convincing but I am sure, You know how to help me through them. I need you to stop living a wasteful life that don't make any difference in my eternity and start living a useful life full of blessings.

#### **Memory Verse:**

**5 "Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing; nevertheless, at Your word I will let down the net"**