

Summer in Galilee #2 – The Call We Follow

Matthew 4:18-22 June 1-2, 2019

Introduction

- A recent study showed that upwards of 15 million adults follow a vegetarian diet in the US
- About 1.6 million are vegan – no animal products at all
- Vegetarians include
 - Vegan: no animal products
 - lacto-vegetarian: will eat dairy products with their fruits and vegetables
 - ovo-vegetarian: will eat eggs with their fruit and vegetables
 - classic vegetarian: fruits and vegetables and animal products so long as it is not the flesh of an animal
 - pescatarian: will eat fish/seafood with their fruit and vegetables
 - polloterrian: will eat poultry – primarily chicken – with their fruits and vegetables
 - flexiterians: will sometimes eat a little meat with their fruits and vegetables
- 84% of vegetarians abandon their diet after 1 year
- What that tells me is that the idea or the call of being a vegetarian sounds great to many people, but most of them want to have it on their own terms.
- Look at Jesus as He calls his first disciples in **Matthew 4:18-22**, first *context* then we break down the *call of Christ*, and the *commitment of the disciples*.
- Pray

Context

- **Matthew 4:12-13, 17** “Now when he heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew into Galilee. And leaving Nazareth he went and lived in Capernaum by the sea ... From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”
- Last week we saw Jesus perform the miracle at the wedding in Cana, this was his first public miracle. By that time, He had been ministering in the southeast near the Jordan River and Jericho where he had been baptized by John the Baptist. He had some people who recognized him as a rabbi and teacher or prophet, but He had not yet begun his formal itinerant ministry going around to different synagogues and teaching, nor had He called his 12 disciples.
- At the arrest of John the Baptist, Matthew tells us that Jesus moved his ministry to Capernaum which is on the north side of the Sea of Galilee, and was also the home of Peter and Andrew and the base of operations for their fishing business with James and John and their father Zebedee.
- And its there at Capernaum that we read out text for today:
- **Matthew 4:18-22** “While walking by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon (who is called Peter) and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were

fishermen. And he said to them, “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.” Immediately they left their nets and followed him. And going on from there he saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets, and he called them. Immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.”

- Now, upon first reading this conversation seems abrupt doesn't make much sense; its almost as if Jesus was just out for a walk and called four strangers from out of nowhere and they decided to just leave their business and their families and follow Jesus. But if we read the gospel of Matthew alongside the other gospels we get some more context.
- **John 1** shows us that Jesus had already met these guys as they were seeking truth through the teaching of John the Baptist. John had told them that Jesus was the one who they should seek, and some began to listen to Jesus's teaching right then and there. They may even have been with him at the wedding of Cana because the text in John says that some of his disciples were with him.
- But they hadn't been formally called yet. And for whatever reason, after being around Jesus and hearing his teaching they had gone back to their normal lives fishing on the Sea of Galilee.
- **Luke 5** tells us that before Jesus called Peter, Andrew, James, and John a great crowd was following Christ near the Sea of Galilee. So Jesus got into Peter's boat and began to teach from the water. So again, these four guys hear Jesus teaching and talking about repentance and the kingdom of heaven being at hand.
- After Jesus was done teaching, He tells the four to cast their nets into the sea. Peter speaks up and says, **Luke 5:5** “Master, we toiled all night and took nothing! But at your word I will let down the nets.”
- I'm sure you remember the story; they caught so many fish their nets began to break, which is why when Jesus came to speak to James and John they were mending their nets.
- After they brought in the catch and made their way back to the shore, we then read in **Matthew 4** how Jesus formally invited them to be His disciples.

Call of Christ

- So that's the context for our story, now I want to look specifically at the Call of Christ.
- Follow Me
 - Follow me (GK *deute opisō mou*) = literally “come here to me” or “come behind me”
 - Our focus, our presence, our time, all of what we are and what we have are to be moved to where Jesus is and respond to what He says.
 - **Story of Shah Jahan and Taj Mahal**
 - Follow Jesus, not all the trappings of religious devotion

- Not about religious exercise, but about getting to know our God more intimately...certainly do that through studying the Word, meditation, prayer, spiritual disciplines, and living in community with other followers of Jesus
 - All those things are means to the end of knowing Jesus more intimately
 - Following Jesus as He reveals Himself, not what we make Him
 - I will Make you
 - Make (GK *poieō*) = to prepare for a purpose, to fashion for a specific end, to author to tell a precise story
 - It is the Spirit of God that transforms us, not our own strength
 - **Philippians 2:12** "...work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure."
 - **Zechariah 4:6** "...Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord of hosts."
 - **John 15: 5, 8** "I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing....By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples."
 - The Lord makes us into the image of His choosing, not what we want to be
 - Fishers of Men
 - **Matthew 28:19-20** "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. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."
 - We are to be focused on getting others to be followers of Jesus...anything else is ancillary and of far lesser importance
 - Cannot fall into the trap of elevating anything beyond the importance of what we're ultimately called to as disciples of Jesus

Commitment of the Disciples

- Humble Spirit
 - **Luke 5:5** "Master, we toiled all night and took nothing! But at your word I will let down the nets."
 - Master (GK *epistatēs*) = overseer
 - **Luke 5:8** "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord."
 - Lord (GK *kyrios*) = owner and authority over them
- Counted the cost – not blind faith, knew Jesus, what He taught and what He was calling them to.
- Immediately followed – no strings attached

- Servants left with Zebedee according to **Mark 1:20**, so didn't abandon all responsibility, but prioritized their pursuit of Jesus above all else
- May not physically abandon our jobs or families, but as we commit to Jesus we commit to following His priorities and His values and His direction for our lives...we abandon all notions of ourselves for what He has for us.
- **Jeremiah 16:16** "Behold, I am sending for many fishers, declares the Lord, and they shall catch them. And afterward I will send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain and every hill, and out of the clefts of the rocks."
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Conclusion

- Many Christians approach their faith just like many vegetarians approach their diet, they pick and choose which aspects of it they want to follow and emphasize.
 - Acknowledge that its good and healthy for them, but that they're just not going to be that serious about it.
- By the grace of God, let us humbly submit and follow Jesus alone, getting to know Him better and better, allowing His Spirit and power and prerogative to work in our lives, as we do the work of discipleship, fishing and hunting wherever he plants us.
- Amen. Amen.