



As Jesus was walking by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon who is called Peter, and his brother Andrew, casting a net into the sea; they were fishermen. He said to them, "Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men." At once they left their nets and followed him. He walked along from there and saw two other brothers, James, the son of Zebedee, and his brother John. They were in a boat, with their father Zebedee, mending their nets. He called them, and immediately they left their boat and their father and followed him.

Introductory Prayer: Dear Jesus, I believe that you have called me to follow you more closely today. I trust that in this prayer, you will help me see the concrete implications of following your will. I love you and want to respond to all that you ask of me, today and always. Thank you for watching over me and guiding me home to heaven.

Petition: Make me a fisher of men, here and now, Lord!

1. As Jesus Walked By: One summer afternoon a priest just happened to be in the area and visited my home. Within three years, two of my brothers and I were following Christ on the road to the priesthood. Jesus didn't just happen to walk by these two pairs of brothers! He had every intention of inviting those brothers to become "fishers of men." How much happens in my life, prepared and intended by God, to help me follow him more closely? And all I see is an accident, a coincidence? Ask him when was the last time he just happened by.

2. At Once They Followed Him: Jesus never calls someone when it's perfectly

convenient, when that person has nothing better to do. No, he calls precisely when we are in the middle of living our life, doing what we do best, what we do most, “casting or mending our nets.” “What a losing formula!” we are tempted to conclude. Yet what is it he really wants of us when he calls? He wants a response -- a reply of love. Love is all about preference and priority. If I love him more than myself, I can follow him “at once.” If I prefer him over my own activities and life, I can follow him “immediately.” What is the response of love I am giving or want to give Jesus today in my life?

3. They Left Something Behind: “Pro-choice:” That’s what God is! He wants us to choose. But he is not indifferent about what we choose. Every choice implies the rejection of other options. We cannot follow someone somewhere without leaving something and someone else behind. Peter and Andrew left their nets behind. James and John left their boat and their father behind. This was possible only with Jesus before them. Yet we, too, often try to follow Christ without leaving things and others behind: the world, comforts, my preferences... We think that we can have it all. We can’t. We are in danger of “taming our faith,” bending to the demands of our passions and the world’s insistence. Love requires a choice, a choice for the real, complete Jesus. It asks me to reject everything in me that is not him. How wholehearted is my following of Christ?

Conversation with Christ: Lord Jesus, you have called me and continue to call me throughout this day. Help me to respond with love, a love that trumps all my other loves, likes and desires. I don’t want you to have to wait for me, Lord. Just show me what you want and give me the courage and generosity to give it to you, no matter the cost.

Resolution: I will give up something today that diminishes the attention that I give to my spouse, family or friends.