

Called to Follow Jesus

Key Verse: *“Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men.”*
—*Luke 5:10*

Selected Scripture:
Luke 5:1-11

IN TODAY’S LESSON, WE are told of the experience of three followers of Jesus—Simon Peter, James, and John—who were fishermen. They had labored all night and had caught nothing. Jesus boarded their ship, and after preaching to a multitude, he asked them to launch again and cast out their nets. They caught so many fish that their nets began to break. (Luke 5:1-6) Jesus then addressed Simon Peter directly, as recorded in our Key Verse: “From henceforth thou shalt catch men.” Peter, James and John were already Jesus’ disciples in a general sense. Now, however, he was choosing them to be among his twelve apostles, who would be sent forth to spread the Gospel message abroad in the earth.—Luke 6:12-16

For Jesus’ twelve chosen apostles and also for us, being merely a hearer of the word is not sufficient. A lifelong inward work must take place within us as followers of the Master. “It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.” (Phil.2:13) We are to seek for an understanding of the doctrines and principles of God’s Word, and then build our faith structure upon the foundation which a knowledge of these divine truths affords.—I Cor. 3:11; Eph. 2:20; II Tim. 2:19

Peter describes this building process, first by reminding

us that we have been given “exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature.” He then identifies certain qualities which we are to add to our faith structure—virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love. “If these things be in you, and abound,” Peter continues, “they make you that ye shall neither be barren [idle] nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an abundant entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”—II Pet. 1:4-11

If, by virtue of the promises of God, we are to attain the divine nature, it is necessary to give “all diligence.” Just as Jesus pointed out in the lesson given to Peter, James and John, we will not be able to divide our interests between the things of God and the things of the world. Paul wrote, “This one thing I do.” (Phil. 3:13) This is the only approach to the Christian life which will result in victory, and the only attitude of heart in which to be if God is to fulfill his promises to us. He knows about our temporal needs and has promised, through the words of his Son: “Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”—Matt. 6:33

What a blessed prospect is assured to us by God’s wonderful promises. Truly he has given us “good doctrine.” (Prov. 4:2) Let us, as did Peter, James and John, yield ourselves to his perfect will and way that we might be made ready for that blessed entrance into the kingdom, where we shall be “like him,” and “see him as he is.”—I John 3:2 ■