

Follow Me

Key Verse: “*Then He said to them, Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.*”
—**Matthew 4:19**,
New King James Version

Selected Scripture:
Matthew 4:12-22

THE CALL TO GOD’S SERVICE in the preaching of the Gospel is timelessly grasped in our Key Verse, and all who recall the setting of our lesson admire the unhesitating response from the invitees. “They immediately left their nets and followed Him.” (Matt. 4:20, *NKJV*) Doubtless the words of Jesus were very persuasive to them, even as they

still persuade us two thousand years from the time they were spoken. The voice of Jesus has an unmistakable tone of authority and spirituality. We want to follow him, as sheep follow their shepherd. Jesus noted that when he calls to his own sheep, “the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.”—John 10:4, *NKJV*

The disciples mentioned in our Selected Scripture had other cause to follow Jesus with such suddenness. Luke’s Gospel reveals that a miracle occurred at the time of the Master’s invitation. As he stood by the Sea of Galilee, called by Luke the “Lake of Gennesaret,” Jesus got into one of the empty boats along the shore, which belonged to Simon, and asked him to go out a short distance from land, and he taught the multitudes from the boat. When he finished speaking, Jesus said to Simon, “Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch. But Simon answered and said to Him, Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing;

nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net. And when they had done this, they caught a great number of fish, and their net was breaking. So they signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink.”—Luke 5:1-7, *NKJV*

When Simon Peter saw what had happened, the account continues, “he fell down at Jesus’ knees, saying, Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord! For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish which they had taken; and so also were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch men. So when they had brought their boats to land, they forsook all and followed Him.”—vss. 8-11, *NKJV*

We, as followers of Jesus, take an important lesson from this event. The disciples were professional fishermen, and knew their trade well. They had fished all night, catching nothing, and now a stranger tells them to drop their nets. With perhaps a sigh and some reluctance, Peter obeyed. The resulting massive catch of fish led Peter to be overcome with emotion, “Depart from me, for I am a sinful man.” However, the voice of the Master was reassuring, “Do not be afraid,” and Simon immediately followed him. We also may encounter circumstances in our lives that seem either overwhelming or futile. Nevertheless, we must obey the words of Jesus despite our thoughts to the contrary. He will see to it that the blessing is given as long as we follow him.

John the revelator provides an apt description of those who closely follow Jesus, “These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.” (Rev. 14:4) They do not seek an easier path or a shortcut in life. Wherever the Lamb goes, they closely follow. Let us listen daily to the Master as he says, “Follow Me.” ■