

A Study of the Gospel of Luke – Part One
Lesson 10

➤ **Read Luke 5:1–32.**

➤ **Reread Luke 5:1–11.**

1. People gathered on the shores of the Lake of Gennesaret (or the Sea of Galilee) to hear Jesus teach.
 - a. What is his creative idea for a pulpit? (v. 3)
 - b. What opportunity will his choice of pulpit provide? (vv. 4–11)
2. Given his expertise as a fisherman, Simon believes that the request from Jesus the carpenter to put back out and fish again is foolish.
 - a. What is Simon Peter's tone as he answers Jesus? (v. 5a)
 - b. What does he do in response to Jesus' request? (v. 5b)
3. Simon, the experienced fisherman, knows that this abundance of fish must be a miracle.
 - a. How does Simon Peter respond to seeing Jesus' power over the fish of the sea? (v. 8)
 - b. Read Job 42:1–6 and Isaiah 6:1–5 to compare Peter's response to that of others who have encountered a demonstration of God's power. Why do you think these men respond in this way?

The Sea of Galilee

Luke uses the name “Lake of Gennesaret,” a name more associated with the Greek, while all of the other Gospel writers refer to as the Sea of Galilee. This body of water has been very important in the history of Israel. Because the Sea of Galilee was surrounded by hills, it was a particularly good natural amphitheater for Jesus to be heard by crowds gathered on the shore. This area was an important location for much of Jesus' ministry.

4. Jesus tells Simon Peter to stop being fearful. How does Jesus describe the new vocation he gives Peter? (v. 10b)
5. The fishing miracle produced a massive quantity of fish, yet Simon, James, and John are captivated not by the miraculous catch itself, but by the source of the miraculous power, Jesus. What are they willing to leave behind to follow this awesome Jesus? (v. 11b; Lk. 14:33)

► **Read Luke 5:12–16.**

6. How does the way the man approaches Jesus show his faith? (v. 12b)

Leprosy

The term “leprosy” was used in Luke’s time to refer to many more skin diseases than only what we currently call “leprosy” (Hansen’s disease), and all of them resulted in quarantine and banishment from the Jewish community. Leprosy was a great source of shame.

7. Read Leviticus 13:45–46.
 - a. Considering what it meant to be a leper, what do you think the emotional impact is of Jesus’ not only speaking to immediately cure the disease, but also reaching out to touch him?
 - b. What does this interaction tell you about Jesus’ care for not only physical, but also emotional and spiritual healing?
8. Why does Jesus tell the previously leprous man to follow the law and present himself to the priest (Lev. 14:1–32)? (v. 15; Mk. 1:45)

9. Verse 16 says that Jesus “often withdrew...and prayed.” He made a habit of being quiet and alone to pray, even though there were many whom he alone could teach and heal.
 - a. What does his habit tell you about Jesus’ view of prayer?
 - b. Despite all of the demands on Jesus, he intentionally nurtured his relationship with his Father through regular prayer. In what ways can you be more intentional in your own prayer life? If you feel discouraged, ask Jesus to teach you about the value of prayer and to show you ways you can incorporate it into your daily routine.

➤ **Read Luke 5:17-26.**

10. “The power of the Lord was with Jesus to heal the sick” (v.17).
 - a. What creative solution do the friends of the paralytic come up with to get around the obstacles they face? (v. 19)
 - b. The men expect Jesus to heal their friend. What does Jesus do that surpasses their expectations?
11. The religious leaders are aghast at Jesus’ claim that the man’s sins are forgiven and they ask, “Who can forgive sins but God alone?” (v. 21).
 - a. In declaring the man’s sins forgiven, who is Jesus claiming to be?


Pharisees
“The separated ones”

“The *Pharisees*... were so anxious not to break God’s commandments that they ‘put a fence about the law’. For example, when the law said, ‘Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain’ they went further by refusing to pronounce the name at all. This [fence]... had the unfortunate result of externalizing religion. Men then put a great deal of effort into the outward without necessarily coming to love God in their hearts. The *Pharisees* were not numerous..., but they were influential. They were the unofficial religious leaders of the day...¹ In our passage we see them coming from far and wide to check Jesus out.

- b. Jesus wants the religious leaders to know that he has authority to forgive sins. How does he verify this authority? (v. 24)

Son of Man

“Son of Man” was a somewhat obscure Old Testament reference, but it is “Jesus’ favourite self-designation, being found in the Gospels over 80 times... It appears to be His way of referring to His Messiahship...”² This title comes from Daniel 7:13–14: “In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a **son of man**, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all nations and peoples of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed” [emphasis added].

12. Jesus has just revealed himself as the Son of Man (the Messiah), but the reaction of the healed man and the crowds is not to directly praise Jesus the man. To whom do they direct the praise and glory for the healing instead? (vv. 25–26;  * Mt. 9:8)


► Read Luke 5:27–32.

13. Levi is more commonly known as Matthew (Mt. 9:9). Tax collectors were despised as traitors who betrayed their fellow Jews for wealth. What would Levi’s response to Jesus’ call mean for him? (v. 28)
14. Contrast Levi’s great joy at being called by Jesus with the Pharisees’ response to the banquet he throws. (v. 30)
15. In verses 31–32, Jesus uses a proverb to sum up his Messianic mission. At first glance it sounds appealing to belong to the group Jesus calls “healthy” and “righteous.” In truth, though, those who see themselves this way deny their need for Jesus and miss out on his blessings. Reread verses 31–32 and compose a note of thanksgiving that recognizes what Jesus’ mission has meant in your life.

⁸ If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

⁹ If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 1:8–9

* For further study

¹ Leon Morris. *The Gospel According to St. Luke: Tyndale New Testament Commentaries* (London: Inter-Varsity Press, 1980), 116.

² Ibid. 118.