

God loves you and He has a wonderful plan for your life. Our goal here at Faith Christian Center is to teach you how to fulfill God's plan for your life and how to experience ALL that God has for you.

This year, we have been learning how God has a plan to INCREASE every single area of your life. When you obey God, you will experience **INCREASE**. And, as we'll see today, when you **Serve the KING, You Will Eat At His Table.**

Today, we'll see **WHO WE ARE** to be as Christians AND **WHAT WE ARE TO DO** as Christians.

Luke 5:1-11 (NIV): ¹ One day as Jesus was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret (the Sea of Galilee), with the people crowding around him and listening to the **word of God**, ² he saw at the water's edge two boats, left there by the fishermen, who were washing their nets. ³ He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to **Simon** (that is, Peter), and asked him to put out a little from shore. Then he sat down and taught the people from the boat. ⁴ When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "**Put out** into deep water, and **let down** the nets for a catch." ⁵ Simon answered, "Master, **we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets.**" ⁶ When they had done so, **they caught such a LARGE NUMBER of fish that their nets began to break.** ⁷ So they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them, and they came and **filled both boats so full that they began to sink.** ⁸ When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus' knees and said, "Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!" ⁹ For he and all his companions were **ASTONISHED** at the catch of fish they had taken, ¹⁰ and so were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, Simon's partners. Then Jesus said to Simon, "Don't be afraid; **from now on you will catch men.**" ¹¹ So they pulled their boats up on shore, **left everything** and **followed him.**

Knowing Jesus changes everything. Following Jesus changes everything. Living for Jesus changes everything.

Who are we as followers of Jesus?

#1: A Christian has the perspective that his entire life and everything he has belongs to God.

The Bible tells us that the earth is the Lord's and everything in it (Ps. 24:1). Jesus just gets into Peter's boat. His attitude – his perspective – is that Peter's boat belongs to Him. As Paul tells us, when we come to Christ, our life is no longer our own (1 Cor. 6:19-20). Jesus gave His life for us, and we give our lives to Him. And friends, when you give your life to Jesus—all of it, not just part of it—something **WONDERFUL**, something **AMAZING** happens...

Luke 5:3: ³ He [Jesus] got into one of the boats, the one belonging to **Simon** (that is, Peter), and asked him to put out a little from shore.

Jesus gets in and asks Peter to push out from the shore. Peter has the opportunity to object, to refuse, to do his own thing. Yet, he does exactly what Jesus asks—he pushes out from shore.

Not only does everything belong to God, the Bible also tells us that God will not be a debtor to any person.

Some people have the idea—a wrong idea, a “religious” idea—that when you serve God, you will do without, or you will lack, or your needs won’t be met, or you’ll barely get by with NOT ENOUGH.

The God of the Bible **provides** for His children. When you serve the KING, King Jesus, the Lord of Lords, He will take care of you every step of the way.

Everything belongs to God and God will not be a debtor to any person.

Jesus uses of Peter’s boat. Peter listens and does what Jesus asks. Jesus then blesses Peter in return.

This is how the Kingdom of God works. Jesus would later teach the disciples this principle of giving *generously* **above** and **beyond**:

Luke 6:38: Give, and [then] it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

When you give something to God, God will not diminish you. God **MULTIPLIES** what you give Him. God **INCREASES** what you give Him.

When you give it will be given back unto you, and that is **PRECISELY** what we see here in Luke 5.

Peter and the other men had fished all night, and they had been unsuccessful. Jesus knew that. And, Jesus also knew where the big fish where. When Jesus showed up, Peter and the other men were looking at their empty boats and nets, but by the end of the story, they are looking to Jesus instead. No matter what you may be facing or going through today, the solution is to get your eyes off the problem, off the shortage, off what is not enough, and to set your eyes on Jesus. Stop looking at the problem and look at the **SOURCE**. Stop looking at what is not enough and begin looking to the **ONE** who is **MORE THAN ENOUGH**.

Peter lets Jesus use his boat. Jesus then blesses Peter. Peter gives to Jesus and then Jesus gives to Peter.

Luke 5:4: ⁴ When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, “Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch.”

Remember, as we’ve learned, to receive from God, to get your answer, to get your need met, to receive a miracle, you must:

- 1) **Hear God**
- 2) **Obey God**

Peter is RELUCTANT but he hears and obeys.

Luke 5:5: Simon answered, “Master, we’ve worked hard all night and haven’t caught anything. **But because you say so, I will let down the nets.”**

They had worked all night and had been unsuccessful. Many times, when we do things in our own strength, on our own, the results aren’t impressive. But when you hear and obey the voice of Jesus, amazing things happen. When you partner your life together with God and live for Him wholeheartedly, amazing things happen. In one moment, God can do more in your life than a lifetime of you working in your own strength!

As we saw with Jesus’ first miracle, a miracle of provision at the Wedding of Cana, the *secret* of receiving from God is simply to do whatever He says to do. **The secret is to obey.**

Peter hears, Peter obeys, and then Peter receives a miracle.

HEAR → OBEY → then RECEIVE

Peter gives to Jesus and then Jesus gives back to Peter.

Luke 5:6-7: ⁶When they had done so, (Done what? When they had done what Jesus said do.) **they caught such a LARGE NUMBER of fish that their nets began to break.** ⁷So they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them, and they came and **filled both boats SO FULL that they began to sink.**

You can work hard all night and barely make any progress. Work alongside Jesus and you'll be **ASTONISHED** at what happens. When you give your labor to God, and do what He says, the results are **ASTONISHING:** **they caught so many fish...** (v6-7)

God will not be a debtor to any person. You can't out give God! When you give NOT ENOUGH to God, He turns it into **MORE THAN ENOUGH**. When you GIVE to God, God gives back to you, abundantly more than all you can ASK, THINK, or IMAGINE (Eph. 3:20).

Peter gives his boat to Jesus to use. Further, Peter obeys Jesus’ instructions. The result? A record-setting catch of fish. Peter has to call for help! And the boats were so FULL they began to sink.

This is what God does! He blesses. He provides.

John 10:10: The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and **have it to the full** (or **more abundantly**).

Ephesians 3:20 (NIV): ²⁰Now to him who is able to do **immeasurably more** than all we **ask or imagine**, according to his power that is at work within us,

AMP: Who is able to “do **SUPERABUNDANTLY**, far **OVER and ABOVE** all that we **[DARE] ASK or THINK [INFINITELY BEYOND our highest prayers, DESIRES, thoughts, HOPES, or DREAMS]**—

Who are we as followers of Jesus?

#1: A Christian has the perspective that his entire life and everything he has belongs to God.

#2: A Christian is **generous**.

The Kingdom of God is about **stewardship**. What is **stewardship**? It is protecting, managing, being responsible for, and making good use of the gifts, talents, and abilities God has given you. When the disciples, like Peter, met Jesus, they were hard-working, Jewish businessmen. They were married. They had families. They were hard-working providers. No doubt, many of them tithed and gave God 10% of everything that crossed their hands.

Jesus does not just want part of your life, though. He wants all of it!

Jesus did not ask Peter for a small offering from his business income. He did not show up and say, “Give me a cut” or “I’d like a fish or two.” No, He came and took over His boat and asked Peter to let Him use his boat for ministry. Jesus showed up and asked Peter for **EVERYTHING** he had. Jesus showed up and asked Peter for his **ENTIRE life**. Jesus showed up and asked Peter for Peter.

Peter knew about giving *some* to God but he did not know about giving *all*.

Jesus shows up and teaches Peter to give *all*. When you serve Jesus—and do it right—Jesus is not just Lord over part of your life, He is Lord over *all* of your life, over *every area* of your life.

Peter let’s Jesus use his boat. He is then **SUPERNATURALLY** blessed in return.

Then, having met Jesus and having seen who Jesus is and how Jesus provides, Peter does something even more radical. He leaves **EVERYTHING** behind to follow Jesus.

Luke 5:11: ¹¹ So they pulled their boats up on shore, **left everything and followed him**.

Why would Peter and the others leave **EVERYTHING** to follow Jesus?

That day, they had met the **Master of Provision**. And they saw that if they would follow Jesus, they would not lack any good thing (Ps. 34:10). They saw that when you **SERVE THE KING, YOU EAT AT HIS TABLE**. For 3 years, a group of 12 men—the disciples—would **follow** Jesus everywhere He went, and during those 3 years, Jesus provided for them every step of the way—they never lacked lodging, food, clothing, or other provisions.

Who are we as followers of Jesus?

#1: A Christian has the perspective that his entire life and everything he has belongs to God.

#2: A Christian is **generous**.

#3: A Christian serves – We serve Jesus.

If you want to be **great** in God's Kingdom, be a **servant**. Serve God. Serve others. Serve to see as many people come to faith in Jesus as possible. Have the heart of a faithful servant. Jesus taught His disciples to be servants and He taught them that the least is greatest in God's Kingdom.

Jesus shows up and steps into Peter's boat. Peter does not object. He does what Jesus says do.

This is the secret of serving Jesus. We obey. We do what His Word says to do. When He speaks to us, we obey. When His Spirit guides us, we obey. We do whatever He says do.

God is not something we add to our lives. It is not me plus God or me plus Jesus. I am not the Lord of my life. Jesus is the Lord of my life. When you serve Jesus, you are not the lord of your life...not anymore...when you serve Jesus, **JESUS is the Lord of your life.**

Do what Jesus says do. Serve the KING. And when you do, you will eat at His table. And, He will provide for you—not just with enough but with **MORE THAN ENOUGH**.

Verse 9 says that Peter and his companions were **ASTONISHED** that day.

If you will serve Jesus, like Peter did, and give Him your life—**and GIVE HIM ALL OF IT**—and serve Him and do whatever He tells you, then you will be **ASTONISHED** by what Jesus does in your life.

Jesus gave us His best, and so in our lives, in everything we do, especially as we serve in the church, we should give our best for Him and the Kingdom of God.

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We've seen WHO WE ARE as followers of Jesus. But, **WHAT DO WE DO?**
WHAT DO WE DO as followers of Jesus?

#1: We sow in God's Kingdom, His Church

The Christian life is a life of loving God and loving others, AND the Christian life is a life of **GENEROSITY**.

We sow. We sow with our **WHOLE LIVES**. We sow with **ALL THAT WE HAVE**. We give of our gifts, talents, and abilities in the kingdom of God.

The kingdom of God operates by the laws of seedtime and harvest. When you give, you receive. When you sow, you reap. And, as we've learned, you reap **what** you sow. If you don't like what you've been reaping, *change* what you've been sowing.

Later in Luke, Jesus would tell His disciples that the harvest is plentiful but that the **laborers** are few (Lk. 10:2). When you have a harvest field, who are the laborers? They are those who prepare the ground. They are those who cultivate the ground. They are those who plant. They are those who water. They are those reap the harvest as it comes in.

Christians are sowers. It is who we are. It is what we do.

Paul spoke this way when he talked about the church at Corinth. He said that he had planted and others had watered. He had sown. Others had sown. But what was the result? God had been making the church grow and INCREASE (1 Cor. 6:3). And I believe that this is true of this church. Every week, we plant and water. Every week, pastor and I plant and water. The workers and volunteers plant and water. And you know what happens? God brings growth and INCREASE. Someone might say "Where is it?" but I see it. I see it with my eyes of faith. Every week, we plant and water. Every week, we sow seed. And we just keep sowing and sowing. We give away every message for free online. We're just sowing and sowing and sowing and sowing ... And you know what? A mighty harvest is on the way. Growth is on the way. **INCREASE is on the way!!!** And INCREASE will enable us to do more and REACH more people. And my friends, that is what it is all about! Seeing people come to faith in Christ and then grow and mature in their walk with God.

Peter gave Jesus his boat. He was a fisherman. It was his area of expertise.

You have gifts, talents, and abilities God has *uniquely* gifted you with. Sow those gifts, talents, and abilities into the work of God's Kingdom, into the church, into what we do every week.

Help. Be a blessing. Serve in the church. Give your time. Give your labor. Give of your talents.

Yes, we give of our money. But that is just 1 part of our lives. We are to give of our whole lives into God's Kingdom.

Some of you have begun sowing money and you have begun being generous financially, but you have not yet begun being generous with the other gifts, talents, and abilities God has given you.

As God's people, we sow. And then what happens? **We reap.**

This is why though some Christians come to church and never reap. The reason is because they are not living a life of sowing. It could be financially but it could also be other areas. Maybe they have a gift, talent, or ability God has given them to sow or use in God's Kingdom but maybe they have kept it to themselves.

Peter has a skill. He has a gifting. He has a God-given ability. And look at what Jesus does with that.

Luke 5:10: “Then Jesus said to Simon, “Don’t be afraid; **from now on you will catch men.**”

Peter had used his talent, his gift, his God-given ability for himself and his family. Jesus says, “**Now, Peter, you’re going to use that gift for the Kingdom.**”

Peter, the fisherman, became Peter the fisher of men.

And that is what God is saying to you today. This is how this passage is speaking to us today. We are to use our gifts, talents, and abilities—whatever they may be—for God’s Kingdom, which for us, here, is the church. If you’re here today, you’re here for a reason. You’re here for a purpose. I don’t believe in accidents. I don’t believe in luck or coincidences. You are here for a reason. You are here for a purpose.

God is calling you. If you’re not saved, Jesus is calling you to make Him the Lord of your life. And, then He’s calling you to serve Him in the Kingdom by being a part of this church and by serving with your gifts, talents, and abilities to help us reach more people with the GOOD NEWS of the Gospel.

WHAT DO WE DO as followers of Jesus?

#1: We sow in God’s Kingdom, His Church

And finally, #2: We fish for people.

Peter, the fisherman, became a fisher of men.

Jesus is telling Peter that he will now put his gifting, his talent, his ability to use in the Kingdom. But Jesus is also telling Peter that serving Jesus and following Jesus is all about **REACHING PEOPLE and SEEING PEOPLE COME TO FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST**. And if you’re new to the church, that’s what we’re about. We’re about REACHING PEOPLE and SEEING PEOPLE COME TO FAITH IN CHRIST.

We want to see people come to faith in Christ, and then we want to see them experience all that God has for them as they fulfill their God-given purpose and destiny in life.

As followers of Jesus, we fish for people. We plant and sow and water and labor in God’s kingdom to reach people. We give of our time in volunteering to reach people. We give of our gifts, talents, and abilities to reach people. **THAT’S WHAT IT’S ALL ABOUT!** And anytime I meet a ‘Christian’ that doesn’t care about reaching people, I conclude they haven’t really met Jesus or they don’t really know what following Jesus is all about.

Jesus gave His life for the entire world. Jesus loves people. Jesus said we are to be **fishers of men, of people**. And that is His commission to us: to go into all the world, and to preach the GOSPEL—the Good News—to EVERY PERSON we come into contact with.

The HARVEST is RIPE. And here in Arlington and Mansfield, there is a great HARVEST field before us. There are THOUSANDS who have not heard the GOOD NEWS. And there are

THOUSANDS who have heard the wrong witness. They've wrongly heard that God wants to diminish them or decrease them or that He doesn't have a GOOD PLAN for their life. Our message is what the Bible teaches and that is GOOD NEWS.

Today is Volunteer Appreciation Sunday and we are so THANKFUL for everyone who helps and serves. But just imagine how EFFECTIVE we could be if everyone HELPED, if EVERYONE served, if EVERYONE sowed, if EVERYONE was generous, if EVERYONE gave of their gifts, talents, and abilities. Just imagine how many people we could reach then. Just imagine how effective we could be then.

It's a wonderful idea, isn't it? **Here's what I say—let's do it!**

It's time to give your gifts, talents, & abilities to God for use in His Kingdom.

And this is the good news about serving God. When you serve Jesus, when you serve the KING, you get to eat at the King's table. He will PROVIDE for you. He will TAKE CARE OF YOU. He will turn your NOT ENOUGH into MORE THAN ENOUGH. And, you will not lack any good thing (Ps. 34:10)!

On that day, when Peter let Jesus use his boat and then gave his boat to Jesus, Peter wasn't diminished. Peter was BLESSED. Peter was FAVORED. Peter was INCREASED. Peter experienced MORE THAN ENOUGH.

Then, Peter left everything to follow Jesus. How could he do that? Because of his obedience that day, Peter had met the **Master of Provision**. He had met **Jehovah Jireh**, the Lord God our provider in the flesh. He had met **El Shaddai**, the God who is **More Than Enough** in the flesh. He had met Jesus. And He had seen how Jesus provides. He had seen that when you **Serve the King, the King provides for you with MORE THAN ENOUGH**. That is how Peter could leave everything behind to follow Jesus.

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#1: We have the perspective that the entirety of our lives and everything we have belongs to God.

#2: We are generous.

#3: We serve, we serve Jesus.

WHAT DO WE DO as followers of Jesus?

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#2: We fish for people.