

# Following the King

## Message 1 - The Call: Come and Follow

### Matthew 4:18–22 (ESV) - Jesus Calls the First Disciples

While walking by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon (who is called Peter) and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. And he said to them, “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.” Immediately they left their nets and followed him. And going on from there he saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets, and he called them. Immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.

### Introduction – The Power of the Call

Jesus began His ministry not by writing a book, building a synagogue, or organizing a political uprising. He began with a call: “Follow Me.”

***This powerful call was threefold in nature – please pay close attention to the importance of these steps. I must caution you you cannot skip one of these steps. This is a divine order that must be followed:***

**Mark 3:13–15: “And he went up on the mountain and called to him those whom he desired, and they came to him. And he appointed twelve (whom he also named apostles) so that they might be with him and he might send them out to preach and have authority to cast out demons.” (ESV)**

## **1. He called them unto Him**

Before there was a mission, there was a meeting. Jesus did not first say “Go for Me” but rather “Come to Me.”

- The first call is not to service but to surrender, not to preaching but to presence.
- **This is the heartbeat of discipleship: to be with Him.** In fact, the text says He “appointed them so that they might be with Him.” His presence is the training ground of power.
- You can never carry His message if you don’t first carry His nearness.

## **2. He called them to follow Him**

- **The second step is movement.** To come to Him is intimacy; to follow Him is imitation.
- **We will talk more about this today...**

## **3. He commissioned them for Him**

- **The third step is sending.** Notice the sequence: He first called them unto Himself, then called them to follow, and only then did He send them out with authority.
- **Too many want authority without intimacy, mission without submission, fruit without roots.** But Jesus commissions only those who have first been with Him and have walked after Him.
- Their commission was twofold: to preach and to demonstrate—Word and power, message and miracle.
- **Authority flowed out of alignment. To be under His command is the only way to carry His commission.**

## **The Non-Negotiable Order**

**This is the divine order of discipleship: unto Him, after Him, for Him.**

- **Skip the first, and you will preach without power.**
- **Skip the second, and you will serve without substance.**
- **Skip the third, and you will die with potential unfulfilled.**

**The order is not optional; it is eternal. The Church is strongest when it follows the Master's sequence: called into His presence, walking in His steps, sent out in His name.**

**Before you go out into the world, go up to the mountain. The call to be with Him always precedes the commission to be sent by Him.**

**That alone was revolutionary. In His day, discipleship was reserved for the best, the brightest, the religious elite. But Jesus walks the shoreline and calls fishermen.**

**Discipleship is not about finding Jesus — it's about Jesus finding you.**

## **Point 1 – The Place of the Call**

Text: “Jesus, walking by the Sea of Galilee, saw two brothers...”

Jesus calls them not in a synagogue, not in the Temple, not in the middle of prayer — but on a shoreline, knee-deep in nets and fish.

**The call of Jesus collides with the rhythm of your life. He interrupts you in the ordinary to invite you into the extraordinary.**

## The Rabbinic System

- Beth Sefer (House of the Book): Ages 5–12, children memorized the Torah.
- Beth Talmud (House of Learning): Ages 12–15, the best memorized the Prophets and Writings.
- Beth Midrash (House of Study): The elite pursued a rabbi.

**The student applied. The rabbi tested him. Only if he proved worthy would the rabbi say the golden words: “Lech acharai — come, follow me.” Otherwise: “Go back to your family trade.”**

That means Peter, Andrew, James, and John had already been dismissed. They were fishermen because the rabbis of their day had said, “You don’t have what it takes.” But here comes Jesus, the Rabbi from Nazareth, saying to the disqualified: “Follow Me.”

**The rabbis looked for the best; Jesus looked for the broken.”**

**The call of Christ is not the reward of the qualified; it is the rescue of the rejected.**

## **Point 2 – The Pattern of the Call**

Text: “Follow Me, and I will make you...” When Jesus says “Follow Me” in Greek, it is *Deute opisō mou* — literally: “Come behind Me.”

### **In that culture:**

- Disciples didn’t sit in classrooms with their rabbi. They walked behind him on dusty roads.
- They didn’t just memorize what he taught; they patterned their entire lives after his.
- **A disciple’s goal wasn’t only to know what the rabbi knew but to become who the rabbi was.**

The Mishnah gave this blessing: “Powder yourself in the dust of their feet.” The picture? Walking so close behind your rabbi that the dust from his sandals covered your life.

**When Jesus said “Follow Me,” He was saying: “Get so close to Me that My dust becomes your covering. Walk in My rhythm. Let My life rub off on yours until you begin to look like Me, talk like Me, live like Me.”**

**Discipleship is not memorizing His words; it's mirroring His walk.**

- The dust of His feet becomes the fragrance of your life.
- **Jesus doesn't want admirers — He wants imitators.**

### **Point 3 – The Promise of the Call**

Text: "...and I will make you fishers of men."

The call of Christ is never without a promise. Notice what He does not say: **He doesn't say, "Follow Me, and you will make yourself..." He says, "I will make you."**

- The Greek verb poieō means to create, to shape, to bring into being. It's the same verb that echoes from Genesis 1 when God said, "Let there be light." This isn't self-help. This is divine re-creation.
- **Discipleship is not an act of human effort but an act of divine transformation. When you walk with Jesus, He forms you into what you could never become on your own.**

**The skills they already had as fishermen were not wasted — they were elevated.**

- Fishermen had to work by faith, casting nets into dark waters not knowing what was below.
- They had to wait patiently, knowing that timing mattered.
- They had to labor together, mending nets, pulling ropes, hauling boats.
- Jesus was saying, “I’ll take the patience, perseverance, and teamwork you’ve built in the natural — and raise it to a supernatural purpose.”

The promise of discipleship is not that you will become better, but that you will become new.

**Jesus takes what you already know and breathes Kingdom into it.**

- You bring the obedience — He brings the transformation.
- God never wastes your past; He repurposes it for your future.

#### **Point 4 – The Price of the Call**

Text: “Immediately they left their nets...”

**We must not sanitize this moment. To leave their nets was to leave everything.**

- **The nets were livelihood.** This was their income, their security, their provision.
- **The nets were lineage.** Fishing was more than a job; it was a family trade, passed down from father to son.
- **The nets were lifestyle.** The comfort of the familiar, the identity of who they were.

**Dropping the nets was not simply quitting a job — it was abandoning their entire sense of self.**

**You cannot grasp your calling if your hands are still clutching your comfort.**

- The Gospels are clear — they left immediately.
- No time to negotiate.
- No time to calculate.
- No time to delay.
- Because the call of Christ is urgent, and delay is disobedience.

You cannot hold His hand and your nets at the same time. Every call comes with a cost — but what you lose cannot compare to what you gain.

**Faith is spelled L-E-A-V-E.**

**Why? Because true faith is not just believing in your heart — it's moving with your feet.**

- Abraham showed faith when he left Ur, not when he stayed and prayed about it.
- Moses showed faith when he left Egypt, not when he admired the burning bush.
- The disciples showed faith when they left their nets, not when they merely listened to the Rabbi.

**Faith is not proved by what you claim; it is proved by what you're willing to leave.**

**Faith will always cost you something familiar before it gives you something eternal.**

## **Point 5 – The Purpose of the Call**

Text: "...and followed Him."

**Notice, the text doesn't say they followed a cause, a dream, or even a mission. They followed Him.**

- The Greek word *mathētēs* means apprentice. In the ancient world, an apprentice didn't just listen to his teacher — he reordered his entire life to become like him.
- In discipleship, the ultimate goal is not to know what the rabbi knows but to live as the rabbi lives.

**For three years, they would walk His roads, sit at His table, witness His miracles, and ultimately carry His cross-shaped life. The purpose of discipleship is not just to learn the teaching of Jesus but to embody the life of Jesus.**

**The call is not to do more for Christ but to become more like Christ. The end of discipleship is not your doing — it is your becoming.**

- **The true purpose of discipleship is not that you work for Him, but that you walk with Him until His life becomes yours.**

## **Conclusion – The Echo of the Call**

**The shoreline of Galilee is thousands of miles and two thousand years away, but the call of Christ still echoes across every life today.**

- He calls you in the ordinary.
- He calls you to walk in His dust.
- He promises to make you into what you are not.
- He demands the surrender of your nets.
- And He calls you into Himself.

And here's the miracle — when they dropped their nets and followed, they had no idea that their obedience that day would ripple into eternity. **Twelve men turned into seventy. Seventy turned into hundreds. Hundreds turned into thousands. Thousands turned into a Church that would shake empires, topple idols, and carry the Gospel to every corner of the earth.**

**Discipleship begins with two words: 'Follow Me.' But when you answer the call, those two words will turn your world — and the world — upside down.**