

What Does It Look Like to Come to Jesus?

Luke 5:1-15

Pastor Jason Van Bommel, Forest Hill Presbyterian

"But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." - Luke 5:8, ESV

Jesus said, "Come to Me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." (Matthew 11:28) What does it look like to come to Jesus? In today's passage, we see two different men in very different life circumstances both come to Jesus and find salvation in Him: the Apostle Peter and a leper. While their encounters with Jesus were different, we can learn from both of them what it looks like to come to Jesus in faith.

Peter apparently knew about Jesus before this encounter. In so many ways, this encounter with Jesus was very inconvenient for Peter. He had just finished fishing all night and had nothing to show for his work. Jesus showed up and decided to use Peter's boat as a floating pulpit or platform from which to teach the crowds. Jesus asked Peter to push out from shore a little so that He could teach without the crowds pressing in too closely for anyone to be able to hear. On some level, I'm sure Peter wished he could just go home and sleep.

After Jesus finished teaching for some time, He asked Peter to go out and fish more. Jesus wasn't a fisherman; Peter was. Peter had already fished all night and caught nothing. Even though he thought he knew better, he still went fishing. The result: This experienced professional fisherman was astonished by the incredibly large catch of fish, so large their nets started breaking and they needed help from their friends in another boat.

When Peter returns to shore, he reacts to Jesus in a way that we probably wouldn't expect. He doesn't say, "Wow! That was cool! Can you do that again?" He doesn't even say, "Can I follow you, please?" No, he falls to his knees and begs Jesus to leave him, for he is a sinful man. Peter shows that he knows who Jesus is and that he also knows his own sinful state. This humble repentance shows real understanding and real faith, as Jesus calms his fears and invites Peter to follow Him.

The leper also comes to Jesus in humility, confessing his need and pleading with Jesus to meet it. He, too, understands the power of Jesus, as he says, "If you are willing, you can make me clean." Jesus responds to his humble faith with loving compassion and healing.

So, what does coming to Jesus in faith look like?

- 1. Knowing who Jesus is, especially how powerful and holy.** A tame, domesticated Jesus of convenience cannot save because He is not the real Jesus.
- 2. Knowing who we are, especially the depth of our sin and our need for Jesus.** No entitlement mentality will ever lead you to real trust in Jesus.
- 3. An honest and open plea.** Both the leper and Peter were honest with Jesus, speaking from their heart.

If we know who Jesus is and we know our need and we will come to Him with our honest plea, He will not turn us away. He will have compassion. He will save.