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The emphasis of this passage is on the rejection of Jesus by the people of the little village of Nazareth, where Jesus had grown up as a boy and young man. A depiction of the same event is also found in Matt. 4:18-22 and Mk. 1:16-20. Some attention will be given to them as well in order to gain additional insight into this event in Jesus' public ministry.

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I. Context

Both the historical setting and the literary setting of this event in Jesus' ministry need to be explored, if we are to understand the basic point and purpose of the inclusion of this episode in the gospel accounts.

a. Historical

Two levels historical exploration are important to the interpretative process. *First*, we need to explore the composition of the gospel document this passage occurs in, and second we need to locate the occurrence of this event in the public ministry of Jesus. Both of these issues pose challenges, but honest study of scripture needs to learn as much as can be legitimately gleaned. This knowledge helps prevent distorted interpretation of the meaning of the scripture passage.

Since this topic remains the same from last week, I will simply reproduce it for those who may not have a copy of last week's study. Regarding the compositional history of the Gospel of Luke, let me summarize a lot of Lukan scholarship by the following. William Beard in the *Interpreter's One Volume Commentary on the Bible* (iPreach online) summarizes the basic issue this way: "According to tradition this gospel was written by Luke, 'the beloved physician' and travel companion of Paul (Col. 4:14; Philemon 1:24; 2 Tim. 4:11). Actually the tradition is not very old. It appears first in the writings of Irenaeus, who was a theologian living in Gaul during the latter part of the 2nd cent. The Muratorian fragment (ca. A.D. 200), a document which presents an official list of Christian scriptures, supports the same conclusion." With the acceptance of this early church tradition -- although not all do and since the gospel itself makes no effort internally to identify its author -- then the issue becomes trying to locate a setting for the writing of this gospel. Again Bill Beard summarizes quite effectively these questions:

"The exact date and place of the writing of this gospel cannot be ascertained. Since the author uses Mark as a source and since he seems to have accurate knowledge of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans (19:41-44; 21:20-24; see pp. 1029-31) he evidently wrote after A.D. 70. He must have written before 140, when his gospel was included in the canon of the heretic Marcion. Since the situation of the church reflected in the gospel fits well the political situation of the reign of the Emperor Domitian (81-96), a date from about 85 to 95 is most likely.

According to one tradition Luke wrote his histories in Rome. Another locates his writing in Greece. Since there is a correlative tradition that the evangelist died in one of the Greek provinces, this latter tradition has better support. Any of these locations assumes the traditional authorship and bears the same burdens. Perhaps all we can say is that the gospel was written from some locale where Greek was the primary language and where cultured readers like Theophilus (1:3) would be at home."

According to [Luke 1:1-4](#), this gospel -- and subsequently the book of Acts (cf. Acts 1:1) -- were dedicated

to a Theophilus who as a patron supported the cost of producing these documents as well as the making of copies of them for distribution to various Christian communities in the late first century world. Evidently [Theophilus](#) was a wealthy Roman who had become a Christian and wanted to contribute to the spread of Christianity by supporting Luke's writing of these two documents. The gospel preface ([Lk 1:4](#)) suggests the purpose of the document was "so that you may know the truth concerning the things about which you have been instructed."

The Gospel of Luke and the book of Acts together stand as a two volume testimony of the beginning of the Christian religion with its founder, Jesus Christ, and the first three decades of the beginning of this movement in its spread from Jerusalem to Rome from AD 30 to AD 61. The author was closely associated with the apostle Paul. For the gospel account Luke made use of a variety of sources, as he indicated in [Lk 1:1-3](#), since he was not personally present with Jesus during his earthly ministry. Modern scholarship generally concludes that among these sources are the gospels of Mark and perhaps also Matthew, although more likely the material in Luke, that is also found in Matthew, may very well be drawn from a common, unknown source. That is generally called the Q document from the German word Quelle meaning source. Thus with at least Mark and Q in front of him, along with notes from interviews with various people around the earthly Jesus, Luke set out to tell his story of Jesus in a way that would enhance understanding of the enormous significance of this Jewish carpenter from the little village of Nazareth in the northern Palestinian province of Galilee. As best as we can determined, this happened sometime in the 70s or perhaps early 80s of the first Christian century, possibly while Luke was living in Rome.

The *second historical concern* emerges from inside the scripture passage itself. The nature of 5:1-11 is that of a narrative text describing a specific event that happened during the public ministry of Jesus, which extended from about AD 27 to AD 30. All three synoptic gospels place this event toward the beginning of Jesus' public ministry in Galilee ([Luke 5:1-11](#); [Mk. 1:16-20](#); [Matt. 4:18-22](#)), as is illustrated by the [summary chart](#) posted at Cranfordville.com:

	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
II. Galilean ministry				
	4:12-18:35 (51%)	1:14-9:50 (53%)	4:14-9:56 (24%)	4:46-7:9 (15%)
A. Phase One: To the Choosing of the Twelve	4:12-12:21	1:15-3:19a	4:14-7:50	4:46-5:47
B. Phase Two: To the Withdrawals from Galilee	12:22-14:12	3:19b-6:29	8:1-9:9	-
C. Phase Three: To the Departure to Jerusalem	14:13-18:35	6:30-9:50	9:10-56	6:1-7:9

To be sure, each gospel writer has his own sequence of events and they vary somewhat in the phase one section, as is illustrated from the [detailed listing](#) on the life of Christ posted at Cranfordville.com:

Matthew	Mark	Luke
17 Prophetic Preaching	04 Gospel of the Kingdom	21 Popular Teaching
18 Four Fishermen called	05 Four fishermen called	22 Rejection at Nazareth
19 Preaching in Galilee	06 Sabbath exorcism	23 Sabbath exorcism
20-47 Sermon on Mount	07 Peter's Mother-in-law healed	24 Peter's Mother-in-law healed
48 Leper cleansed	08 Preaching in Galilee	25 Preaching in Galilee
49 Centurion's servant healed	09 Leper Cleansed	26 Fishermen called
50 Peter's mother-in-law healed	10 Paralytic healed	27 Leper cleansed
51 Would-be followers	11 Calling of Levi	28 Paralytic healed

Matthew follows Mark sequentially in the first two pericopes (17 & 18), and then inserts some extra material and rearranges some of the subsequent sequence. Luke pretty much follows the Markan order of events, with the exception of the insertion of the Rejection at Nazareth (#22) into his sequence and his listing of the calling of the fishermen (#26) somewhat later in the sequence. Although we can't know the exact sequence of events during the beginning weeks of ministry in Galilee, it is clear that early on Jesus began gathering around him the Twelve who would comprise the inner circle of followers and would later



on be designated as apostles. Four Galilean fishermen were among the first to be chosen by Christ for that group.

Luke's distinctive approach to this event is set forth in a helpful way by Robert Tannehill in the Luke volume in *Abingdon New Testament Commentaries* (iPreach online):

This scene, in which Jesus chooses his first disciples, replaces the scene of Jesus calling four fishermen in Matt 4:18-22 and Mark 1:16-20. Luke's scene is similar to those in Matthew and Mark in the following respects: (1) the new disciples are fishermen; (2) Jesus' statement to them relates to their previous role as fishermen; and (3) the fishermen leave and follow Jesus. But Luke's story has developed in a unique way through inclusion of a wondrous catch of fish. This aspect of the story is related to [John 21:1-11](#), which, however, has a postresurrection setting. The setting of Luke's story differs also from Matthew and Mark, which give no indication of previous contact between Jesus and the fishermen. In Luke, Jesus has already taught in Capernaum and has healed many, including Simon's mother-in-law. Simon Peter already knows something of Jesus' mission and power before he is asked to share in Jesus' work. Thus a basis has been laid for his acceptance of Jesus' call.

The four men were two sets of brothers: (1) Peter and Andrew; (2) James and John. Interestingly, Luke does not mention Andrew, although the other two gospels do. The online Eastons Bible Dictionary has some helpful description of Peter:

originally called Simon (=Simeon ,i.e., "hearing"), a very common Jewish name in the New Testament. He was the son of Jona (Matthew 16:17). His mother is nowhere named in Scripture. He had a younger brother called Andrew, who first brought him to Jesus (John 1:40-42). His native town was Bethsaida, on the western coast of the Sea of Galilee, to which also Philip belonged. Here he was brought up by the shores of the Sea of Galilee, and was trained to the occupation of a fisher. His father had probably died while he was still young, and he and his brother were brought up under the care of Zebedee and his wife Salome (Matthew 27:56; Mark 15:40; 16:1). There the four youths, Simon, Andrew, James, and John, spent their boyhood and early manhood in constant fellowship. Simon and his brother doubtless enjoyed all the advantages of a religious training, and were early instructed in an acquaintance with the Scriptures and with the great prophecies regarding the coming of the Messiah. They did not probably enjoy, however, any special training in the study of the law under any of the rabbis. When Peter appeared before the Sanhedrin, he looked like an "unlearned man" (Acts 4:13).

Floyd Filson in the *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* article on Peter provides us with some background on Peter's name:

The NT uses four names to refer to Peter. Least used is the Hebrew name Symeon (שִׁמְעוֹן; Σέμεων), which appears only in Acts 15:14 and in most Greek MSS of II Pet. 1:1. The Greek name Simon (Σίμων) occurs much more often: in Matthew, five times; in Mark, six; in Luke, eleven; in John, twenty-two; in Acts, four (all in the Cornelius story); and possibly in II Peter, one (1:1). Nearly twenty times, almost all of them in John, the name Simon is used in the double name Simon Peter. The other two names, Cephas and Peter, are identical in meaning. Both mean "rock." Cephas (Κηφάς) is the Greek transliteration of the Aramaic word כֶּפֶס, "rock." It occurs in John once, in I Corinthians four times, and in Galatians four times. The Greek word πέτρος has the same meaning (John 1:42). It occurs in Matthew twenty-three times, in Mark nineteen, in Luke seventeen, in John thirty-four, in Acts fifty-six, in Galatians twice, and in I Peter and II Peter once each. Because Greek MSS vary in the name given in some passages, these figures are only approximate, but they show clearly that the name Peter is dominant in NT usage, and that the name Simon, though used often, is much less frequent. The double name Simon Peter and the phrase "Simon called Peter" recall that Simon was the earlier name and the name Peter was given later. The frequency of the name Simon in the gospels and the rare use of Symeon in the NT indicate that the name Simon was not merely a later Greek substitute for Symeon, but that the name Simon was his alternate original name and was in common use during Jesus' ministry. If this is so, it hints at some Greek background for the pre-Christian life of Peter. He was not an Aramaic-speaking Jew who had no touch with the Hellenistic forces in Galilee, but a bilingual Jew who thereby had some providential preparation for later missionary preaching.

[Simon Peter](#) would rise to great heights and sometimes fall into the depths during a life time of service to the Lord from this point. The others, [Andrew](#) along with [James](#) and [John](#), moved from this event to a life time of faithful service as well.

b. Literary

The literary form of this passage is that of a Pronouncement Story, as Robert Tannehill describes in the *Abingdon New Testament Commentary* on Luke (iPreach online):

Luke 5:1-11 is an expanded pronouncement story, coming to its climax in the pronouncement of Jesus in verse 10. Pronouncement stories are brief narratives in which the climactic element is a pronouncement (or a pronouncement and an action) that is presented as someone's response to something said or observed on a particular occasion. Thus a pronouncement story consists primarily of a situation provoking a response and the resulting response. It is a common literary type in Greco-Roman literature, where it is sometimes called a chreia. (For a collection of many examples, see Robbins 1989.)

Luke 5:1-11 is an expanded pronouncement story because it contains a provision wonder. A provision wonder in the Gospels presents Jesus providing a wondrous supply of food or drink for people. Besides the stories of great catches of fish in Luke and John, there are stories of Jesus feeding crowds in the wilderness with a few loaves and fish (Matt 14:13-21; 15:32-39; Mark 6:32-44; 8:1-10; Luke 9:10-17; John 6:1-15) and of Jesus providing wine for a wedding (John 2:1-11). The provision stories tend to take on symbolic significance.

Thus the climax of the narrative is going to be seen toward the end of the text with a significant declaration of Jesus. In this case, it is in verse 10: "Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching people." The miraculous catch of fish simply heightens this forceful point. A Jesus who can enable Peter to catch fish can also enable him to catch people as well.

II. Message

Luke's version of the episode falls into three small segments: (1) vv. 1-3; (2) vv. 4-7; (3) vv. 9-11. We will treat the last two segments under a general topic.

a. Teaching from the boat, vv. 1-3

Matt. 4:18a (NRSV)

18 As he walked by the Sea of Galilee,...

Mark 1:16-20 (NRSV)

6 As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee,...

Luke 5:1-3 (NRSV)

1 Once while Jesus was standing beside the lake of Gennesaret, and the crowd was pressing in on him to hear the word of God, 2 he saw two boats there at the shore of the lake; the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. 3 He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little way from the shore. Then he sat down and taught the crowds from the boat.

Comments

Quite clearly, Luke sets up his narrative in a significantly different manner that does either Matthew or Mark. Matthew essentially follows his Markan source, but Luke goes a very different direction from Mark.

Luke uses the description Gennesaret rather than Galilee, although the two terms refer to the same place. The sea is a rather large inland lake of fresh water, as K.W. Clark describes in the *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* article on the Sea of Galilee:

The shape of the Lake of Galilee is most like a great heart (more so than like a harp or a pear, as some have suggested). It is ca. thirteen miles long (N-S) and at its greatest width ca. eight miles, between el-Mejdel (Tarichaea) and Khersa (Gergesa). Its waters vary from green to blue, encircled by a ring of yellow or green—depending upon the season. The high mountains around it fall off sharply, especially on the E side, and thus indicate a conformation which

reaches a considerable depth — around two hundred feet below the surface, which is itself almost seven hundred feet below sea level. Almost surrounded by mountains of considerable height, the lake is a vast bowl with an extended lip on the NW (the Plain of Gennesaret) and open at the N and S ends. As a natural phenomenon, the lake and the Jordan rift are of great age, the result of volcanic activity in the Cenozoic era. Around the lake, the action of basaltic intrusions and cappings have modified the limestone mass of the mountains.

Early on in his public ministry Jesus was teaching crowds of people and used Peter's boat at the edge of the water as a platform to do his teaching. Exactly what Jesus was saying to the crowds, Luke doesn't mention. I suspect Peter was listening as well.

What can we learn from this? One thing that strikes me is that while Peter was going about his job in a normal daily routine he had the opportunity to meet Jesus in a way that changed his life forever. It wasn't while Peter was worshipping God in the synagogue, nor while attending a festival in the temple in Jerusalem. If there's insight to be gleaned from this segment, it is that we must not ever confine Jesus to the church building. He encounters people everywhere and during the workaday world, not just on Sunday in a church building.

b. Teaching Peter about fishing, vv. 4-11

Matt. 4:18b-22 (NRSV)

18 As he walked 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.

19 And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fish for people." 20 Immediately they left their nets and followed him. 21 As he went from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John, in the boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets, and he called them. 22 Immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed him.

Mark 1:16b-20 (NRSV)

16 As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the sea — for they were fishermen.

17 And Jesus said to them, "Follow me and I will make you fish for people." 18 And immediately they left their nets and followed him. 19 As he went a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John, who were in their boat mending the nets. 20 Immediately he called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men, and followed him.

Luke 5:4-11 (NRSV)

4 When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch." 5 Simon answered, "Master, we have worked all night long but have caught nothing. Yet if you say so, I will let down the nets." 6 When they had done this, they caught so many fish that their nets were beginning 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 that they began to sink. 8 But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!" 9 For he and all who were with him were amazed at the catch of fish that they had taken; 10 and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. Then Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching people." 11 When they had brought their boats to shore, they left everything and followed him.

Comments

Very clearly Luke has cast his story in a very different way than did Matthew and Mark who go the same basic direction in their narratives. Luke focuses attention on Peter after Jesus finished speaking to the crowds.

Peter needed to learn a lesson in fishing, or, perhaps more accurately, about Jesus as a fisherman. So Jesus instructed Peter where to find the fish. With a mild protest that they had already tried all night long to catch some fish without success, Peter agreed to follow the instructions. Amazingly they caught so many fish that they could hardly get them all into shore. James and John joined them in a second boat and both were loaded down to the point of sinking.

Peter's reaction was pointed toward a realization that Jesus was much more than a mere mortal human being: "Go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!" He recognized that he stood in the presence of the divine! Such recognition automatically rivets attention also on our own personal sinfulness. Robert Tannehill in the Abingdon NT Commentaries volume on Luke calls attention something helpful:

In 5:1-11 Simon comes to this decision [to leave everything] by steps of deepening involvement with Jesus. First he allows Jesus to use his boat. Then, contrary to his own judgment as a fisherman, he follows Jesus' directions and lets down his nets. The amazing catch of fish is recognized by Simon as a manifestation of divine power. This by itself does not lead Simon to follow Jesus, however. Indeed, Simon says, "Go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!" The manifestation of the holy does not attract but repels, for Simon sees himself as an unworthy sinner, threatened by the holy. Simon's decision to leave all and follow Jesus can only come after Jesus' reassurance ("do not be afraid") and promise ("from now on you will be catching people"). This promise opens a new future and is equivalent to forgiveness. It enables Simon to stop viewing himself as a sinner and to become a companion of Jesus. Interestingly, the episode moves through the same three steps as the call of Isaiah ([Isa 6:1-8](#)): from revelation of the holy to confession of sin to call.

Much later on Peter would have a somewhat similar experience, again by this sea shore. After Jesus' death, Peter decided to return back to Galilee and his fishing. Jesus again encountered him ([John 21:1-19](#), NRSV):

1 After these things Jesus showed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias; and he showed himself in this way. 2 Gathered there together were Simon Peter, Thomas called the Twin, Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples. 3 Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We will go with you." They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing. 4 Just after daybreak, Jesus stood on the beach; but the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. 5 Jesus said to them, "Children, you have no fish, have you?" They answered him, "No." 6 He said to them, "Cast the net to the right side of the boat, and you will find some." So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in because there were so many fish. 7 That disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on some clothes, for he was naked, and jumped into the sea. 8 But the other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, only about a hundred yards off. 9 When they had gone ashore, they saw a charcoal fire there, with fish on it, and bread. 10 Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish that you have just caught." 11 So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, a hundred fifty-three of them; and though there were so many, the net was not torn. 12 Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast." Now none of the disciples dared to ask him, "Who are you?" because they knew it was the Lord. 13 Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. 14 This was now the third time that Jesus appeared to the disciples after he was raised from the dead.

15 When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my lambs." 16 A second time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Tend my sheep." 17 He said to him the third time, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, "Do you love me?" And he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep. 18 Very truly, I tell you, when you were younger, you used to fasten your own belt and to go wherever you wished. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will fasten a belt around you and take you where you do not wish to go." 19 (He said this to indicate the kind of death by which he would glorify God.) After this he said to him, "Follow me."

Although Peter struggled at times to grasp the significance of Jesus and how to serve him, Peter was spiritually sensitive enough to realize that Jesus was someone very special. Once he began preaching the gospel about the Lord he spoke bravely and powerfully in behalf of his Savior, as the book of Acts records beginning with the sermon on the day of Pentecost in chapter two. He would become the leader of the

Christian movement in its early days after Jesus' ascension back to Heaven. The beginning of that pilgrimage is described here in chapter five by Luke.

The second segment of vv. 4-11 focuses on Jesus' calling in verses 9 through 11: "9 For he and all who were with him were amazed at the catch of fish that they had taken; 10 and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. Then Jesus said to Simon, 'Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching people.' 11 When they had brought their boats to shore, they left everything and followed him." Peter's partners, James and John, also recognize the special nature of Jesus and then share in the calling to follow Jesus. It is here that the narratives of Matthew and Mark intersect that of Luke. They narrate the events as separate episodes of calling of the two sets of brothers, while Luke collapsed this into a single event in his narrative.

The Markan and Matthean texts stress the words of Jesus, "Follow me and I will make you fish for people." Luke simply declares, "they left everything and followed him." Very insightfully the Markan and Matthean narratives characterize this episode as Jesus having 'called' these men to serve him. Much like the prophets in the Old Testament God issued a summons to serve him. At the heart of this was restructuring of one's life with service to God as the highest priority. For Peter, Andrew, James, and John, their lives would never be the same again. The beckoning call of Jesus is first to not be afraid, and then to come serve.

Again Robert Tannehill has some very helpful insights:

As a result of their encounter with Jesus, the fishermen "left everything and followed him" (v. 11). This introduces a Lukan theme: those called by Jesus must leave everything (cf. 5:28; 14:33; 18:22-23). Although possessions are meant in some of these passages, we do not understand the radical nature of the disciples' decision unless we recognize the importance of a local social network, especially the kinship group, to people of that time. Social science criticism distinguishes our individualistic culture from the "dyadic" or group-oriented culture of the first-century Mediterranean world. People did not think of themselves as independent individuals but took their identity from a social unit, particularly the family, which required loyalty and conformity. "Group-oriented persons internalize and make their own what others say, do, and think about them because they believe it is necessary, if they are to be human beings, to live out the expectations of others" (Malina and Neyrey in Neyrey 1991, 73; cf. 72-74). "Leaving everything" means leaving the family (cf. 14:26) and leaving one's means of support. The family was the primary producing unit in antiquity. Whatever economic security there was came through the family. In leaving their families these men were abandoning family responsibilities and their own security. However, we will see later that they moved from an original family to a "surrogate family," the community of disciples (cf. 8:19-21), as the primary group (cf. Malina and Rohrbaugh 1992, 335-36). This decision did not suddenly make the disciples individuals in the modern sense, but it would take some strength and independence to decide against the group to which society gave the highest value.

What can we learn from these verses? For one thing, Peter's experience of commitment came as an outgrowth of his recognition of the very presence of God in the person of Jesus. With that recognition, came a commitment to follow Jesus at substantial personal cost. Leaving family and job required high level commitment. In the later times of hardship and suffering that Peter endured for Christ, I'm quite confident that he reached back to this early encounter as a reassurance that his commitment was indeed worthwhile.

We should also note that this commitment did not make Peter perfect or even mature spiritually overnight. He would go through times of deep struggle -- being told by Jesus "Get behind me, Satan" and a vision on a rooftop to reach out to Gentiles when that would endanger his life -- and yet would emerge stronger and more deeply committed. His sermons in the book of Acts are powerful presentations of the message of salvation in Jesus Christ. He stood up to enemies among the Jewish leadership courageously, as Luke will describe later in Acts. If so with the apostle Peter, we should expect some ups and downs in our spiritual pilgrimage as well.

In this 'all out commitment' to leave everything behind, these men were privileged to enter into a new 'family' relationship, that of the Twelve closest followers of Jesus. This new community was based on spiritual values, rather than blood relationships, and would be deeper and more lasting. Participation in this spiritual community is critical to the individual growing spiritually and serving effectively. This is just as true today as it was back then.