

# Follow Me

March 1, 2020 – Matthew 4:17-5:1

**1. The Call of Jesus is an act of \_\_\_\_\_.**

- *“he saw two brothers...casting a net” (4:18)*
- *“You did not choose me, but I chose you.” (Jn 15:16)*

**2. The Call is given without regard to the \_\_\_\_\_ of the person called.**

- *“they were fishermen” (4:18)*

**3. The Call demands \_\_\_\_\_ and renunciation.**

- *“They left the boat and their father and followed him.” (4:22)*

**4. Jesus calls to \_\_\_\_\_ alone.**

- *“Follow me!...I will make...” (4:19)*

**5. Following Jesus as a disciple is distinct from \_\_\_\_\_ him as the crowd.**

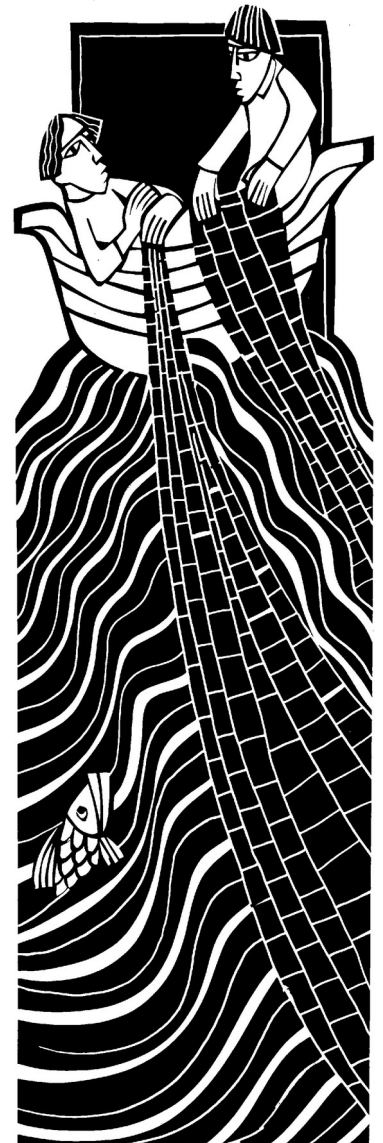
- *“And great crowds followed him...” (4:25)*

**6. To be a disciple of Jesus is to be called out \_\_\_\_\_ the crowd, \_\_\_\_\_ the crowd.**

- *“Seeing the crowds, he went up on the mountain... his disciples came to him.” (5:1)*

**7. The Call of Jesus fills our present lives with hopeful \_\_\_\_\_.**

- *“Go and make disciples...I am with you always.” (28:19-20)*



“Make disciples” was the last command that Jesus gave to His own. We know little or nothing of how Matthew fulfilled that command in his lifetime. But we do know how his book has gone on making disciples in all ages. It can make disciples of us again in our uncertain century and give us a disciple’s certainty again, if we will give him a hearing. If we will do Matthew the honor of hearing him out on his own terms, we can hear again the call which he once heard. And the Spirit which works in his book can make us capable of heeding that “Follow Me!” too. The Christ who called Matthew can be our Christ, to shape and mold our wills with His whole gift and His whole claim of grace. He will write the Law into our hearts, make pure and acceptable our worship, and put serene confidence into our bread-and-butter lives. He will equip us for conflict with the irreligious and the falsely religious world about us and make us capable of doing what His disciples must do, without harshness and without feverish self-will, with prayer and with love. He will give us courage for the narrow way and the strait gate. He will close our ears to seductive prophecy and close our eyes to the false splendor of “successful” churchmanship. He will enable us to live lives of eschatological responsibility under His messianic word, a life in which hearing and doing are one.

The Christ whom Matthew proclaims will send us out on missionary paths that run through all the world, paths of defeat and persecution, perhaps, but also paths on which we can witness to Him, speak in the power of His Spirit, and win His victories according to His will. He can and will make us strong to face the divisions and confusions of our day undismayed. He will give us eyes to see the Kingdom where men see it not, in the Sower who goes out to sow His seed. He will give us ears to hear the footfalls of His judgment in the noisy clutter of our world and teach us to know with fear and trembling the precarious preciousness of the grace of God.

He will fit us for fellowship by removing all greatness and all hardness from our hearts, by giving us an eye for His little ones, a heart that can forgive wholly and again and again, and a love which has the courage to tell a brother his fault.

He will plant in our hearts a high hope which will make us faithful to Him within the orders of this world, where he has placed us and where we stand, while we await Him and the new world He brings. He can give us courage to confess Him and proclaim Him. And He can give us the wise sobriety which can read all history as the trumpets of His advent and the world’s rebirth.

He will judge us with his cross and forgive us with His resurrection. He will melt down the stubborn stuff of our heroic manhood and remold us into men [and women] of God.

He will make disciples of us; He will make us the holy, Christian, apostolic church. It will not be a very brilliant church perhaps. Perhaps we shall not be a large church, this church created by the Christ of Matthew; perhaps not a very successful church, not so well integrated in our communities, not so well accepted as we once were. Perhaps we shall even be the persecuted church again.

But we shall be church, real church, His church; and we shall live forever. We shall rise from our graves and break through the gates of death when He shall come and cry once more, “Follow Me!”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Martin Franzmann, *Follow Me: Discipleship According to Matthew*, St Louis: Concordia, 1982. Pages 225-6.