SMITH FOR CHRIST

TEACHING THE WORD · WATCHING THE TIMES



DEEP DIVE

Luke

Chapter Five, Verses 1–39

Not the Righteous but Sinners — a borrowed boat, a leper's touch, a hole in the roof, and a tax collector's party

NASB 1995 | VERSE BY VERSE | FOUR VOICES | WITH DIAGRAMS

By the lake of Gennesaret a tired fisherman lets down his nets at Jesus' word and falls on his knees a sinner; then a leper is touched, a paralyzed man is forgiven through a hole in the roof, and a tax collector leaves his booth to throw a feast for the Physician who came to call sinners. Read through four teachers — **David Guzik**, **R.C. Sproul**, **C.H. Spurgeon** and **Matthew Henry** — with the Greek behind Luke's key words.

THE PASSAGE

Luke 5:1–39

deep water · cleansed · forgiven · new wine

THE METHOD

Verse by Verse

Color-coded by teacher

WHAT'S INSIDE

Contents

Four movements from the boat on the lake to the new wine at Levi's table

—	**How to Read This Study** · *the four voices & their colors*	3
—	**Before the Passage** · *from the synagogue at Capernaum to the shore of the lake*	3
I	**Put Out into the Deep** · *Luke 5:1–11 · the catch and the call*	4
II	**I Am Willing; Be Cleansed** · *Luke 5:12–16 · the leper touched*	6
III	**Authority to Forgive Sins** · *Luke 5:17–26 · the paralytic forgiven*	8
IV	**The Physician and the New Wine** · *Luke 5:27–39 · Levi and the new wine*	10
V	**The Passage in the Whole Bible** · *cross-references*	12
†	**At a Glance** · *the four voices side by side*	14
†	**Key Insights & Questions for the Table** · *discussion*	14
†	**Sources** · *where each voice comes from*	15



"Do not fear, from now on you will be catching men." — Luke 5:10

SECTION I · THE PASSAGE

Luke 5:1–39

Not the Righteous but Sinners — Four sinners meet Jesus by the lake — and each finds He came for exactly that kind of man

† How to Read This Study

This study walks Luke 5 in 4 movements, in Luke's own order. Each movement opens with the full NASB 1995 text of those verses, marked with the Berean colors and shapes; then the Greek behind the key words; then the teachers, each in his own color — **David Guzik**, the pastor who walks the text verse by verse; **R.C. Sproul**, the theologian who presses every word for its doctrine; **C.H. Spurgeon**, the preacher who turns the doctrine into a call to the heart; and **Matthew Henry**, the Puritan commentator who gathers it into plain, practical counsel. The figures draw the passage so you can see where Luke is going. Read the Scripture first; then let each voice add its angle.

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word — R.C. SPROUL · Ligonier · St. Andrew's
C.H. SPURGEON · Metropolitan Tabernacle — MATTHEW HENRY · Commentary on the Whole Bible

HOW THIS STUDY IS MARKED △ God — His character & actions · Command / instruction · Key repeated word · ⚠ Sin / warning · ☆ Promise / blessing · Time / place / contrast

KEY VERSE · LUKE 5:32

"△ I have not come to call the righteous but ☆ sinners to repentance."

† Before the Passage

Luke 4 ended with Jesus rejected at Nazareth and welcomed at Capernaum. He taught in its synagogue, cast out a demon, and "entered Simon's home," where Simon's mother-in-law lay sick with a high fever (4:38). Simon had already seen what Jesus could do in his own house. When the crowds tried to keep Jesus there, He answered, "I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, for I was sent for this purpose" (4:43). Chapter 5 opens on the shore near that same town.

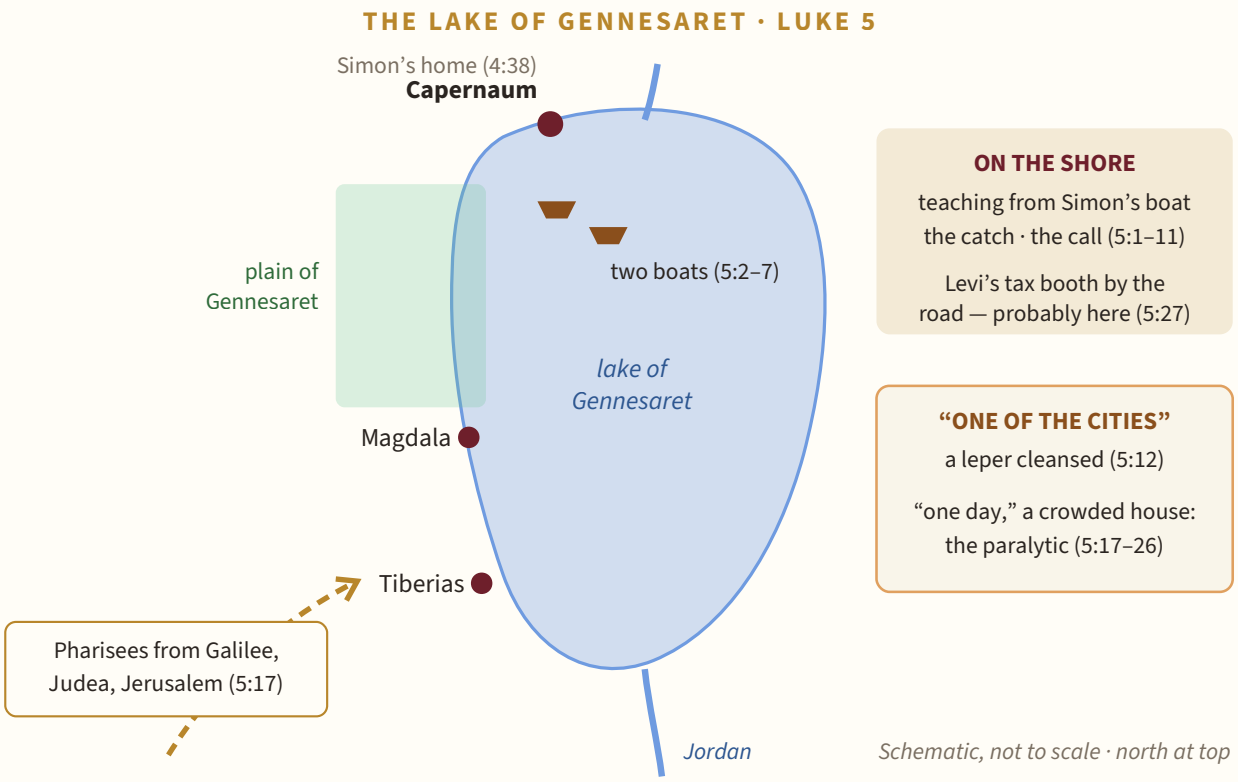
Luke calls the Sea of Galilee "the lake of Gennesaret" (v. 1), after the fertile plain on its northwest shore. It is a freshwater lake about thirteen miles long, and its fishing fed the towns around it. Fishermen worked at night, when the fish came up to feed, and washed and mended their nets in the morning — which is exactly where Jesus finds Simon, James and John (vv. 2, 5). Matthew and Mark give a short account of the call by the sea (Mark 1:16–20); Luke tells the fuller story of the catch that came before "they left everything and followed Him" (v. 11).

Luke was a physician (Colossians 4:14), and it shows. Matthew and Mark say "a leper"; Luke says "a man covered with leprosy" (v. 12) — literally "full of leprosy." Under the Law such a man had to live alone outside

the camp, tear his clothes and cry "Unclean! Unclean!" (Leviticus 13:45–46). Only a priest could declare him clean again, with sacrifices (Leviticus 14) — which is why Jesus sends him to the priest (v. 14).

This chapter also brings the opposition onstage. The Pharisees appear in Luke for the first time at verse 17, with teachers of the law "from every village of Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem," and in the same scene Jesus first calls Himself "the Son of Man" (v. 24). From here the questions come one after another — who can forgive sins (v. 21), why He eats with sinners (v. 30), why His disciples do not fast (v. 33) — and chapter 6 will carry them into the Sabbath.

FIGURE · THE LAKE OF GENNESARET



Luke 5 happens on and near the lake: the catch off the shore by Capernaum, a leper and a paralytic in nearby towns, and critics who walked up from Judea and Jerusalem.

I
MOVEMENT

LUKE 5:1–11

Put Out into the Deep

A borrowed boat, a night of nothing, and a catch that sends Simon to his knees

[1] Now it happened that while the crowd was pressing around Him and △ listening to the word of God, He was standing by the lake of Gennesaret; [2] and He saw two boats lying at the edge of the lake; but the fishermen had gotten out of them and were washing their nets. [3] And He got into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little way from the land. And He sat down and began teaching the people from the boat. [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 and said, "Master, we worked hard all night and caught nothing, but I will do as You say*
and let down the nets." 6 *When they had done this, they enclosed a great quantity of fish, and their nets began to*
break; 7 *so they signaled to their partners in the other boat for them to come and help them. And they came and*
filled both of the boats, so that they began to sink. 8 *But when Simon Peter saw that, he fell down at Jesus' feet,*
saying, "Go away from me Lord, for I am a sinful man!" 9 *For amazement had seized him and all his*
companions because of the catch of fish which they had taken; 10 *and so also were James and John, sons of*
Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not fear, from now on you will be
catching men." 11 *When they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed Him.*

LUKE 5:1-11

"Then I said, "Woe is me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I live among a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.""

ISAIAH 6:5

ἐπιστάτα

EPISTATA · "MASTER" · G1988

Simon's first word to Jesus is *epistatēs*, "one set over," a boss or overseer. Only Luke uses it — seven times, and always of Jesus (5:5; 8:24, 45; 9:33, 49; 17:13). It is a title of respect for a man in charge. Three verses later, after the catch, Simon calls Him something else: "Lord" (*kyrie*, v. 8). He got into the boat with a Master and fell at the feet of the Lord.

ζωγρῶν

ZŌGRŌN · "CATCHING (ALIVE)" · G2221

From *zōos*, alive, and *agreuō*, to catch: to take alive. It appears only twice in the New Testament — here, and in 2 Timothy 2:26 of men "held captive" by the devil. The fish in Simon's nets were caught to die; the men Simon will catch are taken alive, out of one captivity into life. The participle with "you will be" describes an ongoing work: from now on, this is what you will be doing.

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik notices the order of the story: Jesus borrowed Peter's boat first, then repaid him beyond measure — "Peter could not give something to Jesus without Jesus giving even more back to him." Peter knew fishing, and night was the time for it, but he obeyed the word anyway, and the lesson is simple: "When Jesus directs our work, it makes all the difference." Peter's fear at his own sin is met with "Do not fear," because "God wants to relate to us on the principle of love, not the principle of a cowering fear." Catching men alive, he says, is the point of evangelism: "it isn't to bring dead people into a building, but to bring real life."

R.C. SPROUL · Ligonier · St. Andrew's

Sproul's "The Catch of Fish" (17 June 2012) treats the catch as an object lesson. Peter obeyed, but reluctantly; the fish did not hesitate at all — "The fish were jumping to their deaths at the bidding of their Master." "Those were Jesus' fish," and the One who made them deserves full obedience: "If the Lord God omnipotent commands you to do something, you do it." Peter's "Go away from me" is how every sinner feels before holiness, yet "What Peter needed more than anything in the world was a Savior." So Sproul pleads: "You stop being a fugitive," and then "all you want to do is get as close as you possibly can to Jesus and follow Him the rest of your life."

C.H. SPURGEON · Metropolitan Tabernacle

Spurgeon's "The Two Draughts of Fishes" (No. 443, 6 April 1862) sets this catch beside the one in John 21. Here the boats are a picture of gospel ministry: preachers are fishermen who work hard, fail often and must keep casting. God uses means, but means do nothing without the Lord's presence: "In the first case, Christ was in the ship." The nets broke and the boats began to sink, and Spurgeon reads that as the visible church, gathering good and bad alike: "Luke does not tell us how many were caught the first time, for there were some of them not worth the counting." "The first pictures to us the visible, the second the invisible." And here, "the disciples had to forsake all and follow Christ."

MATTHEW HENRY · Commentary on the Whole Bible

Henry sees in the borrowed boat and the miraculous haul a sign of Christ's authority over the creatures and a preview of the apostles' work. Simon's answer is his model for every worker: "We must do our duty, and then leave the event to God." The overflowing nets show the size of Christ's pay: "Christ's recompences for services done to his name are abundant, they are superabundant." And when the four leave their boats, Henry promises them company on the road: "Those that will be constant followers of Christ shall have him a constant guide to them."

II
MOVEMENT

LUKE 5:12–16

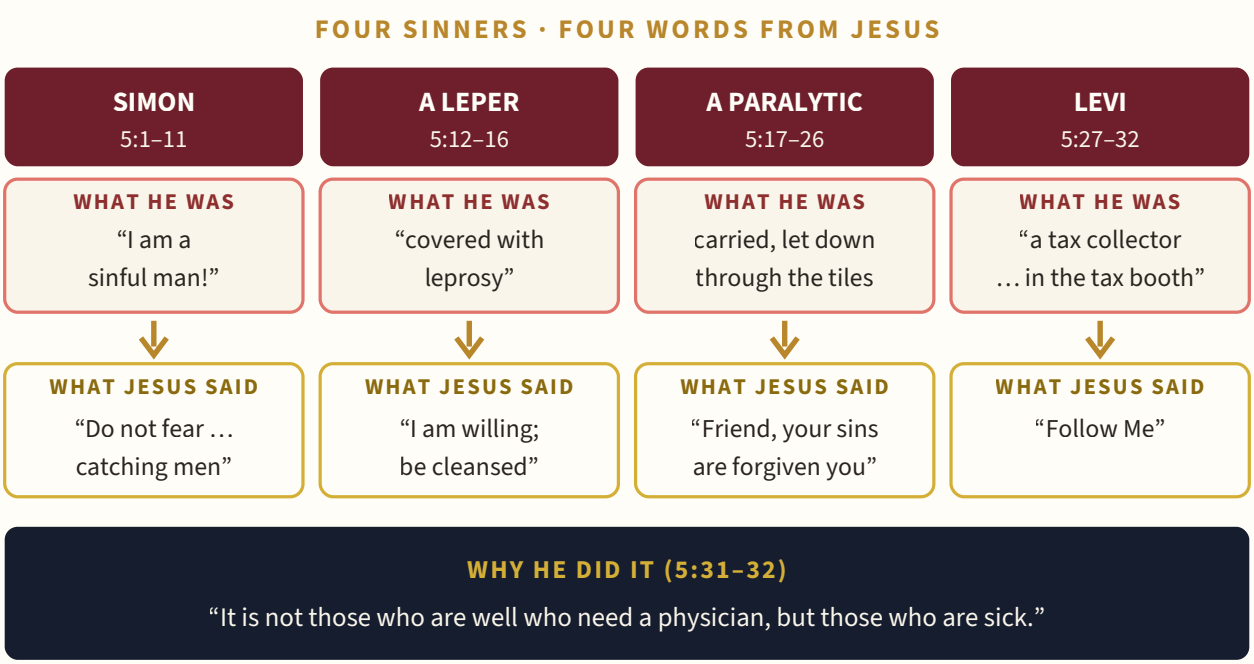
I Am Willing; Be Cleansed

A man full of leprosy, a hand that touches, and a Savior who slips away to pray

12 *While He was in one of the cities, behold, there was* ⚠ *a man covered with leprosy; and when he saw Jesus, he fell on his face and implored Him, saying, "Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean."* 13 *And He* △ *stretched out His hand and touched him, saying, "*△ *I am willing; be cleansed." And immediately the leprosy left him.* 14 *And He ordered him to tell no one, "But go and show yourself to the priest and make an offering for your cleansing, just as Moses commanded, as a testimony to them."* 15 *But the news about Him was spreading even farther, and large crowds were gathering to hear Him and to be healed of their sicknesses.* 16 *But Jesus Himself* ◷ *would often slip away to the wilderness and pray.*

LUKE 5:12–16

FIGURE · FOUR SINNERS, FOUR WORDS



Read each column top to bottom: what the man was when he met Jesus, then what Jesus said — and the bar at the bottom says why.

λέπρα

LEPRA · "LEPROSY" · G3014

Only four New Testament uses, all of this healing (Matthew 8:3; Mark 1:42; Luke 5:12, 13). The Greek and Hebrew words covered a range of serious skin diseases, not only what doctors now call Hansen's disease. Luke the physician alone says the man was "full" of it (*plērēs lepras*; NASB "covered with"): an advanced case. Sproul: "One who was diagnosed with leprosy was not simply confirmed to be ill, but considered to be unclean." The man asks to be made *clean*, and Jesus answers in the same word: "be cleansed."

ὑποχωρῶν

HYPOCHŌRŌN · "WOULD … SLIP AWAY" · G5298

From *hypo*, under, and *chōreō*, to make room or withdraw: to go back quietly, to retire. Only Luke uses it (5:16; 9:10). Here it stands in a periphrastic form ("He was withdrawing") that describes a habit, which the NASB catches with "would often slip away." The busier the crowds became (v. 15), the more regularly He went off alone to pray. Luke shows Jesus praying more than any other Gospel does (3:21; 6:12; 9:18, 28; 11:1; 22:41).

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik notes that the leper had no doubt about Jesus' power, only His willingness, and that is our usual problem: "It is common for people to doubt the love of God more than His power." Jesus answered the deeper need too. "Jesus did not have to touch the leper in order to heal him," yet He touched a man no one had touched for years, and Guzik borrows Barclay's line: "The love in the eyes of God compensated him for the hate in the eyes of men." The priest's inspection would be a testimony. And when the crowds grew, "The demands of life pushed Jesus to prayer, not from it."

R.C. SPROUL · Ligonier · St. Andrew's

Sproul's "Healing of the Leper" (24 June 2012) explains that leprosy in Israel meant exile as well as illness: "One who was diagnosed with leprosy was not simply confirmed to be ill, but considered to be unclean." The man asked to be made clean, and "When a leper approached Jesus, he had no doubt that Christ could make him clean." Sproul defends his "if You are willing" against teachers who call such prayers unbelief; God is sovereign, and a "no" is still an answer — "I've never had an unanswered prayer." Jesus sent him to the priest because the Law required it: "You have to go through all of the ritual that is involved, including the offering of the sacrifice." Then Jesus withdrew to pray.

C.H. SPURGEON · Metropolitan Tabernacle

Spurgeon's exposition of the chapter admires the leper's plea: "This was splendid faith," an adoration of the noblest kind, putting everything on Christ's will. The cleansing is a picture of the gospel: "This is just what Christ can do also in the spiritual realm." Sending the man to the priest shows that "As long as the ceremonial law was in force, Christ very diligently obeyed it, and bade others do the same." And verse 16 is a word to every worker: "O servant of God, when thou art succeeding best in thy service, imitate thy Lord, withdraw thyself and pray!"

MATTHEW HENRY · Commentary on the Whole Bible

Henry admires the leper's humble faith, which put the whole matter on Christ's will, and he answers with the gospel's plain offer: "He is as willing to cleanse leprous souls as they can be to be cleansed." Jesus charged the man to tell no one and to go to the priest, honoring the Law that He came to fulfill. When the crowds pressed harder, He went away to pray, and Henry draws the lesson for every busy believer: "Secret prayer must be performed secretly." Public usefulness must be fed by private communion with God.

III
MOVEMENT

LUKE 5:17–26

Authority to Forgive Sins

Four friends, a hole in the roof, and the Son of Man who forgives

17 *One day He was teaching; and there were some Pharisees and teachers of the law sitting there, who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem; and △ the power of the Lord was present for Him to perform healing.* 18 *And some men were carrying on a bed a man who was paralyzed; and they were trying to bring him in and to set him down in front of Him.* 19 *But not finding any way to bring him in because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and let him down through the tiles with his stretcher, into the middle of the crowd, in front of Jesus.* 20 *Seeing their faith, He said, "☆ Friend, your sins are forgiven you."* 21 *The scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, "Who is this man who speaks blasphemies? △ Who can forgive sins, but God alone?"* 22 *But Jesus, aware of their reasonings, answered and said to them, "Why are you reasoning in your hearts?* 23 *"Which is easier, to say, 'Your ⟳ sins have been forgiven you,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'?* 24 *"But, so that you may know that △ the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins,"—He said to the paralytic—"I*

> *say to you, get up, and pick up your stretcher and go home.” [25] Immediately he got up before them, and picked up what he had been lying on, and went home glorifying God. [26] They were all struck with astonishment and began glorifying God; and they were filled with fear, saying, “We have seen remarkable things today.”*
>
> LUKE 5:17–26

> *“I, even I, am the one who wipes out your transgressions for My own sake, And I will not remember your sins.”*
>
> ISAIAH 43:25

ἀφέωνταί

APHEŌNTAI · “ARE FORGIVEN” · G863

The verb *aphiēmi* means to send away, release, let go — the same word for leaving nets or forgiving debts. In verses 20 and 23 it is perfect tense: “your sins have been sent away, and stay sent away.” The scribes are right that this is God’s work — Isaiah 43:25: “I, even I, am the one who wipes out your transgressions.” They are wrong only about who is standing in front of them.

ἐξουσία · παράδοξα

EXOUSIA · “AUTHORITY” · G1849 · PARADOXA · “REMARKABLE THINGS” · G3861

Exousia is the right and power to act — delegated, lawful authority (v. 24). “The Son of Man” appears here for the first time in Luke, and the title comes from Daniel 7:13–14, where one like a Son of Man receives dominion from the Ancient of Days. The crowd’s verdict in verse 26 uses *paradoxos* — from *para*, beyond, and *doxa*, opinion: something contrary to all expectation. It occurs nowhere else in the New Testament; our word “paradox” comes from it.

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik starts with the friends. Jesus saw their faith, and “There is something lacking in faith if it can never be seen.” He quotes Spurgeon on such bearers: “They need be strong, for the burden is heavy; they need be resolute, for the work will try their faith.” Jesus went to the root first: “Jesus knew what the man’s real need was, and what his greatest need was.” The scribes were right that only God can forgive sins, so Jesus offered visible proof: “Jesus was willing to put Himself to the test in a way where the results would be immediate.”

R.C. SPROUL · Ligonier · St. Andrew’s

Sproul’s “The Authority to Forgive” (1 July 2012) watches the scene from the friends, the man, the crowd and the critics. Of the friends: “They went out of their way to do something about it.” Jesus’ word was dangerous — “to say, “Your sins are forgiven,” in front of the Pharisees and the scribes is to risk your life.” The critics had the theology right: “We know that only God has the authority to forgive sins.” Which is easier to say? “Forgiveness is something that takes place in the invisible realm—it’s hidden from our view,” so Jesus healed what could be seen. “Nothing paralyzes people more than guilt that has not been forgiven,” and “There is only one cure for guilt, and that is forgiveness.”

C.H. SPURGEON · Metropolitan Tabernacle

Spurgeon's "Carried by Four" (No. 981, 19 March 1871) takes its text from verse 16 on, and begins where Jesus did: "Neglect of private prayer is the locust which devours the strength of the church." Some men will not come to Christ unless a few believers carry them together, and the bearers must be inventive — "We must never stop at difficulties." Not all four could preach: "They could not preach, but they could hold a rope." The man's real trouble was guilt — "Sin paralyses them with despair" — and only Christ could lift it: "Thank God, when we end, Christ begins, and works right gloriously." The proof was obedience: "If thou art really saved thou wilt do what Jesus bids thee."

MATTHEW HENRY · Commentary on the Whole Bible

Henry notes that "the power of the Lord was present" even with critics in the room, and that Jesus went to the cause before the symptom: "The cords of our iniquity are the bands of our affliction." Forgiveness is the greater gift, and the healing proves the Healer has power to give it, for none can forgive sins but God. Henry finds comfort in the patience of Christ with weak faith and slow friends: "It is a comfort to us that we serve a Master that is willing to make the best of us."

IV
MOVEMENT

LUKE 5:27–39

The Physician and the New Wine

A tax collector called, a feast for sinners, and wine too new for old skins

27 *After that He went out and noticed a tax collector named Levi sitting in the tax booth, and He said to him,*
"Follow Me." 28 *And he left everything behind, and got up and began to follow Him.* 29 *And Levi gave a big*
reception for Him in his house; and there was a great crowd of tax collectors and other people who were reclining
at the table with them. 30 *The Pharisees and their scribes began grumbling at His disciples, saying, "Why do*
you eat and drink with the tax collectors and sinners?" 31 *And Jesus answered and said to them,*
"It is not those who are well who need a physician, but those who are sick. 32 *"I have not come to call the*
righteous but sinners to repentance." 33 *And they said to Him, "The disciples of John often fast and offer prayers,*
the disciples of the Pharisees also do the same, but Yours eat and drink." 34 *And Jesus said to them, "You cannot*
make the attendants of the bridegroom fast while the bridegroom is with them, can you? 35 *"But the days will*
come; and when the bridegroom is taken away from them, then they will fast in those days." 36 *And He was*
also telling them a parable: "No one tears a piece of cloth from a new garment and puts it on an old garment;
otherwise he will both tear the new, and the piece from the new will not match the old. 37 *"And no one puts*
new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the new wine will burst the skins and it will be spilled out, and the
skins will be ruined. 38 *"But new wine must be put into fresh wineskins.* 39 *"And no one, after drinking old*
wine wishes for new; for he says, 'The old is good enough.'"

LUKE 5:27–39

"It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all."

1 TIMOTHY 1:15

FIGURE · THE BRIDEGROOM AND THE NEW

THE BRIDEGROOM AND THREE PICTURES OF THE NEW (5:34–39)

NOW: THE BRIDEGROOM IS WITH THEM
a wedding — no one fasts (v34)

→

THEN: "TAKEN AWAY FROM THEM"
they will fast in those days (v35)

A NEW PATCH v36	NEW WINE vv37–38	OLD WINE v39
torn from a new garment, sewn on an old one — both are ruined	burst old skins; it "must be put into fresh wineskins"	the drinker says, "The old is good enough" — and wants nothing new

Jesus does not patch the old religion; He brings new life that needs a new container.

Guzik: "Jesus came to introduce something new, not to patch up something old."

The top bar is the timeline of the fasting question; the three boxes are the three short parables Jesus gave in answer.

τελώνης · μετάνοια

TELŌNĒS · "TAX COLLECTOR" · G5057 · METANOIA · "REPENTANCE" · G3341

A *telōnēs* bought the right to collect tolls and customs for Rome or for Herod and kept what he could squeeze above the contract; the people classed them with "sinners" (v. 30). Levi is the Matthew of Matthew 9:9. In verse 32 Luke alone records the last words of Jesus' saying: "sinners *to repentance*." *Metanoia* is a change of mind that turns the whole life around (Levi "left everything behind," v. 28). Jesus did not come to leave sinners as they were.

νέος · καινός

NEOS · "NEW (WINE)" · G3501 · KAINOS · "NEW, FRESH" · G2537

Two words for "new." *Neos* (v. 37–38) is new in time — young, just made: this season's wine, still fermenting. *Kainos* (v. 36, the new garment; v. 38, the "fresh" wineskins) is new in kind — unused, of a different quality. Young wine needs skins that can still stretch. The skins (*askos*, G779) were goatskins; old ones were brittle and split. Jesus' point: the life He brings needs a new kind of container.

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik stresses how scandalous Levi was: "Understanding how almost everyone hated tax collectors, it is remarkable to see how Jesus loved and called Levi." Levi gave up a profitable job, and the first thing he did was invite his friends, because "A saved man doesn't want to go to heaven alone." To the grumblers Jesus answered as a doctor: "Jesus is the perfect doctor to heal us of our sin." On fasting he smiles — "Basically, they thought Jesus was too happy" — but hears the shadow of the cross in "taken away." The parables mean one thing: "Jesus came to introduce something new, not to patch up something old."

R.C. SPROUL · Ligonier · St. Andrew's

In "The Call of Levi" (8 July 2012) Sproul paints how Jews hated tax collectors as collaborators with Rome. Levi left his booth and opened his house, and to the Pharisees who kept themselves apart Jesus gave His answer, which Sproul sharpens: "Nobody needs a physician more than somebody who is fatally ill but doesn't know it." This despised man — "Jesus called him to write the first of the four Gospels of the New Testament." In "New Wineskins" Sproul calls the Pharisees' extra fasts legalism — "The legalist legislates where God leaves people free" — and reads the parables as conversion: "When we come to faith in Christ, we do not merely add Him into our old way of life." "Conversion means nothing less than complete transformation."

C.H. SPURGEON · Metropolitan Tabernacle

In his exposition of verses 27–32 Spurgeon explains that Levi, or Matthew, farmed the taxes for the Roman governor — a hated trade — and that Jesus called him from the booth itself. The grumbling at Levi's feast was nothing new: "It seems that there can never be a great wonder wrought by Christ without somebody or other objecting to it." Spurgeon hears Jesus' reply as a doctor's common sense — why should He keep away from the sick to please men who think themselves healthy? He came to call sinners, and sinners are exactly the ones who answer.

MATTHEW HENRY · Commentary on the Whole Bible

Henry marvels that Christ called a publican at his post: "There is no heart too hard for the Spirit and grace of Christ to work upon." Levi's feast was his way of bringing his friends to the Physician. On the fasting question Henry hears Christ's tenderness with young disciples, who were not yet ready for hard exercises: "It was a wonder of his grace that he proportioned their exercises to their strength." And he answers the critics' comparison: "Christ's disciples, though they had not so much of the form of godliness, had more of the power of it."

V
THEME

CROSS-REFERENCES

The Passage in the Whole Bible

From Isaiah's "Woe is me" to Paul's "foremost of all"

> *"Then I said, "Woe is me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I live among a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.""*
>
> ISAIAH 6:5

> *"I acknowledged my sin to You, And my iniquity I did not hide; I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD"; And You forgave the guilt of my sin."*
>
> PSALM 32:5

> *"I kept looking in the night visions, And behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming, And He came up to the Ancient of Days And was presented before Him."*
>
> DANIEL 7:13

> *"For as a young man marries a virgin, So your sons will marry you; And as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, So your God will rejoice over you."*
>
> ISAIAH 62:5

> *"And He said to them, "Cast the net on the right-hand side of the boat and you will find a catch." So they cast, and then they were not able to haul it in because of the great number of fish."*
>
> JOHN 21:6

> *"Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come."*
>
> 2 CORINTHIANS 5:17

> *"and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will."*
>
> 2 TIMOTHY 2:26

R.C. SPROUL · Ligonier · St. Andrew's

Sproul closes "New Wineskins" with Paul's word in 2 Corinthians 5:17: "If you are in Christ, beloved, you are a new creature."

C.H. SPURGEON · Metropolitan Tabernacle

Spurgeon read the two catches of fish together, at the start and the end of the disciples' training: "The first pictures to us the visible, the second the invisible." "The first is Christ's order to every minister; the second is the secret work of his Spirit in the word."

SECTION II · STUDY HELPS

At a Glance

Four voices, one chapter

Four teachers, one chapter. Guzik walks the text and keeps pointing to Jesus' heart; Sproul presses the doctrine — holiness, the authority to forgive, conversion as transformation; Spurgeon preaches the catch and the four bearers as calls to work for souls; Henry turns each scene into counsel. They agree that Jesus seeks sinners; they lean differently on how much the old forms still matter.

THE MOVEMENT	GUZIK · the text	SPROUL · the doctrine	SPURGEON · the heart	HENRY · the counsel
I · The catch and the call	Peter gave a boat and got more back; Jesus directs the work.	The fish obeyed at once; stop being a fugitive and draw near.	Christ was in the ship; the net gathers good and bad.	Do your duty, leave the event to God; superabundant pay.
II · The leper	We doubt God's love more than His power; He touched him.	Unclean, not just ill; "if You are willing" is not unbelief.	Splendid faith; Christ kept the ceremonial law; withdraw and pray.	As willing to cleanse as we are to be cleansed; secret prayer.
III · The paralytic	Faith that can be seen; He met the greatest need first.	Only God forgives; guilt paralyzes; forgiveness is the only cure.	Carried by four: hold a rope; when we end, Christ begins.	Iniquity binds us; a Master willing to make the best of us.
IV · Levi and new wine	A saved man doesn't want to go to heaven alone; nothing patched.	Fatally ill and doesn't know it; conversion is transformation.	Every wonder of Christ draws an objector; He came for the sick.	No heart too hard; exercises proportioned to strength.

LUKE 5:1–39 · A COMPARATIVE READING

† Key Insights to Carry

- **From "Master" to "Lord."** Simon calls Jesus *epistata*, boss, in v5 and *kyrie*, Lord, in v8. Obedience to a word he did not understand became the doorway to seeing who was in his boat. THE GREEK
- **The fish obeyed before Peter did.** Sproul: "The fish were jumping to their deaths at the bidding of their Master." Creation obeys its Maker at once; sinners argue first. SPROUL
- **Caught alive.** *Zōgreō* (v10) means to take alive — used again only of men "held captive" by the devil (2 Tim 2:26). Jesus' fishermen rescue men from one captivity into life. THE GREEK
- **We doubt His love more than His power.** Guzik: "It is common for people to doubt the love of God more than His power." The leper knew Jesus could; Jesus showed him He would — with a touch. GUZIK
- **Busy ministry, more prayer.** As the crowds grew, Jesus "would often slip away" (v16). Spurgeon: "Neglect of private prayer is the locust which devours the strength of the church." SPURGEON
- **The greater need first.** The man came to walk; Jesus first said, "your sins are forgiven you" (v20). Sproul: "Nothing paralyzes people more than guilt that has not been forgiven." SPROUL
- **The critics had the right doctrine.** "Who can forgive sins, but God alone?" (v21) is correct. Jesus did not deny it; He healed the man so they would know who was speaking. THE TEXT
- **They could hold a rope.** Spurgeon: "They could not preach, but they could hold a rope." Four ordinary men carried one friend to Jesus — and Jesus saw "their faith." SPURGEON
- **Sinners — to repentance.** Luke alone records "to repentance" (v32). Jesus eats with sinners to change them, not to leave them where they were. THE TEXT

❖ **New wine, new skins.** Sproul: "When we come to faith in Christ, we do not merely add Him into our old way of life." Henry: Christ fits the exercises to the strength of young believers. HENRY

† Questions for the Table

1 **Simon had "worked hard all night and caught nothing" and still said, "I will do as You say." Where is Jesus telling me to let down the nets again after I have given up?**

When Jesus directs our work, it makes all the difference (Guzik).

5:4-6

2 **When Peter saw who Jesus was, he said, "Go away from me." In what ways do I keep Jesus at arm's length because I feel too sinful to be near Him?**

You stop being a fugitive (Sproul).

5:8-10; Isa 6:5

3 **The leper was sure Jesus could, but not sure He would. Which do I doubt more about God — His power or His love?**

He stretched out His hand and touched him.

5:12-13

4 **Who is the man I could help carry to Jesus, and what "roof" might we have to open to get him there?**

They could not preach, but they could hold a rope (Spurgeon).

5:18-20

5 **Jesus forgave the man before He healed him. What guilt is paralyzing me that only forgiveness can cure?**

There is only one cure for guilt, and that is forgiveness (Sproul).

5:20-24; Ps 32:5

6 **Am I trying to patch Jesus onto my old life, or has He given me new wine that needs new wineskins?**

Conversion means nothing less than complete transformation (Sproul).

5:36-39; 2 Cor 5:17

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Luke 5 is a parade of the wrong people: a fisherman who knows he is a sinner, a leper no one would touch, a paralyzed man carried by his friends, and a tax collector everyone hated. Jesus calls, touches, forgives and eats with every one of them. He did not come for the righteous — so there is room for you.

Teaching the Word. Watching the Times. — Smith For Christ

† Sources

Each teacher's section summarizes the pages below in our own words; short quotations are verbatim from them. Matthew Henry (1662–1714) completed his *Commentary* himself through the Gospels and Acts. Henry's Commentary and C.H. Spurgeon (1834–1892) are in the public domain; Guzik and Sproul are summarized — consult each author's own work.

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