

**Law Practices and Divine Purposes Workshop**  
**Christian Legal Society**  
**2023 National Conference**  
**Duane Horning**

**Introduction**

Jesus invaded the workspace of several career fishermen and called them to become fishers of people. How does Jesus invade our law practices and other vocations, and transform what we do to Kingdom purposes?

We will look at Jesus' first encounters with his future disciples while they were in the midst of their work lives and routines, and how he both affirmed them and changed them. We will apply these principles to our callings and law practices, and ask how Jesus calls us to use them for his purposes, to be fishers of people.

This session will be interactive. We will learn from one another how Jesus has been at work, and how he may be challenging us to look at our work differently, through Kingdom eyes and for eternal purposes.

**First Encounters**

**Where did Jesus first meet Peter, Andrew, James, and John?**

**John 1:35 43**

John [the Baptist] was standing with two of his disciples. <sup>36</sup> He looked at Jesus as He walked, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God!" <sup>37</sup> The two disciples heard him speak, and **they followed Jesus.**

<sup>38</sup> Jesus turned and saw them following, and said to them, "**What are you seeking?**" They said to him, "Rabbi (which translated means Teacher), **where are You staying?**" <sup>39</sup> He said to them, "**Come, and you will see.**" So they came and saw where He was staying, and they **stayed with him that day**; it was about the tenth hour (4:00 pm).

<sup>40</sup> One of the two who heard John speak, and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. <sup>41</sup> He first found his own brother Simon and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which translated means Christ). <sup>42</sup> He brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon the son of John; you shall be called Cephas" (which is translated Peter).

<sup>43</sup>The next day, he decided to go to Galilee.

**Matthew 3:1 – 4: 22**

3 Now in those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea ... .  
<sup>5</sup> At that time **Jerusalem was going out to him**, and all Judea and all the region around the Jordan. ...

<sup>13</sup> Then **Jesus arrived from Galilee** at the Jordan, coming to John to be baptized by him.

4 Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. ...

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<sup>12</sup> ***Now when Jesus heard that John had been taken into custody, He withdrew into Galilee;*** <sup>13</sup> ***and leaving Nazareth, He came and settled in Capernaum ....***

<sup>18</sup> Now as ***Jesus was walking by the Sea of Galilee***, He saw two brothers, Simon, who was called Peter, and his brother Andrew, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. <sup>19</sup> And He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of people." <sup>20</sup> Immediately they left their nets and followed Him. <sup>21</sup> Going on from there He saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee, and his brother John, in the boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets; and He called them. <sup>22</sup> Immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed Him.

**Mark 1:9-16**

<sup>9</sup> In those days Jesus ***came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan.*** ...

<sup>14</sup> ***Now after John was taken into custody, Jesus came into Galilee, ... .***

<sup>16</sup> ***As He was going along the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and Andrew, the brother of Simon, casting a net in the sea; for they were fishermen. ....***

**Luke 1:3; 3:1 – 5:11**

1 ... <sup>3</sup> it seemed fitting to me as well, having investigated everything carefully from the beginning, to write it out for you in **consecutive order**, most excellent Theophilus ...

3 ... <sup>2</sup> ... the word of God came to John, the son of Zechariah, in the wilderness. <sup>3</sup> He came into all the region around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins ...

<sup>19</sup> But when Herod the tetrarch was reprimanded by him regarding Herodias, his brother's wife, and regarding all the evil things which Herod had done, <sup>20</sup> *Herod* also added this to them all: he locked John up in prison.

<sup>21</sup> Now when all the people were baptized, Jesus also was baptized ...

<sup>23</sup> When He began His ministry, Jesus Himself was about thirty years old, ... .

4 Now Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness <sup>2</sup> for forty days, being tempted by the devil. ...

<sup>14</sup> Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about Him spread through all the surrounding region. <sup>15</sup> He began teaching in their synagogues and was praised by all.

<sup>16</sup> He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up; and as was His custom, He entered the synagogue on the Sabbath, and stood up to read ...

<sup>28</sup> All in the synagogue were filled with rage as they heard these things; <sup>29</sup> and they got up and drove Him out of the city, and brought Him to the crest of the hill on which their city had

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been built, so that they could throw Him down from the cliff. <sup>30</sup> But He passed through their midst and went on His way.

<sup>31</sup> He came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee. He was teaching them on the Sabbath; ...

<sup>38</sup> Then He got up and left the synagogue, and entered Simon's home. Now Simon's mother-in-law was suffering from a high fever, and they asked Him to help her. <sup>39</sup> And standing over her, He rebuked the fever, and it left her; and she immediately got up and served them. ...

**5** 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. <sup>2</sup> He saw two boats lying at the edge of the lake; but the fishermen had gotten out of them and were washing their nets. <sup>3</sup> He got into one of the boats, which was **Simon's**, and **asked him** to put out a little distance from the land. And He sat down and **continued teaching the crowds from the boat.**

<sup>4</sup> Now when He had finished speaking, He said to Simon, "**Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch.**" <sup>5</sup> Simon responded and said, "**Master, we worked hard all night and caught nothing, but I will do as You say *and* let down the nets.**" <sup>6</sup> And when they had done this, they caught a **great quantity of fish, and their nets *began* to tear;** <sup>7</sup> so they signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled **both of the boats, to the point that they were sinking.** <sup>8</sup> **But when Simon Peter saw this, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!"** <sup>9</sup> **For amazement had seized him and all his companions because of the catch of fish which they had taken;** <sup>10</sup> and likewise 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 people.**" <sup>11</sup> **When they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed Him.**

**At least two encounters**

Possibly more

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Lived in the same region

Possibly knew each other, even from childhood

**Chronology – 1<sup>st</sup> Encounter and back story**

**Jesus comes from Nazareth to where John the Baptist is baptizing**

Likely some 90 miles south of Capernaum, Galilee, near Jericho

Identifying with sinful people – identified as the Messiah

**Andrew & John follow John the Baptist**

**Andrew brings Simon to Jesus**

**Jesus changes Simon's name to Peter – *but it doesn't stick***

**The spend the rest of the day with Jesus**

**The Holy Spirit leads Jesus into the wilderness for 40 days to be tempted by the devil**

**Possibly the wedding at Cana, the encounter with Nicodemus, and the encounter with the Samaritan woman at the well.**

**Jesus hears John the Baptist is arrested. Jesus returns and withdraws into Galilee.**

**Jesus preaches and teaches in the synagogues in Galilee**

**Jesus calls Philip and Nathaniel – in Galilee**

**Crowd in Nazareth tries to through Jesus off a cliff.**

**Jesus moves from Nazareth to Capernaum.**

**Jesus heals Simon's mother in law, Luke**

**Chronology – Second Encounter**

**Boats**

**When Jesus approached them, they already knew who he was**

**Fishermen**

Superstition about the “deep”

Fisherman were lower class, smelly, rough, opposite of elite

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rotting fish –

dirty nets

Stinky work space

Stinky men

Social outcasts as fishermen – the “deep,” smells, low class

Associated with the abyss, the deep, which was thought to contain evil

**Jesus stepped into their stinking work space**

**Observations**

**Meeting Jesus the First Time Was Not Enough**

Had met Jesus at the time of his baptism

Grew up in the same area; may have known each other from childhood

After meeting Jesus, went back to their jobs

**Took Jesus' initiative**

Took Jesus' invasion into their stinking mess

Jesus literally stepped into their stinking, messy work place, through the rotting fish and nets

Asks permissions to use their boat – not a command

Literally, getting ***in*** to their stinking boat with them

Jesus directs these experienced fishermen how to fish

Deep water

Simon is defensive, but obedient - **“Master, we worked hard all night and caught nothing, but I will do as You say *and* let down the nets.”**

Jesus blesses the natural work of their hands

Great quantity of fish

More than they can contain

Nets are breaking

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Calling for their business partners with another boat

Boats were sinking

**Away from me – I am a sinful man**

Yes, you are

Doesn't disqualify you

That won't stop Jesus moving powerfully through you, too

**Jesus' Response:**

Luke 5:10 - **Do Not Fear**

Matthew 4:19:

**“Follow Me [for the second time]; and**

**! [Jesus] will make you fishers of people.”**

**Applications**

**Meeting Jesus is not enough.**

**At Jesus' initiative, we are to invite him in to our work spaces.**

**Jesus takes us and our work as we are, and starts there.**

**We don't have to be cleaned up to be qualified for his call, his empowering, and his anointing. That comes later. The sequence is first the call, then our response, then the training and qualification.**

**Jesus transforms what is earthly, earthy, and even stinky, into something of eternal value.**

**Jesus transforms our work from temporal money making to eternal soul saving.**

**Jesus lifts our vision from the work at hand – “fishing” – to people. Only people are eternal. Nothing else will last for eternity. All we do in our professions, in our work, in our law practices, that will last is that which affects people.**

**Look for surprise divine appointments. Opportunities to share our faith, to pray with client, to encourage, to give wise, godly, biblical counsel.**

**Be alert for “teachable moments,” when people are open and curious.**

**Salt the conversations.**

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Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity. Your speech must always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person. Colossians 4:5-6

Make your hearers hungry, thirsty, for more.

**Be transparent, vulnerable, and authentic. We are no better, just one hungry person telling another hungry person where to find food. Share your stories, your failures, how God intervened and rescued, how you were encouraged.**

**See your work, no matter how worldly or mundane, as a divine calling as you interact with the people around you – clients, coworkers, colleagues, vendors and suppliers, court staff, even opposing counsel.**

**Consider pro bono, Christian legal aid, and public service opportunities:**

<https://www.christianlegalsociety.org/cla/>

[https://www.christianlegalsociety.org/christian\\_conciliation/](https://www.christianlegalsociety.org/christian_conciliation/)

<https://www.peacemakerministries.org/>

[https://adfilegal.org/?utm\\_source=Bing&utm\\_medium=PPC&utm\\_content=Comp](https://adfilegal.org/?utm_source=Bing&utm_medium=PPC&utm_content=Comp)

**Transformed law practices are not only public service or legal aid. They are all practices, where people are first, and we are open to what the Holy Spirit would do and say through us.**

**Prayer**

Lord, I know who you are – so do demons! That by itself is not enough.

You have invaded my life. You have affirmed my value. You have used natural things – education, bar admission, money – for Kingdom purposes.

You have multiplied the work of my hands.

You have called me.

To your call, I say, “Yes!”

I leave everything and follow you with my whole heart. Please use me for your Kingdom purposes. Please multiple the work of my hands. Please make me a fisher of people.