

LEAVING SUCCESS FOR SIGNIFICANCE

Leaving Success for Significance

Key idea:

Jesus emphasizes the greatest commandments: to love God and to love our neighbors. Genuine love always involves sacrifice, mirroring Christ's ultimate act of laying down His life for us.

Key text:

Luke 5: 1-11

One day as Jesus was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret,[a] the people were crowding around him and listening to the word of God. 2 He saw at the water's edge two boats, left there by the fishermen, who 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 from shore. Then he sat down and taught the people from the boat.

4 When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch."

5 Simon answered, "Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets."

6 When they had done so, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began 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 full that they began to sink.

8 When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus' knees and said, "Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!" 9 For he and all his companions were astonished at the catch of fish they had taken, 10 and so were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, Simon's partners.

Then Jesus said to Simon, "Don't be afraid; from now on you will fish for people." 11 So they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed him.

Key points:

1. For every calling, there is a sacrifice. Every "yes" to God involves a "no" to something else.
2. Responding to Jesus' call means leaving everything to follow Him.

3. Leaving everything doesn't necessarily mean abandoning material possessions, but rather leaving behind worldly success for eternal significance.
4. We are called to use our resources, talents, and positions to make disciples and further God's kingdom.

Discussion Questions:

1. The speaker shared a story about his parents giving away a house. Have you ever felt called to make a significant sacrifice for God? What was that experience like?
2. In the passage, Peter left his catch of fish to follow Jesus. What do you think the "fish" represent in our lives today?
3. How do you distinguish between pursuing worldly success and pursuing kingdom significance in your own life?
4. The speaker asked, "What's in your boat?" What represents success in your life that you might need to leave behind to follow Jesus more fully?
5. How can we pursue significance in our everyday lives and careers without necessarily changing our jobs or circumstances?
6. What challenges do you face in trying to prioritize eternal significance over temporary success?
7. How has Jesus' example of choosing significance over success impacted your understanding of discipleship?

Practical Applications:

1. Take some time this week to reflect on what "success" means to you. Write down areas where you might be prioritizing worldly success over kingdom significance.
2. Identify one way you can use your current position, resources, or talents to "make disciples" this week. (e.g., inviting someone to church, sharing your faith at work, serving in a ministry)
3. Practice "mentally disassociating" from praise or recognition you receive. When complimented, try redirecting the glory to God or focusing on the eternal impact rather than personal success.
4. Evaluate your schedule and commitments. Is there anything you need to "leave behind" to create more space for pursuing significance?
5. As a group, brainstorm ways you can support each other in living lives of eternal significance rather than chasing worldly success.
6. Commit to praying for each other throughout the week, asking God to reveal areas where He might be calling you to sacrifice for His kingdom purposes.