

Jump School—Miracle Maneuvers

(Context: Luke 5:1–11.)

We know little about the early days of Jesus' ministry. John provides insights into time that Jesus spent by the Jordan where He first met Simon Peter, and His days in Jerusalem. Luke tells us how the synagogue congregation in Nazareth violently rejected Jesus, and that He moved to Capernaum.

One day, Jesus visited Simon Peter's home after a synagogue meeting. Peter's mother-in-law had a fever, which Jesus rebuked. Later, Jesus borrowed Peter's boat from which to teach a crowd on the beach. Following the message, Jesus did a miracle that rearranged the fishermen's lives.

When He had finished speaking, He said to Simon, "Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch." And Simon answered and said, "Master, we worked hard all night and caught nothing, but at Your bidding I will let down the nets." And when they had done this, they enclosed a great quantity of fish, and their nets began to break.
(Luke 5:4–6)

So great was the catch that Simon Peter's crew had to call for help. "Hey, James and John, bring your boat quickly, or we'll lose 'em." They were all amazed because that night there hadn't been any sign of fish. Peter was so struck by the miracle that he fell at Jesus' feet, convicted by comparison. "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!" (Luke 5:8). Life changed for Peter. He no longer referred to Jesus as Master but as Lord. It also launched Peter & Co. into a new kind of business—fishing for men. The partners left everything to follow Jesus.

How did Jesus have such an impact on men who, until then, might have been little more than His acquaintances? It's not that Jesus had a clever new strategy for locating or netting fish; rather, it was His presence and His authoritative word that made the difference to Peter. "I will do as you *say*."¹

Most people take their time to build new relationships. Trust has to be earned, and common interests discovered through conversations and shared experiences. Jesus is exceptional. He parachutes behind walls of customary reserve and privacy using three parachutes to invade lives: love, truth, and power. He lands deftly facing the real me, looking straight into the eyes of ignorance, independence, cynicism, self-protection, shame, pride, or whatever separates us from real life. His love caresses the scarred hearts of the rejected or un-affirmed. His truth illuminates shadowy strongholds built of little white lies. His miraculous power wows and rattles minds, urging them to listen to the Spirit. Jesus' arrival transforms. Peter & Co. witnessed miracle power that day, and it jolted them away from business as usual onto a fast track to follow Him.

As Jesus' present-day disciples, we can take parachute lessons from Him. You see, when Jesus parachutes into our lives, He recruits and trains us to join Him on jumps and to see other lives begin to change, too, because of love, truth, and power. Jesus runs a jump school.

A sample piece from *Becoming Like Jesus: How to Think and Live Like Jesus Christ*. This collection of forty short inspirational devotionals provides thought-provoking reflections on what made Jesus tick.

¹ *Rhema* is the Greek word translated "bidding" or "say."

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