

# Gospel Doctrine Lesson #6 "They Straightway Left Their Nets"

(Luke 4:14–32; Luke 5; Luke 6:12–16; Matthew 10)

**Lesson Goal:** To help us understand that Apostles are called to be special witnesses of Jesus Christ and that we are blessed when we sustain and follow them.

## 1. Jesus announces that He is the Messiah.

**Luke 4:14:** And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee

It is no coincidence that the power of the Spirit rested on Jesus as he began his ministry. His preparation has been immaculate, for he has done all the right things to invite the Spirit into his life.

- He has **kept the commandments** of God.
- He has just **communed with God** for forty days.
- He has **fasted, prayed, meditated** upon his assignment.
- He has **accepted his calling**.
- He has '**quenched fiery darts** of the wicked' one.
- In all this, he has been **the great Exemplar**.

**Certainly we will also be blessed with 'the power of the Spirit' if we can follow this same pattern.**

**Isaiah 61:1:** The Spirit of the Lord **GOD** is upon me; because the **LORD** hath anointed me to preach **good tidings** unto the **meek**; he hath sent me to **bind up** the brokenhearted, to **proclaim liberty** to the captives, and the **opening** of the **prison** to them that are **bound**;

**Luke 4:18-19:** The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because **He** hath anointed me to preach the **gospel** to the **poor**; he hath sent me to **heal** the brokenhearted, to **preach deliverance** to the captives, and recovering of sight to the **blind**, to **set at liberty** them that are **bruised**;

The quotation of Isaiah 61:1-2 is framed by a chiasm in Luke 4:16-20:

- A He **stood up** to read (16).
- B He was **handed** or given the scroll or the **book** (17).
- C He unrolled the scroll or **opened the book** (17).
- D **He reads the scripture** (18-19).
- C' He rolled up the scroll or **closed the book** (20).
- B' He **handed the scroll back** to the "chazzan" or minister (20).
- A' He **sat down** (20).

**Christ's prophecies can have both temporal and spiritual applications.**

To show the spiritual meaning, we will **ADD** the spiritual message in bold italics for emphasis:

**Luke 4:18** -----The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he hath anointed me

To preach the gospel to the poor ***in spirit***;  
He hath sent me to heal ***those with a broken heart and contrite spirit***  
To preach deliverance to the captives ***in spirit prison***  
And recovering of sight to the ***spiritually*** blind,  
To set at liberty them that are ***bruised and battered in spiritual bondage***.

**Luke 4:18:** He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted

**Bruce C. Hafen:** "By thus referring so broadly to the **bruised and brokenhearted**, the Savior pointed toward his eventual Atonement as the **healing power** not only for sin but also for **carelessness, inadequacy, and the entire range of mortal bitterness**. The Atonement is not just for sinners.

I believe there is in the Church today a compelling need for us to **teach and understand the Atonement more fully than we do**... The Savior's victory can **compensate** not only for our sins but also for our **inadequacies**; not only for our **deliberate mistakes** but also for our **sins committed in ignorance**, our **errors of judgment**, and our **unavoidable imperfections**. Our ultimate aspiration is more than being forgiven of sin—we seek to become **holy, endowed with Christlike attributes, at one with him, like him**. **Divine grace is the only source that can finally fulfill that aspiration, after all we can do**" (*The Broken Heart: Applying the Atonement to Life's Experiences* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1989], 1, 20).

**Gerald N. Lund:** "The next phrase, '**and recovering of sight to the blind**,' also contains a highly significant word. Jesus did not talk about **giving** sight to the blind, but about **recovering** sight to the blind. These are people who once saw but now are blinded. I suspect that the blinding could come from many kinds of darkness—**sin, guilt, shame, low self-esteem, ignorance**, and so on. It doesn't really matter what the cause of darkness is if a person cannot see. But in all cases **Christ provides the illumination to help us see again**" (*Jesus Christ, Key to the Plan of Salvation*, 23).

**Reuben Clark, Jr.:** "When the Savior came upon the earth He had two great missions; one was to work out the Messiahship, the atonement for the fall, and... the other was the work which he did among his brethren and sisters in the flesh by way of relieving their sufferings... He left as a heritage to those two great things—work for the relief of the ill and the suffering of humanity, and the teaching of spiritual truths which should bring us back into the presence of our Heavenly Father." (Conference Report, Apr. 1937, 22).

## 2. Jesus calls his Twelve Apostles.

**Disciple.** A pupil or learner; a name denotes (1) the twelve, also called apostles, (2) all followers of Jesus Christ. **Apostle.** The word means "one sent forth." It was the title Jesus gave (Luke 6:13) to the twelve whom he chose and ordained (John 15:16) to be his closest disciples during his ministry on earth, and whom he sent forth to represent him after his ascension into heaven. **The calling of an apostle is to be a special witness of the name of Jesus Christ in all the world, particularly of his divinity and of his bodily resurrection from the dead (Acts 1:22; D&C 107:23).**

**Bruce R. McConkie:** "All true believers are disciples; all who keep his commandments and who follow Him as He follows His Father are His disciples; the apostles, as here designated, are those chosen disciples who are ordained to the office of apostle in the Melchizedek Priesthood and who receive and use the keys of the kingdom of God on the earth. **There are or may be disciples without number, but those acting in the holy apostleship are twelve in number at any given time; they are the governing officers over the disciples**" (*The Mortal Messiah*, 2:104).

**Luke 5:3-6,10-11:** And he [Jesus] entered into one of the ships, which was Simon's, and prayed him that he would thrust out a little from the land. And he sat down, and taught the people out of the ship. Now when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, **Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught [a catch].** And Simon answering said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: **nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net.** And when they had this done, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes: and their net brake. . . And Jesus said unto Simon, **Fear not; from henceforth thou shall catch men.** And when they had brought their ships to land, **they forsook all, and followed Him.**

**Ted Gibbons:** Clearly Peter knew the Savior and knew some things about him, just as he knew some things about fishing. "Lord, we have just spent an unproductive night, we have let down our nets a hundred times, and retrieved them empty every time." And then this powerful declaration of faith: **"But if you want me to, I will let down the net again. Just tell me where and when."**

And this is the lesson: **"Nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net."** Consider Peter's attitude and what we should learn from it as you review some other examples:

**Naaman, the Syrian general (2 Kings 5) who was told he could be healed of leprosy by bathing seven times in the Jordan River.** I am confident that the Leprosy did not leave or even begin to leave until the seventh time. But in that immersing, it all washed away. Every rotted, ragged piece of diseased flesh was gone, "and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child." (2 Kings 5:14) But it did not happen until he "let down the net" the seventh time.

**Nephi went back to Jerusalem to get the plates (1 Nephi 3,4)** and found it almost impossible. Laman tried first, and his life was threatened. The brothers tried to buy the plates with the family treasure and were robbed and marked for death. Laman and Lemuel were ready to quit. But Nephi "let down the net" again and went back one more time. (1 Nephi 4:6)

**Alma went to Ammonihah (Alma 8) to preach** and was reviled, spit on, cast out; He left for the city of Aaron and was stopped by an angel who told him to go back to Ammonihah and try again. "I was just there," he might have said. "I did not catch a thing!" Instead he went back "speedily," letting down the net once more at the word of the Master.

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**Luke 5:8—He [Peter] fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man**

**Ronald E. Poelman:** "Each one of us, at times, may feel like Peter, **conscious of our failings** and uncomfortable at the thought of approaching the Lord. **Transgression causes us to feel estranged from our Father** in heaven, and we feel unworthy of his love and fearful of his disapproval. Yet we need the strengthening influence of our Father to help us overcome our weakness, to help us repent and become reconciled with him. Unrepented sin tends to become habitual and is frequently accompanied by a deepening sense of guilt, which may make repentance increasingly difficult. **This feeling of estrangement from the Lord becomes an impediment to repentance.**

"Knowing we have offended our Father in heaven, we are afraid to ask his help, feeling that we don't deserve it. Paradoxically, when we are most in need of the Lord's influence, we deserve it least. Nevertheless, in such circumstances he says to us, as Jesus said to the trembling Peter, **'Fear not.'**" (Luke 5:10.) "(Love ,89 - 90).

### 3. Jesus ordains and instructs the Twelve Apostles.

The Savior prepared for making His selection of apostles.

**Luke 6:12-13:** And it came to pass in those days, that He went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. And when it was day, He called unto him His disciples: and of them He chose twelve, whom also He named apostles;

**Bruce R. McConkie:** "Thus we see Jesus (for the time for calling the Twelve is now) go out alone into a mountain to pray. All night long His petitions ascend to His Father; during the long hours of darkness He communes with the one who sent him and whose will He came to do. He needed—as we need during the long and dark days of life—direction from on high. He received answer to His prayers" (*The Mortal Messiah*, 2:104).

**Errol R. Fish:** "We might ask why it took so much time for the Savior to pray. Why would he 'continue all night in prayer' or rise 'up a great while before day' in order to pray? Having the fulness of the Spirit (and 'not by measure'), it would seem that the questions and answers would have been immediate.

"Living in mortality, however, He was apparently required to study out problems in his mind—much as we are. He must have had to explore alternatives, present questions, and express feelings, prior to receiving answers. Evidently he was not exempt from the work and effort involved in the process of prayer" (Errol R. Fish, *Promptings of the Spirit* [Mesa, Ariz.: Cogent Publishing, 1990], 147).

The apostles received a specific commission to follow in the footsteps of the Savior's ministry. In so doing, they would be blessed with the same power He had.

**Jesus gave the Twelve Apostles priesthood power, instructed them in their responsibilities, and warned them of potential adversities.**

- a. They have power to heal the spiritually and physically sick (Matt 10:1).
- b. They are sent to the lost sheep of Israel to preach that the kingdom of heaven is at hand (Matt 10: 6–7).
- c. They are to use their priesthood power to bless and heal people; give freely (Matt 10: 8).
- d. They are to seek out those who are prepared to hear the gospel (Matt 10:11–14).
- e. They are to be as sheep amidst wolves, wise as serpents, and harmless as doves (Matt 10:16).
- f. They should beware of men (Matt 10:17).
- g. They are to teach as guided by the Spirit (Matt 10:19–20).
- h. They shall be hated of all men for His name's sake (Matt 10:22).
- i. They shall fear not them which kill the body, but fear those that kill the soul (Matt 10:28).
- j. They are to give their lives entirely to the Savior's work (Matt 10: 39).
- k. They are to preach the gospel to the nations (after the lost sheep of the house of Israel) (Matt 28:19).

**Elder Spencer W. Kimball:** "No one in this Church will ever go far astray who ties himself securely to the Church Authorities who the Lord has placed in his Church. This Church will never go astray; the Quorum of the Twelve will never lead you into bypaths; it never has and it never will. There could be individuals who would falter; there will never be a majority of the Council of the Twelve on the wrong side at any time. The Lord has chosen them; he has given them specific responsibilities. And those people who stand close to them will be safe. And, conversely, whenever one begins to go his own way in opposition to authority, he is in grave danger!" (*Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, 459).

**Matt 10:39--He who seeketh to save his life shall lose it**

**Robert L. Millet:** "It is the natural man that seeks acclaim, that requires attention, that elicits compliments, that feasts upon praise. It is the man or woman who is 'without God in the world,' who is 'in a state of nature,' who has 'gone contrary to the nature of God' and thus the nature of happiness. 'The natural life in each of us,' C. S. Lewis wrote, 'is some-thing self-centered, something that wants to be petted and admired. And especially it wants to be left to itself: to keep well away from anything better or stronger or higher than it, anything that might make it feel small. It is afraid of the light and air of the spiritual world, just as people who have been brought up to be dirty are afraid of a bath. And in a sense it is quite right. It knows that if the spiritual life gets hold of it, all its self-centeredness and self-will are going to be killed and it is ready to fight tooth and nail to avoid that.'" (*An Eye Single to the Glory of God*, 26.)

**Ezra Taft Benson:** "Men and women who turn their lives over to God will discover that He can make a lot more out of their lives than they can. He will deepen their joys, expand their vision, quicken their minds, strengthen their muscles, lift their spirits, multiply their blessings, increase their opportunities, comfort their souls, raise up friends, and pour out peace. Whoever will lose his life in the service of God will find eternal life (see Matt. 10:39)" (Andrew C. Skinner and Robert L. Millet, *C. S. Lewis, the Man and His Message: An LDS Perspective*, 67 - 68).

4. **CONCLUSION: Reflect on your personal relationship with the Twelve.**

- **Ponder experiences** that come to mind when the counsel of one of them has blessed your life or the life of a member of your family: in person, in General Conference, in lectures, in any situation.
- **Make a record** of such experiences in your journal so that your children and your children's children will know of your faith in them and testimony of their divine calling.

**THE CURRENT MEMBERS OF THE QUORUM OF THE TWELVE  
IN ORDER OF SENIORITY**

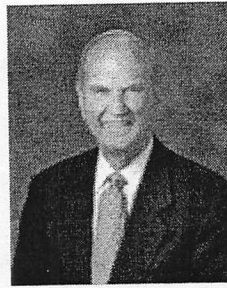
**Boyd K.  
Packer**



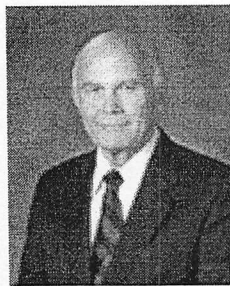
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Perry**



**Russell M.  
Nelson**



**Dallin H.  
Oaks**



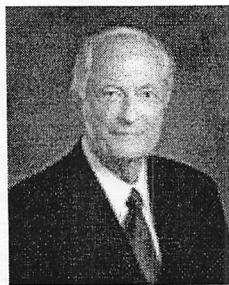
**M. Russell  
Ballard**



**Richard B.  
Scott**



**Robert D.  
Hales**



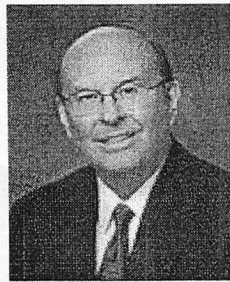
**Jeffrey R.  
Holland**



**David A.  
Bednar**



**Quentin L.  
Cook**



**D. Todd  
Christofferson**



**Neil L.  
Anderson**

