“We have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God” (John 6:69).

It may surprise some sports fans to learn that successful race car drivers are among the world’s highest-earning athletes. Yes, baseball and basketball superstars earn millions, but their incomes do not eclipse those of big-name race car drivers. Formula One race car drivers Kimi-Matias Räikkönen and Michael Schumacher have both made the list of top ten highest-earning athletes. NASCAR drivers Dale Earnhardt, Jeff Gordon, and Jimmie Johnson are just a few of the drivers who compiled millions of dollars in the popular sport of racing.

Such high-income race car drivers must be extremely happy that someone introduced them to race car driving. After all, that introduction started them on the road to fame and fortune.

In the first century, four fishermen—Simon (also called Peter), Andrew, James, and John—were introduced to an exciting life of following Jesus. They became His full-time disciples. Unlike high-income race car drivers, they did not become rich, nor were they surrounded by millions of adoring fans. But they helped change countless lives and even the course of history.
**Start Your Engine!**

Jesus was teaching a crowd of followers beside Lake Gennesaret (also called the Sea of Galilee), when He saw two boats at the water’s edge and four fishermen washing their nets.


1. What did Jesus teach (v. 1)?

2. On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 representing the highest value, prioritize the following:
   - ___ an important message from a highly regarded politician
   - ___ an important message from a financial genius
   - ___ an important message from God
   - ___ an important message from your closest relative
   - ___ an important message from your boss

3. Why does the choice you marked “1” deserve that ranking?

4. How do you know the crowd was eager to hear Jesus speak (v. 1)?

5. How eager are you to hear the Word of God?
   - ___ very eager
   - ___ somewhat eager
   - ___ not eager at all

**Running Full Throttle**

Luke 5 reports one of the most dramatic meetings between Jesus and Peter, Andrew, James, and John. This meeting at the Sea of Galilee showed these four men that Jesus not only had the authority to teach but that He is more than an ordinary man. Learning about Jesus led these fishermen to walk away from their lives as fishermen and give Jesus their full-time allegiance, to follow and serve Him full-time.


Simon Peter and the other three fishermen were cleaning their nets when Jesus approached them. Their fishing expedition had ended.
They were hanging it up, so to speak. They must have been exhausted and discouraged.

6. How long had the four men fished on that occasion?

7. How many fish had they caught?

8. How do you think they must have felt afterward?

9. What did Jesus ask Peter to do after He entered Peter’s boat?

10. What might have been Jesus’ reasons for teaching from Simon Peter’s boat?

Simon Peter complied with Jesus’ request, but then Jesus instructed him to row into deep water and lower his nets for a catch of fish. Peter explained that they had fished all night but had not caught a single fish. Nevertheless, he agreed to obey Jesus’ command.

What happened next must have completely surprised Simon Peter and his brother and partner, Andrew. So many fish swam into their net that it began to break. Urgently, they signaled their partners, the brothers James and John, to help them. The four men filled both boats with so many fish that the boats began to sink.

11. Jesus had grown up in a carpenter’s home. He was not a fisherman by trade. Simon Peter, on the other hand, was an experienced fisherman. Why do you think Peter decided to obey Jesus’ instructions? What must Peter have recognized about Jesus that caused him to obey?

12. Simon Peter fell down at Jesus’ knees and asked Jesus to depart from him. According to Luke 5:8, why did Peter ask Jesus to depart from him?
In the presence of Jesus, the perfect Son of God, Peter recognized his sinfulness. Instead of rejecting Peter, Jesus told him, “Do not be afraid.”

13. What had caused Peter and the other three to be astonished?

14. Based on your reading of Jesus’ words to Simon Peter, what do you learn about Jesus?

15. Jesus had performed a miracle by filling Simon Peter’s net and the two boats with fish. What did the four fishermen learn about Jesus from this miracle?

A miracle is an act of God by which God intervenes in nature or human situations and does what is impossible. The purpose of a miracle is to show that He is God and is worthy of trust and worship. Jesus did many miracles—more even than the miracles recorded in John’s Gospel (John 20:30). “But these [accounts of Jesus’ miracles] are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you might have life in His name” (John 20:31).

Jesus is God’s Son Who came to earth and was the only One ever to live a perfect life. He taught people about God and performed many loving miracles. He died on a cross to take the punishment for sin. He was buried and rose from the dead (1 Corinthians 15:3, 4). God promises eternal life to all who believe on Jesus (Acts 16:31; Romans 6:23).

16. According to Luke 5:10 and 11, how did the men translate this learning into action?

After walking away from the biggest catch of their fishing careers, Simon Peter, Andrew, James, and John followed Jesus. He would train them to “catch men.” They were going to learn how to draw people to Jesus. They would become followers of Jesus and tell other people about Him, His power, and His love.

From that time on, Simon Peter, Andrew, James, and John followed Jesus. One day, Jesus and His followers encountered a leper. Leprosy is contagious, so a leper was excluded from his community and required to cry “Unclean! Unclean!” as a warning to those who approached him. If a leper became disease free, he was obligated to present himself to the priest, who would inspect him and pronounce him healed. Such healing, however, was very rare.

The leprous man must have heard about Jesus’ power to heal, because he fell down on his face and stated that Jesus could cleanse him of leprosy if He were willing to do so.

17. What stage of leprosy had the leper reached (v. 12)?
   ___ a beginning stage
   ___ moderate stage
   ___ an advanced stage

18. What do you learn about Jesus from the fact that He touched the leper?

19. What do you learn about Jesus from the fact that He healed the leper instantly, simply by speaking?

Jesus followed the Old Testament instructions about leprosy by telling the healed leper to go and show himself to the priest. The appearance of the healed leper before the priest would provide clear testimony to the religious leaders that something amazing was taking place in Israel.

Jesus instructed the man not to tell anyone what had happened, but to go immediately to the priest. But soon word about the leper’s healing spread like wildfire. Throngs came to Jesus to hear Him teach and to receive healing from Him.

**Pit Row**

Pit row is where temporary garages are set up beside a racetrack. Race car drivers are said to “pit in” for refueling, tire changes, or
repairs, or to have some other service performed. As quickly as possible, the work is done, and the driver “pits out” to rejoin the race.

Before you “pit out” and rejoin the “race,” think about making some life changes or adjustments.

20. Simon Peter and his three fishing partners had given up because they had fished all night without landing even one fish. Do you ever feel like giving up or feel discouraged? If so, what tends to discourage you?

___ acts of terrorism
___ your employment situation
___ behavior of family member(s)
___ world news
___ loss of friends
___ financial debt
___ ill-health
___ other ____________________

Jesus turned a bad night of fishing into an amazing event. He brought so many fish into Simon Peter’s net that the four fishermen could hardly bring them to shore. Jesus can take control of any discouraging, hopeless situation. But our sinfulness is our most hopeless situation until Jesus forgives our sin.

Peter acknowledged that he was a sinful man; that is, he had done things and thought things that violated God’s commandments and offended Him. The Bible states that we have all sinned (Romans 3:23).

21. God knows everything about each of us, and He loves us. If you haven’t already acknowledged that you are a sinful person, will you admit to God that you know you have done wrong things?

22. Are you willing to believe that Jesus died on a cross to take the punishment for the wrong things you have done? Will you trust Jesus to forgive you and be your Savior? Are you willing to follow Him the rest of your life?

A leper came to Jesus, fell at His feet, and acknowledged that Jesus could heal him. This sick and socially excluded man exercised great
faith in Jesus. He recognized that Jesus had the authority and power to change his life. If he were healed and received cleansing by offering the correct sacrifice, he would be allowed back into the community to lead a normal life.

23. List below some things that you can’t possibly control but are willing to trust to Jesus’ power and His love.

Old Testament law instructed a healed leper to present himself to the priest, and the priest would pronounce him clean, healed. After healing the leper, Jesus told the man to present himself to the priest just as the Old Testament law commanded. Obedience to Scripture is important. Everyone who trusts in Jesus and receives cleansing from sin should obey Scripture, but we cannot obey it if we do not know what it teaches.

24. Will you commit to reading at least a chapter of the Bible every day?

Why not begin by reading through the Gospel of Luke and learning more about Jesus?

**Checkered Flag Victory**

Congratulations! You have completed lesson 1 and have received a checkered flag at the finish line.


**Rev Up Your Memory**

Learn one of the following verses by memory.

“But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name” (John 20:31).

“We have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God” (John 6:69).