



First Presbyterian Church of Ocala  
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As he walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the lake—for they were fishermen. <sup>19</sup>And he said to them, ‘Follow me, and I will make you fish for people.’ <sup>20</sup>Immediately they left their nets and followed him. <sup>21</sup>As he went from there, he saw two other brothers, James 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. (Matthew 4:18-22)

When I read this particular passage it plays out in my imagination just as it is written. I imagine the Sea of Galilee with its sandy shores bustling with the activity of a port. The smell of fish fills the air in the heat of the day and the hardworking fisherman do not smell much better. Into this scene, a wise and somewhat stoic Jesus makes his way along the banks. He walks slowly, watching and studying the fisherman as they work, and then he makes his choice. I am not sure what Jesus was thinking or why he chose fisherman for his disciples, but there it is. What is more interesting to me is their obedience to Jesus’ call. They drop their nets, as though under some trance, and follow. In Matthew, they ask no questions. Their nets are simply abandoned, and without knowing either their destination or their new leader they set out for the unknown. The writer of Matthew makes a profound point by leaving out the details. Following Jesus and living in discipleship is a choice that requires a great deal of trust. It is a call to leave the places of self sufficiency and security for life lived in the unknown. If we think back to Abraham’s call in Genesis 12, we see a similar call. God tells Abraham to leave everything behind for the unknown. It sounds rather scary, especially to those of us who are used to being in control of our daily lives. We worked hard and have made a nice comfortable place for ourselves. We work in our homes making them comfortable and welcoming. We have invested time in our work and depend on it for our livelihood. Some have worked for a lifetime and enjoy retirement. If then, for example, Jesus, whom each of us know way better than the fisherman in our passage, showed up in our lives with a call to follow, how easily would we leave our places of comfort for the unknown?

Walter Brueggemann says that to stay in safety is to remain barren. To leave in risk is to have hope. That is to say if we choose to move into life with God it will always require moments of uncertainty the unknown. Like the call of Abraham and Jesus’ call to the fisherman, each of us have a call to believe in what we cannot see. There is always more to what God plans than what is visible and apparent. No one knows or can predict God’s plans, and part of becoming a disciple means learning to live with uncertainty and moving forward into the unknown. This call to leave our security and enter the unknown requires total dependence on God. The disciples trusted Jesus and their lives were transformed. Abraham was obedient and trusted God and he was blessed for it, becoming the father of many nations. That same God extends the invitation to us. Will we choose the security and comfort that we know? Or will we step out into life totally dependent on God; life that is often uncertain, taking us to places unknown, but where we find change, blessing, transformation?

This Week’s Daily Bible Readings					
<i>Sustained by God’s Word and Following Jesus</i>			Wednesday	January 30	Colossians 2:20-3:17
Sunday	January 27	Colossians 1:1-23	Thursday	January 31	Colossians 4:2-18
Monday	January 28	Colossians 1:24-2:5	Friday	February 1	Leviticus 19:1-18
Tuesday	January 29	Colossians 2:6-19	Saturday	February 2	Luke 10:25-37