



**CHRISTIAN  
ENDEAVOUR**  
*for Christ and the Church*



# An Unexpected Choice

## Two brothers join up with Jesus

### Simon and Andrew become disciples

**Mark 1: 14-18**

#### Teaching aim

To show how two men made a willing sacrifice to become followers of Jesus

#### Setting the scene

The scene is the region of Galilee and indeed the whole of Israel at the time of Jesus. Here the people had a hard life, most found it very difficult to make ends meet.

There was great poverty, and very little work. It was a land ruled over by a conquering nation, the Romans. They appointed local overlords, such as king Herod to administer parts of the territory, and these exercised power through the tax-collectors. In turn the tax collectors made themselves rich by keeping the excess taxes they raised for themselves.

Fishing was one of the few jobs that was doing well. In modern terms the fishermen ran a closed shop. All the fishing was controlled by a few families, with no outsider being able to join them. Fishing was also a lucrative business, with the fishermen making quite a lot of money, and living well.

Two pairs of brothers were working by the Lake of Galilee. One pair were repairing their nets prior to going out fishing at some time, while the other pair had mended their nets, and were actually fishing from their boat just off the shore, but well within earshot. They were using the traditional Galilean method of fishing, which involved casting the net into the sea, trawling it for a short distance before pulling it in, hopefully with a good catch of fish.

#### Jesus was looking for men to join Him.

Jesus had been preaching for a short while in Galilee, now He wanted men to join Him. He had probably watched the brothers working for a few days, now He'd got His eyes on them. They were industrious and patient as they mended their nets, they were not afraid of sailing on the lake which was notorious for its sudden and violent storms and, very importantly, these men worked as a team. Jesus took the initiative.

He shouted to Simon and Andrew in the boat, I want you to come with Me and follow Me. They must have looked surprised, yet before they could say anything, He added, and I'll make you fishers of men. They must have looked even more surprised. Jesus put the challenge directly to the two brothers. Today it is still the same; Jesus puts His challenge to us. What are we going to do about it?

## Simon and Andrew weighed up the situation and gave a straight answer.

They might have heard Jesus preaching, or even heard about Him. Now He was speaking to them. There was something compelling in His voice that made them want to go with Him, but were they prepared to make the sacrifice? They had a good job, which was very secure. Financially, they were doing well. What did He mean by making them to be fishers of men? Fishing for fish was fine, they understood that for it was their job. But fishing for men that was altogether different, they neither had experience of it, nor were they in anyway trained for it. If they joined this wandering preacher, their prospects did not look good. To put it mildly, they would be poor . They would have nothing. And here He was asking them to do something that they had never done before. All sense and reason was telling them to say NO. The decision they made affected their lives and changed their lives forever. There and then they decided to go with Him. “At once they left their nets and followed Him”.

## Summing up

Simon and Andrew heard the challenge and weighed it up. Then they accepted it. They faithfully followed Jesus to the end of their lives. Have you accepted the challenge to follow Jesus?

## Resources

### Discussion

- Do you think it was fair of Jesus to put that kind of challenge to those men?
- How do you think you would feel living at such a time and under such conditions particularly if you were an ordinary labourer?
- Consider the sacrifices the modern Christian is called upon to make as a follower of Jesus.

### Prayer points

- Pray for Christian workers who have made financial sacrifices to serve Jesus Christ.
- Pray for your friends to become Christians.
- Pray that the qualities which Jesus looked for in Simon and Andrew may be developed in you.