

# Ridin' High Cowboy Church

8771 FM 35  
Union Valley, TX

Pastor: Steve Bishop

January 24, 2016

**Introduction:** Have you ever signed up or agreed to do something and then realized that had you known what all was involved, you never would have done it!

***Matthew 16:24*** “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.”

## ***Luke 5***

***1*** One day as Jesus was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret (aka Sea of Galilee, Lake of Tiberias, Kinneret) ***the people were crowding around him and listening to the word of God.***

Following Jesus always begins with information, it's never a quick decision, but is always based on truth. This is important, because if you are ever a part of a church that says just believe, don't ask questions...you should leave real quick. Jesus taught and people followed him based on information.

***2*** He saw at the water's edge two boats, left there by the fishermen, who were washing their nets. They had fished all night and then they would wash the nets and lay them out on posts to dry so they would be ready the next day, a long and hard process.

***3*** He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little from shore (a little inconvenience). Then he sat down and taught the people from the boat. Faith comes by hearing.

***4*** When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, “Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch.” He asked Peter to do something he had done a thousand times, but in a different way. They had just cleaned their nets, what you do when you FINISH fishing, it's like someone saying let's go ride horses after the saddles are put up, blankets are wet from riding, the horses are brushed and dry.

***5*** Simon answered, “Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything (fishermen fished at night when the fish were near the surface in cooler temperatures and during the hot day, they went down to the

bottom where it was cooler). ***But because you say so, I will let down the nets.*** (not because I think this will work out or that we will catch fish or that this will be a story I tell, not because it's a good use of time...but because Peter had a little bit of trust in Jesus he said he would let down the nets.

The whole reason we know who Peter is, is because he chose to do something that seemed to make no sense, imagine what hung in the balance if Peter could see down the road...118 years to build St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, Peter didn't know and neither do you.

***6 When they had done so,*** (not when they believed, not when they intended to, or thought about it, doing makes the difference) ***they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break. 7 So they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them, and they came and filled both boats so full that they began to sink.***

***8 When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus' knees and said, "Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!" 9 For he and all his companions were astonished at the catch of fish they had taken, 10 and so were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, Simon's partners. Then Jesus said to Simon, "Don't be afraid; from now on you will fish for people." 11 So they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed him.***

Peter's small faith intersected with Jesus' faithfulness and great things happened from there.

In this story, you can find yourself and where you are in following Jesus.

1. Some are in the sit and listen stage. For some of you the best thing you can do is just come back next week and ask as many questions as possible.
2. Some of you are in the loan me your boat stage. This is where following Jesus begins to inconvenience you just a little, begin to read your bible, sit in a small group.
3. Some are in the take me fishing stage. God wants you to do something you have done a thousand times but in a different way. It usually involves a relationship, your job, or your money. You will know you're in the 'take me fishing stage' when you start having the thought, "I really need to stop" "I need to stop" all the sudden stuff that never bothered you before begins to bother you, things you never thought were important begin to become important.

It won't make sense but you will know God is telling you to do it.

4. Then there is the whole leave your nets thing. You've been giving God parts of you for your whole life and eventually God is calling you to follow him with everything you have.

The goal is not to grade yourself but to realize what the next step is for you. You don't want to wonder what God would have done in your life had you just trusted him.

David Curry, "Open Doors" states that in 2015, over 7,000 Christians were killed, 2,400 churches destroyed because they were Christian.

- ❖ Andrew: Martyrdom by crucifixion (bound, not nailed) to a cross so he would suffer longer.
- ❖ Bartholomew (Often identified with Nathaniel in the New Testament): Martyrdom by Flayed alive and crucified, head downward.
- ❖ James the Greater: Martyrdom by being beheaded or stabbed with a sword;
- ❖ James the Lesser: Martyrdom by being thrown from a pinnacle of the Temple at Jerusalem, then stoned and beaten with clubs.
- ❖ John: Died of old age.
- ❖ Jude (often identified with Thaddeus in the New Testament): Martyrdom by being beaten to death with a club.
- ❖ Judas: Suicide
- ❖ Matthew: Martyrdom by being burned, stoned and beheaded
- ❖ Peter: Martyrdom by crucifixion at Rome with his head downwards
- ❖ Philip: Martyrdom – no information
- ❖ Simon: Martyrdom by being sawn in half
- ❖ Thomas: Martyrdom by being stabbed with a spear

Apostle Paul – stoned and left for dead, unconscious, but he got up and went to the next town and kept talking about Jesus until he was arrested and eventually beheaded.

Jesus walked willingly into Jerusalem, to the worst beating and crucifixion anyone could imagine.

A Roman doctor in the coliseum...Christians were made to fight wild animals and usually died as they were lying there dying of their wounds he wrote, "fearlessness of death and the hope of the hereafter is something we witness every day."

William Tyndale land our bible – burned at the stake.

Two questions:

1. Is our version of Christianity worth dying for?
2. Is the way we live worth the price they paid?

*RHCC-01242016.doc*