

# LEAVING THINGS BEHIND

## Part I

Text: Mark 1:14-20

**Key Word:** Behind

**Key Thought:** There Is Much Freedom to Be Gained by Leaving Things of Our past in the Past

The title that I've chosen for today's message may cause you to wonder what my real topic is. Is it perhaps speaking of having a poor memory and forgetting about many things?

### Things Most Forgotten

I was relieved to find out that I'm not the only one who forgets things. Everyone does at one time or another, according to Karen Bolla, A Johns Hopkins researcher. These are the things people most often forget:

1. Names	83%
2. Where something is	60%
3. Telephone numbers	57%
4. Words	53%
5. What was said	49%
6. Faces	42%

And if you can't remember whether you've just done something, you join 38 percent of the population.

*"Our Daily Bread"*  
December 27, 1996

I just want to set your mind at ease. My sermon is not about having a poor memory. **It's rather about choosing to leave behind things of our past that often hold us back from going forward.**

Every heart needs to be set free  
From possessions that hold it so tight  
'Cause freedom's not found in the things that we hold . . .  
**And we can't imagine the freedom we find  
From the things we leave behind.**

Written by Michael Card, Scott Roley and Phil Madeira  
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There are a number of Biblical accounts of people leaving behind significant things to follow Jesus. Peter/Andrew/James/John left their nets. Matthew walked away from his tax table. The woman at the well left behind her water jar. The blind man dropped his cloak that he had once used to catch his beggarly coins. Lazarus left behind his grave clothes and an empty tomb.

## What Will We Leave Behind to Follow Jesus?

### I. SIMON/ANDREW/JAMES/JOHN - Nets/Families

### II. LEVI - Tax Table/Money

### III. THE WOMAN AT THE WELL - Water Jar

#### I. SIMON/ANDREW/JAMES/JOHN - Nets/Families

A. **Nets** - We may be called upon like Peter/Andrew James and John were to leave aside our nets to follow Jesus. Their nets represented not only their **financial security** but also **their significance** as working men.

“My experience suggests that although men and women need both kinds of input, for men the **primary** route to personal worth is **significance** and for women the **primary** route is **security**.”

Dr. Lawrence Crabb  
“Effective Biblical Counselling”  
Zondervan Publishing House  
1977, p. 62

The Bible makes it clear that they willingly left what was so near and dear to them to follow Jesus.

*As Jesus walked beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen.*

*17. “Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will make you fishers of men.”*

*18 At once they left their nets and followed him.*

*19 When he had gone a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John in a boat, preparing their nets.*

*20 Without delay he called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men and followed him.*

*Mark 1:16-20*

## I. SIMON/ANDREW/JAMES/JOHN - Nets/Families (Contd.)

**A. Nets (Contd.)** - I found it interesting to discover what Thayer's Greek Definition was for the word "**net**" used by Simon and Andrew in both Matthew 4:18 and our text.

**"Net"** - anything thrown around one **to impede his motions, as chains**, a garment, a net for fishing.

Thayer's Greek Definition

These nets had to be left behind for them to discover the freedom that God had set in place for their lives. This all took place as Jesus began his ministry in Galilee. This happened shortly after John the Baptist was bound and put into prison (at a time of uncertainty). Isn't it true that when the enemy of our soul works to bind one of God's people that many others are set free!

The second word used for "**nets**" finds its root from the word "**to cast.**" So once James and John cast aside their "casting nets" they were able to follow Jesus.

Another vital truth is that Andrew and Peter "**left or forsook - KJV**" their nets before following Jesus. This same verb is used to denote **a man divorcing his wife; describing one who has expired (died); to forgive a debt; to go away leaving something behind; to abandon or leave destitute.** They were willing to lay aside everything that was important to them. It was also important to Jesus.

*"In the same way, any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple."*

*Luke 14:33*

**B. Families** - As we venture a little further into the Gospel of Mark, we find another discussion about forsaking all to follow Jesus.

*Peter said to him, "We have left everything to follow you!"*

*29. "I tell you the truth," Jesus replied, "no one who has left (forsook (KJV) home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me and the gospel*

*30. will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age: homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and fields—and with them, persecutions – and in the age to come, eternal life."*

*Mark 10:28-30*

## I. SIMON/ANDREW/JAMES/JOHN - NETS/FAMILIES (Contd.)

### B. Families (Contd.)

Some would feel that being asked to forsake your family would be a blessing.

Who can ever forget Winston Churchill's immortal words: "*We shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills.*"

*"It sounds exactly like our family vacation."*

Robert Orben

For the disciples it was going to be one of their greatest challenges. Yet it appears that their decision to follow Jesus didn't even consider the implications that were to follow. **There was a price to pay for following God's will but it would never compare to the benefits they were about to receive.**

Jesus was not trying to tell them that they would be getting a hundred homes or siblings or parents for everyone they left behind. **But He was saying that they would find an abundant compensation for what they chose to leave behind.** In other words, **they were going to find much freedom by the things they left behind.**

Abraham received an incredible blessing when he chose to leave the land called the Ur of Chaldeans (leaving behind his kindred). By doing so all the families of the earth were blessed (Genesis 12:1-3). Moses chose to leave behind the palace of Pharaoh and the position of being a Prince of Egypt for a much greater reward.

*"He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt, because he was looking ahead to his reward."*

Hebrews 11:26

I can relate to both of these points in their reverse order. We were first of all separated from our families for 17 years. During that time period we were also led to leave our "net" in order to follow Jesus. I can also say it had its difficult moments. So why did we do it? It was because it was the right thing to do. Others had more difficulty with our decision than we did. We never asked Jesus for a soft pillow to land upon. He took us past **our comfort zone** time and time again just as He did to His early disciples.

## I. SIMON/ANDREW/JAMES/JOHN - Nets/Families (Contd.)

### B. Families (Contd.)

\*\*\* There was a group of people standing outside a very large and ornate cathedral in Europe and they were admiring the very fine craftsmanship, the detail work, the care and the love that seemed evident in building such a fine place to worship a loving God.

One of the men turned to another in the group and said, *"Why can't we build so today? Why can't we build with such pride, such craftsmanship today,* and the other man replied, ***"They had convictions; we have opinions."*** \*\*\*

**God is looking today for people of conviction who are willing to leave the security and significance of their lives behind in order to fulfill His calling. He's looking for men and women of convictions who will stand for what they believe no matter what they must leave behind. He is calling them to a life of freedom.**

God may have been asking some of here today to lay aside their vocation and their families to do what He is calling them to do. It is not easy but it is always the right choice to make. **Jesus called these men to a 3-year discipleship program like none other.**

**Do you hear His call today? Is He asking to leave your "things" behind? Is it time to heed the call of the Master? Is there a better day than now to start?**

**Use what you have as a stepping stone NOT a stumbling stone.**

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Date: May 26/24

Place: FCA

Time: 10:30 Am

Songs: I Surrender All - C; All He Wants - C

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## What Will We Leave Behind to Follow Jesus?

### I. PETER/ANDREW/JAMES/JOHN - Nets/Families

A. Nets - *Mark 1:16-20; Matthew 4:18; Luke 14:33*

B. Families - *Mark 10:28-30; Genesis 12:1-3; Hebrews 11:26*