

Calling Fishermen to become Fishers of Men

Introduction:

1. in 1986, after a long drought had dropped the water level of the Sea of Galilee...
A young man found the remains of an ancient fishing boat hidden for 2 centuries
 - a. A fishing boat from the 1st century, the time of Jesus ministry...
 - b. and now affectionately called—the Jesus boat, because it is from the time of His ministry
 - c. It is Possible that it was on the Lake at the time Jesus was teaching from Peter’s boat
2. **Jesus used Peter’s own boat... Peter’s own nets and Peter’s own profession as a faith lesson for the disciples and for us...**

“A ship is safe in harbor, but that’s not what ships are for.” (John A. Shedd)

I. THE MIRACLE

A. HIS WISDOM (v.1-3)

1. **Jesus taught in the Synagogue but He also taught outside...**
 - a) The Crowd of People is Pressing, so Jesus uses Peter’s Boat as a Pulpit
2. **Jesus used different ways to reach the hearts of people with God’s word**
 - a) He used the flowers of the field and birds of the air to show God’s Care...
 - b) He used Water at Jacob’s Well to teach of the Living Water of Life...
 - c) He uses their own boats and nets to catch the hearts of these fishermen!

B. HIS CHALLENGE (v.4-5)

1. **Launch Out into the Deep and Let Down Your Nets...**
 - a) Peter says: We Already Did That...
 - b) We’ve been fishing all night and caught nothing
 - c) Peter is a Commercial Fishermen, the expert who grew up fishing this lake
2. **This is a Faith Test for Peter!**
 - a) Will He Trust and Obey Even if it Conflicts with Peter’s Way of Thinking?
 - b) Will He Make the Effort Even if it seems Hopeless?
3. **Jesus Challenges Our Faith to Bring Us to Greater Faith...**
 - a) Peter Makes His Objection Known...
 - b) But says: "nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net."

C. HIS GENEROSITY (v.6-7)

1. **The Catch was so enormous that their nets began breaking...**
 - a) They start scrambling and call for help to take in all these fish...
 - b) And as they try bringing them into the boat, the boats can barely float!
 - c) It Must’ve Been Almost Comical to See the Mood Swing of Peter...
from “I Guess, if I Have to...” to Scrambling, yelling orders, overwhelmed
2. **Jesus doesn’t Just Give the Bare Minimum... He Gives to Overflowing!**

D. HIS MAJESTY (v.8-10)

1. They Were Astonished... Amazed!

- a) They Had Fished all night and caught nothing...
- b) But They Knew This Was No Accident... This was the Divine Power of Jesus

2. But Not Only Was Peter Astonished... He Was Ashamed...

- a) The Realization that He was Standing in the Presence of the Holy...
Made Peter Drop to His Knees
- b) "When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!"

3. Peter Realized Jesus is Lord... and Bowed to His Knees before Jesus

- a) In a Moment of Time The Veil Vanished between physical and spiritual
by the Realization of Jesus Holiness...
- b) And in the Presence of the Holy — Peter Realized His Own Unworthiness

E. HIS INVITATION (v.10-11)

1. Peter asks Jesus to Depart from him—But Jesus asks just the opposite... Jesus invites them to Follow Him!

- a) An Invitation to a New Life...
- b) An Invitation to a Changed Life...
- c) An Invitation to Help Other Lives — through Your Changed Life!

2. But This Invitation to Follow Jesus is Not to a Blind Faith in Jesus...

- a) They Had Seen **Jesus POWER Over the Super-Natural Realm...**
when He Cast Out a Demon...
- b) They Saw **Jesus POWER over Sickness and Disease...**
when He Healed Peter's Mother-in-law,
and the sick and diseased of Capernaum.
- c) And Now They See **Jesus' POWER Over Nature**

3. Now They Know Jesus is Lord — and Now they're ready to Follow Him

II. THE IMPLICATIONS

A. THE LORD TESTS OUR FAITH TO MAKE IT STRONGER

1. This was a Faith Test for Peter!

Jesus said: 'Put out into the deep and let down your nets...'

- a) Peter was a Fisherman by Trade—He grew up on these waters
- b) We've Worked All Night and Haven't Caught Anything
(so we're definitely not going to catch any now!)
- c) I'm sure they were all tired... hungry... exhausted from working all night
- d) Lord, you know about preaching and teaching—but I know about fishing

2. God's Ways Are Higher than Our Ways—He Knows What is Best!

And Sometimes He Tests Our Faith to Make it Stronger...

- a) There were over 5,000 hungry people and look at what Jesus says (**John 6:4-7**)

He said to Philip, "Where shall we buy bread, that these may eat?"

⁶ But this He said to test him, for He Himself knew what He would do.

b) Jesus Knew Philip Needed a Teachable Moment to Strengthen his faith...

3. Greek word Test: Peirasmos

a) **Peirasmos is trial or testing** directed towards an end, and the end is that anyone who is tested should emerge stronger and purer from the experience.

(1) For example, a young bird is said to test its wings.

(2) The Queen of Sheba travelled to **test** the wisdom of Solomon (1 Kings 10:1).

(3) God **tested** Abraham, when he asked for the sacrifice of Isaac (Gen 22:1).

4. James Explains What Testing Does for Us... (James 1:2-4)

a) Testing produces Patience (Hupomone)

b) Not Just the Ability to Suffer and Bear Things... But to Conquer them through Faith

c) To Make You Perfect... Complete... Lacking Nothing

"There will be the test of the sorrows and the disappointments which seek to take our faith away. There will be the test of the seductions which seek to lure us from the right way. There will be the tests of the dangers, the sacrifices and the unpopularity which are so much a part of the Christian way. But they are not meant to make us fall; they are meant to make us soar. They are not meant to defeat us; they are meant to be defeated. They are not meant to make us weaker; they are meant to make us stronger." (Barclay)

→ When Our Faith is Tested—it Will Make Us Stronger

B. THE LORD REWARDS OUR FAITHFULNESS

1. Jesus Told Peter What to Do: Launch Into the Deep and Let Down your nets

a) But Peter Didn't Want To... —We already tried that it didn't work...

b) Naaman Didn't Want to Dip in the Dirty Jordon River... —it doesn't make sense

c) Moses Didn't Want to Confront Pharaoh or Lead the People—I'm not a good speaker

2. But God is Faithful—He Provides When We Trust and Obey

a) He Blessed Peter so Much His Nets Were Breaking and Boats were Sinking!

b) He Cured Naaman's Leprosy Completely and Permanently!

c) He Was With Moses to Confront Pharaoh with God's Help!

3. God is Faithful—He Rewards Our Faithfulness When We Trust and Obey

a) Husbands love your wife: > I already tried that—it doesn't work

b) Wives respect your husband: > I already tried that— it doesn't work

c) Repent and Be Baptized for the Remission of Your Sins—It Doesn't Work

Where did we get the idea that we are smarter than God?!

4. Faith is Trusting the Power of God's Word, Even If Things Seem Hopeless

a) They Had Been Fishing All Night...and Had Not Caught Anything

b) Peter Was Reluctant, He was Tired, the nets were put away...

c) But he still said, '**nevertheless at your word I will**' (v.5)

And By Doing EXACTLY What Jesus Said—They Were Blessed by God!

C. GOD PROVIDES MORE THAN WE NEED OR DESERVE

1. When Peter Did What Jesus Said — He Was Blessed Beyond what He Needed or even Deserved!

- a) That is What Grace Means ...
 - b) Grace is unmerited Favor...
 - c) Grace is a GIFT that We Don't Deserve
- 2. If We Only Knew What a Gift of Grace Salvation is and What it Cost We Would React the same way Peter did...**
- a) Lord depart from me I am a sinful man...
- 3. Thankfully Jesus Did the Opposite...**
- a) Jesus Left Heaven to Become Like us in Human Form
 - b) He Became a Servant and Humbled Himself to die on a Cross for our sins
 - c) Just So We Could Be Blessed Beyond What We Could Ever Deserve!

D. THE LORD TAKES OUR BROKEN LIVES AND MAKES THEM USEFUL IN HIS KINGDOM

- 1. After the Nets Are Breaking and the Boats are Sinking...**
- Peter falls at Jesus Feet: (v.8) Depart from me Lord I am a sinful man...
And Jesus said: 'Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch men.'
- 2. Jesus used these fishermen's own nets to catch their own hearts!
And Jesus will use these Fishermen to Change the World!**

"For He who by the foolish things of the world would confound the wise, and by the weak things of the world would confound the strong, who meant as Augustine has it, to draw emperors to Himself by fishermen, and not fishermen by emperors, lest His Church should even seem to stand in the wisdom and power of men rather than of God—He saw in these simple fishermen the aptest instruments of His work." (Trench)

- 3. God Didn't Use Emperors to Call Fishermen—
—He used Fishermen to call Emperors!**
- a) He Took 12 ordinary men... Fishermen, tax collectors, zealots! Even a Former Pharisee... to spread His kingdom and change the world!
- 4. And Just So Peter Would Be Sure to Understand...
After Jesus was Crucified, Buried and Rose from the Grave...**
- a) Peter Went Back to What He Knew Best — Fishing! the others went with him!
 - b) They Fish All Night AGAIN! And Again They Don't Catch Anything!
 - c) And Guess Who Shows Up on the Shore?! (John 21:3–6)

CONCLUSION:

- 1. Remember, Peter Had Denied Jesus Three Times in Fear for His Life...**
- 2. But Now Peter Runs to Jesus**
- 3. Jesus Takes Our Broken Life and Makes Us Useful in His Kingdom**
- 4. Peter Would Later Die for the Lord Rather than Deny Him**