

10/24/2021 **Throw the net one more time!** Luke 5:1-11

Today's Bible is the story of Simon Peter confessing that he was a sinner before the Lord. Luke, the author of this book, does not say exactly when this event occurred in Jesus' life. However, in reference to other Gospels, this event appears to have occurred early in Jesus' life, but after the first encounter with Peter, John, Andrew, and other disciples (John 1: 35-52). This is also after Jesus first called Peter and others to be disciples. If you look at Luke 4, there is a scene where Jesus healed Simon Peter's mother-in-law's severe fever.

Though they follow Jesus, I don't think the disciples were following Jesus in a thorough and unconditional way. Until they made the final decision to abandon everything and completely follow Jesus (5:11), it is likely that they were following Jesus only partially, even doing their fishing jobs on the side.

One morning, however, Jesus was on the shore of Lake Gennesaret near Capernaum where Simon Peter lived, on the west coast of Lake Galilee. At that time, rumors of Jesus were so great that many people had already gathered around him early in the morning to hear the words of Jesus. To speak more effectively to the crowd, Jesus got on Simon Peter's boat by the lake. Then he told Peter to take the ship off the shore a little bit, and then Jesus preached to the people from the ship.

Verses 4-7, when Jesus finishes his teachings, he immediately tells Peter to go where the water is deep and catch some fish. What is Peter's occupation? Fisherman. *In short, Peter was an expert in fishing! Although Jesus was a famous teacher at the time, wasn't he a carpenter in his original occupation? What do carpenters know about catching fish?! Of course, he could be talented, but would he do better than the fisherman? Peter shows a slight objection to Jesus by saying that he tried to catch fish all night but failed.

In verse 2, they were already washing their nets after work. How tired would you be after working all night?! You've finished your net trimming, but to throw the net again? How troublesome is it?! Think of it this way. *It's time to close your store, end the day, turn off the computers and equipment, and get ready to go home. Imagine if a customer comes in last minute and asks for something. Well, it doesn't matter if it's simple, but if you're done trimming the net and they ask something like throwing the net again, the story is different. However, the importance is that Peter still obeyed!*

A quick reminder here is that we all experience working hard all night but gained nothing worthy of our work. We struggle with our life, but there are times when we do not have much success. Once I read books all night and wrote a paper, but I didn't like the results. You prepared a business plan for a long time, but it didn't come to fruition. You raise your kids as best as you could, but they don't listen to you. Even though Peter was an expert in catching fish, he had a day when things did not go well. Like Peter, how common is it to work hard and not gain anything. Sometimes we work hard and patiently, but it just doesn't work.

However! Trust in the Word of the Lord, and **throw the net one more time!** We must be able to obey! If you stop there, it is all for nothing! Today's Scripture tells us that we should not be bound by our past experiences, we will not be confined to our knowledge and common sense, **but we must believe in the Lord's Word and rely on it.** Without the Word of the Lord, there is no effort and labor that will yield benefit, but when we act according to the word of the Lord, there is always fruit. Believing in the promises of the Scriptures, being firm in faith and acting on it are never in vain.

Going back to today's Scripture, despite this situation, Peter and his co-workers obey Jesus' command. They have already heard and seen many of Jesus' miracles and were impressed by his teachings. Therefore, they obeyed Jesus, even though not all the circumstances did not line up. Obedience is not just

following when it is possible to follow it. Obedience is hard when it is difficult to do it! There are people who seem to be doing well in their faith life, but when some circumstance happens in their lives, they are separated from God. At that moment, check whether you are standing in faith, and I bless you in the name of Jesus to come to the place of obedience.

In obedience to Jesus, Peter threw a net, but this time, in verse 6, "When they had done so, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break." Everyone at the lake was amazed at the supernatural ability of Jesus in controlling even the fish in the lake. At this very moment, Peter forgot that the boat with so many fish was sinking and fell at Jesus' feet! What did he say? In verse 8, "When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus' knees and said, "Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!"" Instead of praising Jesus or celebrating his success, Peter tells Jesus to go away from him because he is a sinner.

Peter had already seen the power of Jesus in another miracle. Although such things impressed Peter and made him agree to follow Jesus, this incident of the Lord's ability to govern the fish of the lake, which is Peter's place of living, came as a special shock to him. Peter's crying reminds us of Job's confession. "My ears had heard of you but now my eyes have seen you. Therefore, I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes" (Job 42:5,6). Job tried to live righteously before God and was regarded as the most righteous of his time, and he knew God well, but when he stood in the divine presence of God, he realized nothing but his sins and repented.

Also, after the prophet Isaiah saw the glory of God, "'Woe to me!' I cried. 'I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the Lord Almighty.'"(Isaiah 6:5). When Peter began to see Jesus as divinely dignified through the power that Jesus showed, he instinctively realized his sins. In such a situation, the first reaction that occurs naturally to human is the overwhelming sense that humans cannot exist before

the Holy One. So, Peter immediately cried out, "Lord, leave me!" Do you know what Jesus was called before? In verse 5 the title "teacher" was changed to "Lord" in verse 8!

Without obedience, we cannot see! We easily see others as sinners but not ourselves. Obedience is when we stand below. "When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus' knees and said." When we are above the Word of God, we can never obey. We think that my thoughts are more correct than God's Words! We may think it is a good teacher's story, but it's not my Lord's word for my life! However, in this passage, the title has naturally changed! When we rely on God's Word, we experience miracles and my sins are revealed before God's presence. Repentance comes naturally!

Later, in John 21, a similar situation to what we read today happens. After Jesus' resurrection, seven disciples, led by Peter, go fishing to Galilee. They worked hard all night but couldn't catch anything. Then our Lord stands by the seashore and shouts. 'Do you have any fish?' 'No.' 'Throw the net on the other side.' But this time, the net was not torn. If you catch many big fish, of course the net will be torn, but here it's not tearing! Peter was a fisherman and certainly experienced the Lord's special presence and the touch of God through catching fish. Jesus spoke to him in a wonderfully understandable language! Then that means God wants to communicate with us in our daily work when we obey God's Words!

The Lord understood Peter's state of mind. So in reassuring words, "Don't be afraid; from now on you will catch people." Peter continued to lay down his job to follow Jesus. "So they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed him." (v.11). It's worth noting that the irony here is that in his profession, Peter was able to catch the greatest number of fish than ever before, but he left everything to follow Christ. At his all-time professional high, Peter let everything go in order to follow Jesus Christ. While we live, we must be careful when the wealth of the world grows in us that it becomes our hope in life. We must be careful so that our eyes

are not blind and our ears aren't closed.

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ, no matter what reason you come to church or how we believe in God, on the final judgment day, everyone will realize and confess that God is truly the Almighty Creator, and that Jesus is the Lord who saves us from sin and death. Whatever our past, I pray that you and I will be saved in the Lord, day by day with fear and trembling from now on to the moment before the Lord! Philippians 2:12, "Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed – not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence – continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling."

Fairfield Grace, May God's grace and peace and blessing be with you and your family, and your business, and your studies, and with the lives of your children. Amen.