

Lesson 1

PUT OUT INTO DEEP WATER

Luke 5:1-11

KV Luke 5:4

"When he had finished speaking, Jesus said to Simon, 'Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch.'"

Thank God who allowed us last week to complete our glorious study of the book of Acts. Through this study we learned many things. Chief amongst them was that a viper bite cannot stop the word of God. That and without the power of the Holy Spirit the work of God cannot go forth. Only through the engine of the Spirit does the work of God come to fruition. May the Holy Spirit work in Dupage ministry so that we too may help bring the gospel to Dupage county and too the ends of the earth.

This week we are beginning a seven part series to explore the foundations of the Bible and the message of salvation revealed through Jesus. Today's passage focuses on Jesus' challenge to Peter in Luke chapter 5, to put out into deep water. Jesus' purpose was to start a deep relationship with Peter. How can we start a personal relationship with Jesus? We can begin when we trust Jesus and obey his words. Let us learn today from Peter who trusted Jesus and grew to trust Jesus eventually with his own life. May God bless us to overcome all obstacles and answer Jesus' request for our lives.

Part I - Jesus speaks to Peter

As the passage begins we see Jesus standing by the Lake of Gennesaret, or the Sea of Galilee, or the Sea of Tiberias as John calls it. There was a great crowd around Jesus. Look at verse 1, **"One day as Jesus was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret, ^[a] the people were crowding around him and listening to the word of God."** The passage says that the crowd was listening to the word of God. Many people at that time were hungry and thirsty to hear the real word of God. This is what Jesus came to do and he graciously shared the word with them. How gracious Jesus is, who always has compassion on the crowd—he saw them as sheep without a shepherd and helped them find comfort in the Lord.

But it turns out the crowd wasn't Jesus' primary focus. Look at verse 2, **"He saw at the water's edge two boats, left there by the fishermen, who were washing their nets."** While Jesus was teaching—there were fisherman in the background doing work, cleaning nets and putting equipment away getting ready to go home. One of those fishermen was Peter—who was minding his own business and not

really enjoying or listening to the words of life that came from Jesus' mouth—too busy.

Peter had met Jesus before. His brother Andrew was a disciple of John the Baptist. In John 1:41-42 Andrew told Peter, "...**We have found the Messiah**" (that is, the Christ). ⁴² **And he brought him to Jesus.**" Peter had been tangentially around Jesus but had not done much with that opportunity. Many people spend their entire life around Jesus, introduced to Jesus, cool with Jesus, but never knowing Jesus personally. What about you? Are you in Jesus or around Jesus?

In God's grace we see that though Peter was waffling around Jesus, Jesus had a direct plan for his life. In fact it turns out that Peter was the sole focus of this entire passage and the preaching on the shore of Galilee. Look at verse 3, "**He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little from shore. Then he sat down and taught the people from the boat.**" This was God's initiative that Jesus got into Peter's boat. Peter probably wouldn't have minded if Jesus had gone to another boat. Jesus is so wonderful in his grace to save one soul. Peter was not really interested in hearing what Jesus had to say. But now Peter was in the boat off shore sitting right next to Jesus—listening to the word of God.

The word of God could begin to move his heart. Here we learn that the first step in any relationship with Jesus is coming close to him and listening to his words—free of distraction and with an open heart. Thank God who provides this opportunity through Sunday service and Bible Study to come and hear the word of God.

As Jesus finished his sermon to the people they all left and went home, perhaps it was lunch time or the Bear's game was on. Look at verse 4, "**When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch."**" Jesus now turns the attention directly to Simon. Jesus makes an odd request of Simon. Jesus' profession was a carpenter before he became a rabbi, with no experience in the fishing business. Look at verse 5a, "**Simon answered, "Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything..."**" Simon must have been dog tired—he had worked all night and caught nothing. Perhaps Peter thought Jesus didn't care and was just arrogantly giving demands. Peter felt like a big failure at this moment and just wanted to go home. In life when we fail at something we tend to close off our hearts to others and to God. And sometimes we never open them backup--closed by bitterness. But Jesus has the words of life and wanted Peter's heart to open up so that he could be changed for the glory of God.

Jesus was not ignorant of fishing strategy. Jesus knows all things and all fish are in his hands. Jesus was helping Peter come into a deeper relationship by challenging his common sense. All of Jesus' commands to his disciples were to help

their hearts open to a deeper relationship with God. Peter had already put his nets away and thought Jesus' advice was too impractical to follow. In the short time studying this passage I have learned much about fishing, how to fish and catch fish. Fish supposedly live in shallow water--not deep water, so this request didn't make sense, but look at Peter's response in verse 5b, **"But because you say so, I will let down the nets."**

Somehow the words Peter heard from Jesus' sermon moved his heart. When nothing made sense, Peter decided to trust in Jesus. Though he had previously ignored Jesus, now he decided to trust him. Jesus' request was strange and seemed impractical. When we look back in the Bible we see God constantly choosing seemingly impractical ways to accomplish his will. Why is that? Isaiah 55:8-9 explains, **"8For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the Lord. 9"As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts."** God uses his ways to help us break our reliance on our own intellect and come to rely completely on God and Jesus.

In the Bible this is revealed through God's servants. God chose the tiny nation of Israel to make a covenant with and to be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation (Ex 6:19). God chose Jacob over Esau to be the father of the 12 tribes of Israel (Ro 9:13). God chose David over his 7 athletic brothers to be king (1 Sa 16:1-13). God chose Mary, a country virgin, to be blessed among women (Lk 1:28). It also seems impractical to gather on a Sunday morning and sing hymns of praise and listen to a sermon from the word of God. But God called all of you to come this morning. I know you all have the weight of the world on your shoulders, perhaps you're not sure why you even came, but you like Peter said, "because you say so—I will go." Those who call themselves disciples of Jesus will say when faced with seemingly odd request from Jesus, "but because you say so..." Those who are not disciples will come up with an excuse. Jesus desires that we draw near to him by putting out into deep water, that we may have a deeper relationship with him and be able to obey what he says because he is the one who said it.

When examining Jesus' words to us we must also endeavor to understand what Jesus' is trying to help us learn about his purposes. When the word of God seems impractical we must learn to trust Jesus and draw closer to him at that time and be able to be used for the Glory of God. The foundation of having a relationship with friends or between husband and wife is trust. The same is for those who consider themselves followers of Jesus. Followers of Jesus must trust Jesus completely. In this they grow deeper and deeper in their relationship with Jesus.

Look at verse 6 and 7, **"6 When they had done so, 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.” Here we see that when Simon obeyed Jesus, the two boats caught so many fish that the nets were bursting and the boats were sinking! Why such a miracle? Jesus helped Peter to see that he was more than just a good teacher. Jesus revealed his power over nature to Peter. As we come to Jesus in times of trouble and failure and when we listen to him we too begin to truly realize who Jesus is.

Another very important thing is that Peter realized something about himself. Look at verse 8, **“When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus’ knees and said, “Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!”**” Peter’s reaction wasn’t the joy and astonishment of his employees, but he realized his own true nature before Jesus. Peter had been around Jesus, had heard the words of Jesus, had ignored Jesus, and Jesus even came to meet him and give him a new name, to no effect. Now Jesus sought him out, came to him, and blessed him abundantly so that Peter could make the right conclusion of who Jesus really was. Sometimes we don’t recognize our own sinfulness because we are surrounded by the fallen world and other sinners. We think we are normal. This reminds us of John chapter 1:5, **“The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not understood it.”** We need to come into the close relationship and presence of Jesus and his holiness that our own sinfulness be revealed. That is why Jesus draws us closer to him, so that our own dependence on ourselves can be removed and we can see that we are sinful people deserving of wrath—yet receiving grace.

Part II - You will be fishers of people

Everyone in the group was astonished including James and John. No one had ever seen anything like this. But Jesus wasn’t just using his miracles to help them get rich quick. Look at verse 10b, **“Then Jesus said to Simon, “Don’t be afraid; from now on you will fish for people.”**” Jesus had something more than what they were able to catch with their hands. Jesus had the words of life. They were no longer to work just for material gain but to enlarge the kingdom of God. Instead of just living for himself, Simon would be living for Jesus. Through this catch of fish Jesus turned Peter from a selfish man into one who would be a great man of God—helping many others turn to Jesus.

Look at verse 11, **“So they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed him.”** When Jesus revealed himself to them, they realized they were sinners in the presence of God and were so thankful for the grace of God on their lives. They decided to pack up and follow Jesus. Here we can learn those who are disciples of Jesus live for Jesus and not for themselves. How can we know if we are

living for Jesus? Just think about this, it is a good measuring stick, when you do something, who gets the glory? God or yourself? When we make a commitment in life to follow Jesus, we are changed by him. Just as if we hang out with gang members we begin to wear gang colors, and wear low pants, and become a gang member. If we follow Jesus and trust in Jesus we grow to learn his attitude and become like him, the image of Jesus.

The conclusion of being a disciple of Jesus is to share the gospel with others and help others come to know the same saving grace you received from Jesus. Abraham listened to God's word to leave his land and his people—to give up his family business and go to the Promise Land on just a promise from God. Abraham obeyed but not because of potential financial gain. Same with Moses, who lived a quiet family life in the desert. He did not go back to Egypt to rescue God's people because it seemed like a good thing to do—but returned because God called him to do so. Through these events God could build a relationship with Abraham and Moses. Now we call Abraham the father of faith and Moses became the giver of God's Law.

When I first encountered Jesus' words like Peter I was on the peripheral just minding my own business not really listening to the words of Jesus and their life giving power. As a teenager being in a rock band was fun—but this was not God's calling in my life - so that as I studied the Bible and began to see the Holy Spirit applying the word of God in my life I realized that this was not what God intended for my life.

But it didn't make practical sense to give that up - young people to be in a band and have the glory of a group of friends following and supporting you. But because Jesus told asked me to - I decided to quit and divest myself of the band. A few years after that - Msn Gideon who used to teach the children at Saturday Bible study could not do it anymore - I volunteered to do so. At that time I was running a successful pickup baseball league in Dupage County area. The problem was both baseball and children's bible study were on Saturday morning at the same time. It did not make sense to give that organization up to teach children the Bible. But every time I made that kind of decision for God because he asked me--I could not see it but it paid off. You see Michael Ulrich here as fruit of that labor. When Isaiah says, "God's ways are different from man's ways," he has a point. In the same way back in March as Msn David received his calling to go to Indianapolis - the calling to lead this ministry was extended to me. I had thought in the back of my mind - maybe when David retired in 25 years or maybe when I am 50 years old I will be ready. But that was not God's challenge for me. By the grace of God it happened in one day. I looked at it as Jesus' words to Peter. Lord there are many things I have to do and many excuses. But because you says so, I will do it.

This has been my abundant blessing then to co-work with you. I have had the

privilege to learn so much in this time, so much that I thought I knew that I don't and how much I really need the help of the Holy Spirit to help others. Through this Jesus taught me I need to be humble and listen to him and not my own ideas. Jesus is challenging me to draw closer to him through this time of growth and learning and how to draw closer to those around me as well. Jesus is challenging me to look at him and come to depend entirely on him, because he has a purpose that God's salvation plan will be revealed and God's name will be glorified through Dupage UBF. Lord at this time help me to draw closer and nearer to you and trust your command. Lord help me to know your heart for Dupage that I may follow you and put out into the deep water, and watch you work mightily for the Glory of God.

Conclusion: Today we learned how Jesus comes to each of us and challenges us to put out into deep water. Sometimes we don't understand Jesus' requests of us but as a disciple we follow Jesus' lead trusting in him. By obeying his words we grow in a deeper relationship with him and can be used mightily for the work of God. I pray you may draw closer to Jesus by obeying his will for your life and may come to know who Jesus' true nature as the Son of God.