

Friday 29th May 2020

“So it was, as the multitude pressed about Him to hear the word of God, that He stood by the Lake of Gennesaret, and saw two boats standing by the lake; but the fishermen had gone from them and were washing their nets. Then He got into one of the boats, which was Simon’s, and asked him to put out a little from the land. And He sat down and taught the multitudes from the boat.

“When He had stopped speaking, He said to Simon, ‘Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch.’

“But Simon answered and said to Him, ‘Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing; nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net.’ And when they had done this, they caught a great number of fish, and their net was breaking. So they signalled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so they began to sink. When Simon Peter saw it he fell down at Jesus’ knees, saying, ‘Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!’

“For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish which they had taken; and so also were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, ‘Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch men.’ So when they had brought their boats to land, they forsook all and followed Him.” Luke 5:1-11

Picture the scene. Jesus standing on the shore surrounded by a crowd of people listening to the word of God, He noticed the empty boats and the fishermen washing their nets, this was a sure sign that they had stopped fishing because they had caught nothing. Jesus got into Simon’s boat and asked him to go out, away from the shore and to cast out the nets. I can imagine Simon Peter’s frustration. In verse 5 it shows, however, that Simon listens to Jesus and obeys His instructions to let down the nets, this would be the wrong time of day to expect a catch. Simon’s obedience resulted in a large number of fish being caught.

In verse 8 Simon is aware that he has seen a miracle. God at work through Jesus. Simon also realizes his own sinfulness expressed in his words to Jesus ‘Depart from me for I am a sinful man, O Lord’ and the realization of Jesus’ holiness. Simon knew that Jesus had healed the sick and driven out demons but he was amazed that Jesus cared about his day to day routine and understood his needs. This is true for us too. Jesus desires that all receive salvation through Him.

Jesus does not drive away the sinner who recognizes his or her wretched condition. He accepts the confessing sinner and offers that person the opportunity of reconciliation with God. Then He sends the forgiven sinner out to do the work of God to catch men: Peter’s commission would be to rescue men from the danger of sin.

We too are called to tell others about Jesus, who was crucified for our sins, how He died and rose again. We all have our own story about how and when we believed that Jesus was our Lord and Saviour. It might have been in Sunday School, through a Youth Organization or for some later in life. Maybe it included a losing of faith or leaving church when other interests pulled you away but in time you were led back into fellowship with Christ.

Then Jesus told them this parable:

“Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Does he not leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbours together and says, ‘Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.’ I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.” Luke 15:3-7

When it comes to throwing out our nets the issue is not how good we are at speaking to people but like Simon whether we are obeying Jesus whenever His holy spirit directs us to tell the gospel story.

In this season of Pentecost let us welcome the Holy Spirit into our lives. Let us recall Jesus’ last words to the disciples:

‘But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth’. Acts 1:8

These commands are also spoken to us.

Lord Jesus at this present time many people need to hear the gospel message. By the power of your Holy Spirit at work in us, let us proclaim the Good News message of salvation. We ask this in the name of Jesus. Amen