

An Invitation to a Mission – February 24, 2008

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Luke 5:6-11

6 And when they had done this, they caught a great number of fish, and their net was breaking. 7 So they signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. 8 When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!" 9 For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish which they had taken; 10 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." 11 So when they had brought their boats to land, they forsook all and followed Him.

Wow! It looks like Jesus knew a little bit about fishing after all, huh? Regardless of the lack in our lives in times past in our own efforts by our own strength, when we listen to what the Lord has to say on any matter and act accordingly, amazing things begin to occur!

As we finish up from last weeks message entitled '**Invitation to a Mission**' let's be very clear about this one point:

[When you accept God's invitation to join Him in His mission...]

1. With God all things are possible!

In fact **Luke 18:27** Jesus replied, "What is impossible for people is possible with God."

Saying it another way:

Matthew 19:26 'Jesus looked at them intently and said, "Humanly speaking, it is impossible. But with God everything is possible."

Verse 6 says:

6 And when they had done this, they caught a great number of fish, and their net was breaking.

When they had done what? Listened and obeyed to Jesus request for them to "Launch out into the deep and let down their nets for a catch."

In spite of their pitiful results from the previous night's toil and labor, NEVERTHELESS, at His word, they let down the net.

*Important side note: remember several weeks ago we discussed that 'the word of God came to John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness.' [Luke 3:2] and now we are reading that Simon responds to Jesus with 'nevertheless at Your word.'

This is a 'rhema' word; Simon was in close proximity with Jesus, in the same boat by the way, and didn't only 'hear' what Jesus said but he 'HEARD' what Jesus said; took it to heart and acted upon it.

That is why I continue to encourage each of us to CARVE OUT TIME to get in the boat, if you will, regularly with Jesus. This type of hearing doesn't just happen by chance. Clear communication is enhanced through relationship.

[Back to it...]

Notice they didn't catch anything without doing anything!

Luke 10:2

'Then Jesus said to them, "The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few; therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.'

'Here am I Lord, send them!' No! Here am I Lord, send me!

*In times past I have encouraged the use of a daily prayer that the Lord would lead me to cross paths with somebody today that I might share the God's Good News with; and that when He does I would be faithful to open my mouth and do so.

So Simon launched out and let down and they caught a great number of fish... All is good right? Uh oh, now the net is breaking because they caught too many fish and they can't handle it.

7 So they signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink.

[When you accept God's invitation to join Him in His mission...]

2. We need each other.

You are not the Lone Ranger, nor are you the chosen one; you are one of the chosen ones, that's for sure, but you're not it! You need your partners and they need you! We need each other!

The moment we begin to act like we are the only ones that has it all together is the moment when we will begin to notice that it is beginning to all fall apart!

Hear me well! I love the Apostle Paul's perspective concerning team work and recognition of our need of each other in our mission as well as our utter dependence upon God, whose business it is in the first place!

1 Corinthians 3:5-7

'Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers through whom you believed, as the Lord gave to each one? 6 I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. 7 So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase.'

*Youth With A Mission: Impact World Tour events coming later this year. Already several churches locally are planning, praying and beginning to work together, some for the first time maybe, to reach the lost in our community. This is awesome!

I think it's about time we each began signaling our partners in the other churches and work together to bring in the harvest don't you?

Oh they might not sing the same songs we do; they might use wine at the Lord's Supper instead of grape juice; they might even wear a robe when they preach or dance during worship and sprinkle when they baptize and maybe even speak in tongues!

But they are our brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ and we need each other if we are ever going to effectively join Jesus in His mission to reach the lost effectively!

[When you accept God's invitation to join Him in His mission...]

3. Humility is a primary requirement for availability.

8 When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!" 9 For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish which they had taken;

James 4:6 and **1 Peter 5:5** both say this with crystal clarity: *'God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.'*

James and Peter both share this core truth from **Proverbs 3:34** *'Surely God scorns the scornful, but gives grace to the humble.'*

Here Jesus is, standing 'smack dab' in the middle of Peter's little dingy with a load of fish so big that the net is breaking, and what does Peter say: **"Get out of here; I'm such a sinful man!"**

Peter was a fisherman and probably quite good at it I would imagine. The image of a big, burly

fisherman in this time period wasn't especially refined or soft. Basically, Peter was probably a 'man's man,' so this type of response might have been completely unexpected by many. But he was undone.

Church, let's get this right: we are not nearly as strong as we think we are.

We are not as strong as we think we are by Rich Mullins

Well, it took the hand of God Almighty
To part the waters of the sea
But it only took one little lie
To separate you and me
Oh, we are not as strong as we think we are

And they say that one day Joshua
Made the sun stand still in the sky
But I can't even keep these thoughts
Of you from passing by
Oh, we are not as strong as we think we are

We are frail
We are fearfully and wonderfully made
Forged in the fires of human passion
Choking on the fumes of selfish rage
And with these our hells and our heavens
So few inches apart
We must be awfully small
And not as strong as we think we are

And the Master said their faith was
Gonna make them mountains move
But me, I tremble like a hill on a fault line
Just at the thought of how I lost you
Oh, we are not as strong as we think we are

When you love you walk on the water
Just don't stumble on the waves
We all want to go there somethin' awful
But to stand there it takes some grace
'Cause oh, we are not as strong
As we think we are

Peter didn't just say it, he showed it. Verse 8 *'When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees!'* He humbled himself before Jesus, probably kneeling in stinky fish slop!

Psalm 99:5 *'Exalt the LORD our God, and worship at His footstool; He is holy.*

[*Shaw-kaw*] to bow down, to stoop before someone as an act of submission or reverence; **to make oneself low**

1 Corinthians 1:29 reminds us that *'no flesh should glory in his presence.'* and goes on to add in verse 31 that if we should glory then *'let us glory in the Lord!'*

Peter knew he didn't catch those fish; it was God! He was astonished or taken by surprise, made

aware, that something spectacular, even miraculous was going on here. Therefore he responded accordingly which made him a prime candidate for an invitation to a mission!

It's not your ability the Lord wants so much as it is your availability, and that comes through humility! The Lord has a way of giving you a helping hand with that sometime, bless His Holy Name!

At Wednesday night prayer meeting we looked at ...

Psalm 102:23 Amplified

'He has afflicted and weakened my strength, humbling and bringing me low [with sorrow] in the way;

Humility to follow Jesus' invitation comes from seeing who He is and realizing who you are not.

9 'For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish which they had taken; 10 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. 11 So when they had brought their boats to land, they forsook all and followed Him.'

Jesus gave the invitation to join Him on a mission to be fishers of men and they responded by forsaking and following. They left behind a prized possession, a huge catch of fish, to accept Jesus' invitation to join Him in His mission.

[When you accept God's invitation to join Him in His mission...]

4. It will cost you but brings great rewards.

Matthew 19:27-28 The Message

27 Then Peter chimed in, "We left everything and followed you. What do we get out of it?" 28-30 Jesus replied, "Yes, you have followed me. In the re-creation of the world, when the Son of Man will rule gloriously, you who have followed me will also rule, starting with the twelve tribes of Israel. And not only you, but anyone who sacrifices home, family, fields—whatever—because of me will get it all back a hundred times over, not to mention the considerable bonus of eternal life. This is the Great Reversal: many of the first ending up last, and the last first."

Closing:

[When you accept God's invitation to join Him in His mission...]

- 1. With God all things are possible!**
- 2. We need each other.**
- 3. Humility is a primary requirement for availability.**
- 4. It will cost you but brings great rewards.**

When you receive an invitation it usually asks you to RSVP which is an acronym for the French phrase "**Répondez s'il vous plaît**" which means please respond. When given an invitation it is proper to convey a response.

What will be your "**Répondez s'il vous plaît?**"