

**All-Age Talk for 6<sup>th</sup> Feb 2022 based on Luke Ch 5 v 1-11 following drama. Caroline Seaton**

Peter, having worked all night, was sceptical at Jesus request to put out his nets again, but he did and without much deliberation. We know what happens next, and this is the focus – **so many fish** that he struggles to drag in the net. Seeing what is happening Peter is overwhelmed with fear and wonder, sensing he is in the presence of divine power and responds by falling at Jesus feet and begging him, “Go away from me Lord for I am a sinful man!”

Do we ever find ourselves in a situation where we acknowledge our downfalls and sinful ways to God so dramatically? Every week we have a time of confession in church but would we, do we, own up to it so dramatical as Peter – falling on our knees? I’m sure I wouldn’t be able to get up again though!

Peter is caught by surprise. In the midst of his daily grind, and in fact, after a particularly lousy night fishing, he is encountered by the one who changes everything. Amazed by the power of God displayed in the abundant catch of fish, Simon is suddenly aware of his sinfulness and unworthiness. He sees the overwhelming display between God’s power manifest in Jesus and his own mortal compromised life.

Jesus responds to Peter by saying, “Do not be afraid, from now on you will be catching people.” The Greek word for “catching” used here is *zogron* which apparently means “to catch alive”. Obviously the fish Peter caught would die fairly quickly as they were out of water. But Peter and the other fisherman with him, were being called to a new vocation of catching people so that they might live, a calling by God to carry out His mission of salvation for us all.

Us gathered here today, ordinary people, are being called to discipleship and mission. Like Simon Peter and his friends Jesus calls us to a new mission. We see that our sinful lives, our failure and inadequacy are not obstacles to God’s call. God calls imperfect people to do God’s work, people who are aware off their unworthiness and are often doubting and resistant to God’s call – Moses in the book of Exodus says, “Who am I that I should go to Pharoah?” and in Jeremiah ch 1, “Then I said, ‘Truly I do not know how to speak to the Lord as I am only a boy’.” God uses ordinary everyday people to do his work, as they are. He doesn’t wait for them to shape up but works on them to make them faithful servants.

How often do we resist Jesus’ claim on our lives because what he is calling us to do seems too crazy, or too impractical, or doesn’t fit into our busy schedule?

How often do we avoid putting out into the deep waters of following and showing witness to Jesus because we are convinced that we will not see any results?

For most of us, this will not mean leaving our current work but who knows? We are all called to look at our priorities to bring into line with God’s priorities.

To use the gifts God has given to us in service to others, to share the good news of Christ in word and deed.

The work Jesus calls us to doesn’t wait until we are ready. We live in a broken world which needs the good news of the Gospel, our prayers and our action. We are called right now in despite of our frailty, failures and doubts, even in the business of our daily lives to serve him.

And Jesus’ word to Simon Peter, “Do not be afraid,” is as much for us today as it was for the fishermen on the shores of the sea of Galilee. God works through us and with us – in the depths of the unknown, and in the shallow waters of faith for those exploring God’s mercy and love. Amen