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St. Paul's Lutheran Church  
2100 16<sup>th</sup> Street SW  
Austin, MN 55912-1749  
Pastor Ted Barthels  
Sermon preached on  
February 10, 2019  
5<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost

Scripture Lessons: Isaiah 6:1-8; 1 Corinthians 14:12-20  
Hymns: 360; 777; 770, 313:3

Grace be unto you and peace from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

Sermon Text: Luke 5:1-11

So it was, as the multitude pressed about Him to hear the word of God, that He stood by the Lake of Gennesaret, <sup>2</sup>and saw two boats standing by the lake; but the fishermen had gone from them and were washing *their* nets. <sup>3</sup>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. <sup>4</sup>When He had stopped speaking, He said to Simon, "Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch."

<sup>5</sup>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." <sup>6</sup>And when they had done this, they caught a great number of fish, and their net was breaking. <sup>7</sup>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. <sup>8</sup>When Simon Peter saw *it*, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!"

<sup>9</sup>For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish which they had taken; <sup>10</sup>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.” <sup>11</sup> So when they had brought their boats to land, they forsook all and followed Him. (NKJV)

This is the Word of God.

Sanctify us, oh Lord, through Your truth. Your Word is truth. Amen.

In Christ Jesus, God our Savior, dear fellow Redeemed:

INTRO: The Purpose of the Epiphany season

Comprehending the glory Jesus is what the Epiphany season is all about. For several weeks we have been meditating upon Jesus' glory as it has been revealed to us in the inspired record of Holy Scripture. We have seen how it was spoken of in prophecy. We have considered how it was revealed in miraculous signs. We have seen how people marveled at Jesus's teaching because they perceived the authority that was present in Jesus and His Word.

In these final Sundays of the Epiphany season we are preparing for the transition to the Lenten season. It is important for us to enter Lent with a refreshed certainty of Jesus' divine majesty for a blessed contemplation of Jesus' sufferings and death.

However, we must also be on our guard against this renewed understanding of Jesus' glory becoming merely academic for us. We must comprehend that Jesus' glory wasn't only something that impacted people's state of mind, and even the state of their heart, but something that impacts people's lives now. And yes, I switched to the present tense for Jesus' glory not only impacted people in the past but it impacts people's lives now. This isn't only a Bible History lesson; it is a lesson regarding Jesus' glory and its impact on your life. --

**THEME: Jesus' Divine Majesty Brings Blessings  
to the Lives of His Disciples.**

## **I. These Blessings Are Conveyed to Us through Jesus' Word.**

For a couple of Sundays we focused on how Jesus' taught in the synagogues, and there boldly taught that He was the Christ, that the words of the prophets were being fulfilled in the hearing of the people of Nazareth. That scenario for hearing the Word of God fits very nicely with the pattern of our lives as well. We know that we ought to go to church on Sundays, and we expect to hear the Word of God presented faithfully for the growth of our faith. This is according to the will of God both for those who come before Him to worship and for those teaching His Word. We know that the Holy Spirit will work powerfully in the hearts of those who hear the Word of God. However, what we see in our text this morning is that Jesus did not confine His teaching of God's Word to the synagogue or temple courts. He took it to the people, and people came to hear; indeed they showed up in such large numbers that it was necessary for Jesus to take action so that all could hear and His words would not simply be lost in the press of the crowd.

This is a good reminder for us as well that the Lord doesn't compartmentalize the Word, assigning it to Sunday mornings. The Lord would have His Word go with us. Jesus would bring us His Word throughout the week wherever we may be, including at our place of employment.

It was no accident or coincidence that Jesus came to that particular section of the shore of the Sea of Galilee, referred to as the Lake of Gennesaret in our text. There were some fisherman tending to their nets after a long night of fishing that had produced no catch. These weren't just any fishermen, but men that were already familiar with Jesus, Simon to whom Jesus assigned the name Peter, and the two sons of a man named Zebedee, whom we know as James and John. It was Peter's commercial fishing

boat that Jesus chose to use as a sort of pulpit, pushed out a bit from shore so that He could be heard as He taught the crowds that had gathered at the sea shore. There was Peter tending to his work as a fisherman and along comes Jesus with the Word of the Lord for Peter and his business partners to hear while they tended their nets.

Jesus' blessings come to His disciples through His Word. And isn't the first primary blessing that comes to those who believe just that, that Jesus comes to us with His Word even when we aren't in church, and He blesses us with that Word of Grace?

That was but the beginning of blessings that would come to Peter as well as James and John on that day. As the teaching for that day concluded Jesus addresses Peter's lack of fish. Jesus, a preacher, a former builder, addresses Peter, who has been fishing all his life and tells Peter how to fish. He tells Peter to launch out into the deep and let down his nets for a catch. Peter might have found it amusing if it had not come from Jesus. Peter knew about fishing, and Jesus was telling Peter to go out wrong time of day, wrong place, way out in the deep, not in the shallows where in the Sea of Galilee the schools of fish they were after were normally found and could be easily netted. No this preacher, and former builder tells Peter to go contrary to everything Peter knows about fishing. Peter related to the Lord what the Lord already knew, that Peter and his partners and employees had already fished all night and hadn't caught anything. But then Peter went on to say something very important for us to hear, *"nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net."* (v.5)

Well, you know what happened. Peter no sooner let down the net and the nets began to fill with fish, so many fish that these well-tended nets were in danger of tearing; so many fish they couldn't handle it, and called for help; so many fish that both of these commercial fishing boats were filled to the point of sinking!

The power, the majesty, the glory of Jesus was evident in that wondrous sign. The blessing came to these new disciples through the hearing and following of Jesus' word. Peter obeyed Jesus and followed Jesus' word even when it came down to impacting the way Peter fished. And Peter was blessed, blessed beyond any expectation, blessed beyond measure, setting things up so that Peter would be able to serve the Lord more fully in the months and years to come.

Here is where the rubber meets the road. All too often, all too easily we limit the application of Jesus' word and the following of that Word to a very limited area of life. We know how the world does business and we might study and get degrees in business, and that is fine, but then the Lord directs us a little differently with His Word, that we should love our neighbor leading us to do business differently than the world sees as smart. How should we react? May the Spirit lead us to respond as Peter did, *"nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net."*

The word has its own established mores which they expect us to first tolerate and then also observe. Of course what society accepts as good comes from the will of the flesh and not the will of God. It will frequently run in direct and open opposition to the express will of God. The world expects us to conform. The Lord says, *"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."* (Romans 12:2) We ought to be ready to say, *"Nevertheless at Your word..."*

The lesson is resounding, when common sense and even the authority of the whole world tells us one thing, but the Lord Jesus tells us something different, the disciple is blessed who concedes to the word and will of our Lord. We are richly blessed. And yes of course the Lord is not limited in how He pours His blessings into our lives, and the Lord will bless us only and always as He knows is best

for us, for our good as we seek to live to His glory. We need to remember that when we are transformed by the Spirit's renewing, our attitude toward material things as well as spiritual matters will be different from the world, sanctified by the Spirit.

The impact on Peter was profound. To say that it paralleled Isaiah's vision experience in our Old Testament lesson is not going too far. Peter realized the majesty of Jesus as his holy, holy, holy Lord. Peter was humbled by this powerful demonstration of Jesus' power and authority over ALL things. "Simon Peter ... fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, 'Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!' " (v.8) and so began a new outpouring of blessings not only for Peter but also for James and John, an outpouring of --

## **II. The Lord's Blessings for True Spiritual Living.**

Peter had humbled himself before the Lord because he realized the holy majesty of Jesus. We understand the power of the law to reveal our sin. Our conscience is busy responding to the law of God, accusing, or else excusing our behavior. Yes, we have extremely flawed consciences. We respond to the accusation of the law by feeling sort of guilty, but then we think we aren't as bad as drug dealers, and we are nice most of the time, and "I'm not hurting anyone, at least not anyone besides myself," (forgetting that our transgressions do hurt the Lord). And on and on our prattling goes.

The holiness of the Lord shuts that nonsense down. As we hear the Word, as we consider the majesty of our Lord, as the Holy Spirit opens our hearts to know Jesus as our holy God and Savior, we too shall humble ourselves before the Lord. We too shall confess with Peter, perhaps with the words of Isaiah, "*Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, The LORD of hosts.*" (Isaiah 6:5)

Jesus' response to Peter was full of grace and purpose. We might well say the Lord lifted Him up and called Peter to follow Him in faith. John, who witnessed all this with his own eyes and ears, wrote in his first epistle: *"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. <sup>9</sup>If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."* (1 John 1:8-9)

Jesus made it abundantly clear that this marked a divide in Peter's life. Jesus addressed the fear within Peter's heart, and at the same time instilled a higher calling, and divine purpose into Peter's heart and life. Those simple words coming from the Lord, *"Don't be afraid!"* (v.10) convey such a wonder of forgiving grace. Jesus brings the peace of sins forgiven. Let me say that again. **Jesus brings the peace of sins forgiven.** In place of fear and great trepidation comes peace, peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Today we shall again come before the Lord's altar to receive the very body and true blood given and shed for us for the forgiveness of sins. The message is loud and clear for the penitent sinner. The Lord Jesus is saying to you every bit as personally and intimately as Jesus did to Peter, *"Don't be afraid."* Don't be afraid, your sins are forgiven. Jesus leaves you with His peace! What an amazing gift of grace! What a wondrous spiritual blessing!

But the Lord didn't stop there with Peter. Jesus continued by calling Peter to a new and higher calling for Peter's life. Jesus said, *"From now on you will catch men."* (v.10) Peter as well as James and John left behind their fishing business; trusting the Lord's word and calling, they followed Jesus. They entered the discipleship that would prepare them for their work as apostles of the Lord. This was yet another wondrous spiritual blessing that Jesus imparted through His Word, a blessing that gave new purpose to the lives of these men.

Does Jesus call us in this way also? Does He expect all of us to leave behind our work through which we support our families that we might be evangelists? That specific calling is not for all, however Jesus has called us to believe. He has called upon us to deny ourselves and take up our cross and follow Him. (Matthew 16:24) Jesus has called us through the great commission to be His witnesses to the ends of the earth, preaching the gospel to every creature, knowing that whoever believes and is baptized shall be saved. (Mark 16:15) Through His Word Jesus has brought this higher purpose to each of our lives. As individuals with differing gifts and abilities we shall serve that calling in different ways, but always to the same end. We “show forth the praises of Him who has called us out of darkness into marvelous light.” (1 Peter 2:9)

How blessed we are to know the divine majesty of our God and Savior Jesus Christ. Even as He has revealed His glory to us through His Word, so also through the power of His Word and faith which lays hold of the power of Jesus’ Word, we are blessed to go forward into life confident that the Lord shall bless us with every needed grace and blessing, that we might be enabled to serve Him all our days.

**AMEN.**

And the peace of God which passes all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.