

ST. LUKE 5:1-11 (esp. 10b-11)  
[1 KINGS 19:11-21; 1 PETER]  
5<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY  
SUNDAY, JULY 16, 2017

SERMON ..... ST. LUKE 5:10b-11

**“HEARING, SEEING, & BELIEVING OFTEN RESULTS IN BEING SENT”**

In the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit. *[Amen.]*

Dear fellow sent saints, grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ

Jesus our Lord. *[Amen.]*

“Then let us follow Christ, our Lord,

And take the cross appointed

And, firmly clinging to His Word,

In suff’ring be undaunted.

For those who bear the battle’s strain

The crown of heav’nly life obtain.”

*(LUTHERAN SERVICE BOOK, © 2006 Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, MO. 688:5)*

GOSPEL READING..... ST. LUKE 5:10b-11

<sup>10b</sup>And Jesus said to Simon, “Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching men.”

<sup>11</sup>And when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed him.

PROLOGUE: Before I was allowed to perform my military duties in West Berlin, Germany, during the Vietnam War I underwent significant training that prepared me to serve as a radio intercept operator and traffic analyst in the worldwide defense of peace and freedom. Before I was allowed to referee high school basketball games and umpire high school baseball games I underwent significant training that prepared me to know the rules that I was expected to enforce and how to enforce them. Before I was allowed to drive commercial busses with live human beings on them I underwent significant training that prepared me to safely drive those large vehicles loaded with real people. And, before I was allowed to perform the tasks of pastoral ministry without direct supervision I underwent significant classroom and on-the-job training that prepared me to serve God by serving you, His people, in accordance with His instructions as set forth in His Holy Word.

In all the above and various other instances the training that prepared me to properly perform my assigned tasks involved hearing the instructions, seeing examples of how the tasks were expected to be performed, and believing that the training I received was correct and beneficial. The training in all those situations was for the purpose of preparing me to be sent to do the tasks that needed to be done.

So it was with the apostle Peter as well as the other men whom Jesus enlisted to be His apostolic disciples. They then like many modern-day disciples of Jesus Christ (that is, Christians) discovered that ...

**“HEARING, SEEING, & BELIEVING OFTEN RESULTS IN BEING SENT.”**

The proverb or idiom “a rolling stone gathers no moss” actually has two meanings. The original meaning is that “people pay a price for being always on the move, in that they have no roots in a specific place.” A second meaning that has evolved is that “people who keep moving avoid picking up responsibilities and cares.”

*(www.google.com)* In our fast-paced largely workaholic society, we often find ourselves without roots and avoiding picking up additional responsibilities and cares due to an already-overloaded plate.

Today’s Gospel Reading records the frustrating life-situation of Simon Peter and his fisher-buddies who had invested much physical labor overnight and gained ... NOTHING! They were understandably bone-tired, certainly frustrated, and perhaps even agitated. Then Jesus, who was NOT a fisherman, gave an instruction that was certainly confusing to the

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veteran fishermen. After all, it came from someone who seemingly had neither training nor experience in the art and science of fishing. **“Nonetheless at His command, Simon not only launched into deeper water but also let the nets down.”** (Donald Guthrie in *JESUS THE MESSIAH: AN ILLUSTRATED LIFE OF CHRIST*. Copyright © 1972 by The Zondervan Corporation, Grand Rapids, MI. Page 72.) In so doing, he exemplified his realization that ...

### I. GOD CALLS US TO OBEY HIM. (1-5)

<sup>1</sup>On one occasion, while the crowd was pressing in on [Jesus] to hear the word of God, he was standing by the lake of Gennesaret, <sup>2</sup>and he saw two boats by the lake, but the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. <sup>3</sup>Getting into one of the boats, which was Simon's, he asked him to put out a little from the land. And he sat down and taught the people from the boat. **“And when he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, “Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch.”** <sup>5</sup>And Simon answered, **“Master, we toiled all night and took nothing! But at your word I will let down the nets.”**

You know, Peter could have offered all sorts of rebuttals based on his learned experience as a seasoned fisherman. He could have countered with all sorts of well-founded reasons to scornfully ignore Jesus' commands. But he didn't ... and having obediently followed the given directions, he received an astounding blessing, namely, a large catch of fish!

Okay, let's consider our personal present-day lives. We who are grown adults with years of life-experiences and shaped by both formal and informal training often find ourselves in situations similar to Simon's. We oftentimes endeavor to succeed in efforts of various kinds only to be met with failure. Perhaps some who are here this [evening / morning] [or listening on the radio] are struggling with frustration, irritation, and agitation over efforts that have not met with the desired success. In the face of such, it's tempting to ignore God's holy commandments with the logical reasoning: **“Lord, I've tried to do things Your way, following Your commands, but success is escaping me.”**

Now, we can do one of two things: either continue living in obedience to God's holy law by the power of the Holy Spirit and eventually receive astounding blessings of His own kind and in His own time, or we can ignore His holy law, live contrary to it, and suffer unpleasant consequences. As we struggle with what to do and the devil's temptation to rebel against God's holy law by following a course that's counter to His law, let's realize that obeying His law does NOT earn God's favor; indeed, that could never be since, as we confessed earlier, we are miserable sinners whose sins and iniquities have ever offended our holy God and **“justly deserved [His] temporal and eternal punishment.”**

But thanks be to God that **“for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of [His] beloved Son, Jesus Christ, [He is] gracious and merciful to [us], ... poor, sinful being[s].”** (LSB page 184.) That is, our compassionate Savior lived almighty God's commands perfectly for us, endured the horrendously painful suffering and crucifixion-death that we deserved to pay for our sins, and arose from the dead to validate all His atoning work whereby He gained for us forgiveness of all our sins, salvation for our sin-sick souls, and eternal life with Himself in heaven's glorious mansions. He now mercifully conveys those wonderful gifts to us in the remembrance of our Baptism, the reading and hearing of His Holy Word, the declaration of absolution, and the consumption of Christ's true body and blood in the Lord's Supper ... and we receive them through the conduit of Spirit-given faith in Jesus. In view of such, it's only good, right, and salutary that ...

### II. GOD CALLS US TO PRAISE AND THANK HIM. (6-10A)

<sup>6</sup>And when they had done this, they enclosed a large number of fish, and their nets were breaking. <sup>7</sup>They signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they

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came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. **8But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord."** **9For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish that they had taken,** <sup>10</sup>and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon.

That's the meaning of the statement and response that we sing in Divine Service III after receiving Christ's true body and blood for the reassurance of the grace-gifts we receive from Him in Holy Communion: **"O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good, and His mercy endureth forever"** and, in Divine Services I and II: **"Thank the Lord and sing His praise; tell ev'ryone what He has done. Let all who seek the Lord rejoice and proudly bear His name. He recalls His promises and leads His people forth in joy with shouts of thanksgiving. Alleluia, alleluia."** (*LSB pages 200, 164, 181.*) In addition, we offer our thanks and praise to God for what the celebrating pastor declares in the dismissal: **"The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and preserve you in body and soul to life everlasting. Depart ✕ in peace. Amen."** (*LSB pages 164, 181, 199, 210, 218.*)

Of course, as happened with Jesus' disciples then so also we His disciples today don't limit our thanks and praise to the liturgical elements of the Divine Services. Instead, we go forth into the world being sent by Jesus to tell the Good News about Him with our acts of obedience to God and sharing His love with our neighbors in the home, at work, in the classroom, and wherever we find ourselves among the people whom God dearly loves. In fact, the apostle Peter in today's Epistle Reading provided clear instruction in how to do that: **"Finally, all of you, have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind. Do not repay evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary, bless, for to this you were called, that you may obtain a blessing."** (*1 Pet 3:8-9 ESV*) We do so guided by His holy law that justly accuses us, seeks to safeguard and protect us, and now instructs us in loving others as He loves us.

So, realizing that ...

**"HEARING, SEEING, & BELIEVING OFTEN RESULTS IN BEING SENT"**

we see that **"Peter and his partners, James and John, the sons of Zebedee, pulled their boats up on the shore, left everything, and followed Jesus. The powerful word of Jesus compelled these men to follow. They become the first disciples, destined to be with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration, in the Garden of Gethsemane, and in that room with bolted doors on Easter Sunday evening. [There and] Then again they would hear encouraging words from Jesus: 'Don't be afraid. Be my witnesses in all the world.'" (Victor H. Prange in *PEOPLE'S BIBLE COMMENTARY: LUKE*. Copyright © 1992 Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, MO. Page 55.)** May we as our Savior's contemporary sent-ones whom the Holy Spirit has prepared with hearing, seeing, and believing acknowledge that ...

- I. GOD CALLS US TO OBEY HIM. (1-5) even when the odds seem overwhelmingly stacked against us in this ever-increasing pagan society. After all, even as God assured Elijah in today's Old Testament Reading that a large amount of faithful Believers still were present, so He assures us of the same today: **"Yet I will leave seven thousand in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him."** (*1 Kings 19:18 ESV*) And may we further recognize that ...
- II. GOD CALLS US TO PRAISE AND THANK HIM. (6-10A) Now, that's something that takes various shapes and sizes. Nevertheless, however it sounds or looks the substance of the praise and thanks that we offer God is always in response to and motivated by what's contained in today's Introit: **"Hear, O LORD, when I cry aloud; be gracious to me and answer me! O you who have been my help, forsake me not, O God of my**

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**salvation! Wait for the LORD; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the LORD!"** (*Ps 27:7, 9b, 14 ESV*)

And so we humbly bow before our Savior, Jesus Christ, begging Him with the words of today's Collect to **"Pour into our hearts such love toward You that we, loving You above all things, may obtain Your promises, which exceed all that we can desire"** even as we call upon Him with words from today's Gradual: **"O LORD God of hosts, hear my prayer; give ear, O God of Jacob!"** (*Ps 84:8 ESV*)

**God grant it all for the sake of Jesus Christ, His humble Son, our holy Savior.**

*[Amen.]*

**In the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit. *[Amen.]***