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**INTO** *the* **DEEP**

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# Into the Deep

## **Week One: Can He use your boat?**

This week's theme is availability. We simply ask the question if you're available to God. Let's begin by setting our alarms to 5:34 (for Luke 5:3-4) and pray every day.

### **Scripture:**

Luke 5:1-11 | **Focus Verse - Luke 5:3** | Isaiah 6:8

### **Sermon Refresher:**

It would be helpful to place ourselves in the scene of Luke 5. Go there and feel the gentle breeze coming off the Sea of Galilee - a welcome relief from the heat of the morning sun. Sweat stings your eyes and, after you wipe it away, you look around to see a mass of people crowded together in the hopes of hearing Jesus speak. Maybe He would do a miracle. His words are getting lost in the front row of people because the crowd isn't giving him enough space to project. You arc your neck to catch a glimpse of him over the sea of heads and shoulders. Then, he gets into a boat and pushes off a little way into the sea. From this distance, his voice carries over the water to the eager crowd. You're relieved that Jesus found a way to speak to you. You are grateful that someone had a boat to offer.

Unless, of course, you're Simon Peter. In that case, this scene is a bit different because Jesus gets into YOUR boat. Jesus turns and tells Simon Peter to put out a little way. Remember, Peter had worked all night as the captain, now this carpenter from Nazareth is taking the captain's seat? But, he doesn't argue. He does what Jesus says.

Later, Simon (now Peter) sees Jesus walk on water! Jesus would demonstrate that he didn't *need* a boat that day on the shore when He spoke to the crowd. He could have walked on water. But, he chose to use Simon's boat and that decision changed Simon's life forever.

Jesus gets into a boat that he saw at the water's edge. He uses what is available to him. Are you willing to let Jesus use your boat? This week, picture Jesus getting "in" to your "boat." He takes a seat and starts taking command. Are you going to kick him out or are you going to start doing what He says? Are you ready to see what God can do through you when you are available to Him?

## Family Discussion

- 1) What is a highlight from this week's message that stood out to you?
- 2) What do you think Simon/Peter was thinking when Jesus just got into his boat? What would you think if someone just got into our car and told us to drive somewhere?
- 3) Why do you think Jesus chose to use Simon/Peter's boat instead of walking on water?
- 4) Simon's boat was his life - it was his source of income and the place he spent most of his day/night. What is your "boat?"
- 5) Do you believe Jesus wants to get into your "boat" or just watch you live your life from a distance? Why?
- 6) Have you invited Jesus into your "boat?" How do we do that?

## Going Deeper

"We are in need of a sacramental approach to life, in which the body is understood to be sacred because it is the place where God's Spirit has chosen to dwell." - Ruth Haley Barton, *Sacred Rhythms*

"Jesus Christ is like a vast ocean. He is too immense to fully explore, and too rich to fathom. You are like a bottle. The wonder of the gospel is that the bottle is in the ocean, and the ocean is in the bottle." - Leonard Sweet, *Jesus Manifesto*

"If you seek Jesus in all things you will find Him in all things: and if you seek yourself in all things you will find yourself, to your undoing." - C.S. Lewis, *Yours, Jack*

- 7) What are those places in your life where Jesus has not yet been invited (work, school, finances, family life, relationship, hobbies, etc...)?
- 8) How did making his boat available to Jesus change Simon/Peter's life?
- 9) What does it mean to be available to God? How does that relate to living a Sacramental life?
- 10)

# Into the Deep

## Week Two: Will you go?

The theme for this week is faith. We listened together to Jesus' invitation to put out into deeper water. Will we go? Keep your alarm set to 5:34. Now, in your prayer time ask God how He might be asking you to sacrifice for the Serve Both Campaign. Remember, it's not equal gifts but equal sacrifices! Our willingness to sacrifice models our Savior and demonstrates our love.

## Scripture:

Luke 5:1-11 | **Focus Verse: Luke 5:4-5** | Hebrews 11

## Sermon Refresher:

Put out into deep water. That phrase just sounds scary. We are used to shallow water. I can play in shallow water. I can splash and feel the comfort of the water without any of the danger. After all, if something happens, I am able to put my feet down - I can touch the ground. Deep water is dangerous. Deep water holds mystery. Jesus would call Simon Peter into this mystery. The command didn't make sense. Fishermen fished at night, in shallow water. To set out into deep water in the afternoon - after fishing all night - after you washed your nets - after you're ready to go to bed - doesn't make sense. Yet, Simon Peter pushes out into deep water because Jesus says so. There's the key - "because Jesus says so." **The word of Jesus is a doorway for Peter's faith.**

Usually, when we hear the word, "faith," we think along the lines of belief. But, faith doesn't mean belief. It means trust. In a trust fall, it's the difference between believing the person behind you will catch you and falling backwards into the person's arms. So, we are saved by grace through faith, right? This does NOT mean we are saved by *God's free gift* through *believing in it*. It means we are saved by the *power of God* through *trusting in that power* to save us. **Grace is the means and faith is the way.** Let's go back to the trust fall exercise. I have to believe that there is a person behind me who can catch me. However, my belief doesn't turn into faith until I fall backwards into that person's arms. Then, I am trusting in the unseen power of the person behind me to hold me up.

Simon/Peter puts his faith in Jesus. This leads to doing what Jesus said to do because faith (trust) and obedience are two sides of the same coin. Perhaps after hearing Jesus teach that morning, Simon came to trust that Jesus knew more about how to operate in the world than he did. So, when Jesus, a carpenter, told Simon, a fisherman how to fish, Simon obeyed...even though it was crazy. As we enter the Serve Both Campaign we want to walk in obedience to God's call upon us no matter how crazy it may seem to be.

## Family Discussion

- 1) Was there an idea from this week's sermon that stuck out to you?
- 2) Who is the smartest person in history?
- 3) Why is Jesus usually not on that list?
- 4) In your own words, what does it mean to have faith in Jesus?
- 5) In general, why is obedience difficult (to parents, bosses,...etc)? Why is it difficult to obey Jesus?

## Going Deeper

"The Christian is a person who recognizes that our real problem is not in achieving freedom but in learning service under a better master." - Eugene Peterson, *Long Obedience in the Same Direction*

"Take the first step in faith. You don't have to see the whole staircase. Just take the first step...The end of life is not to be happy, nor to achieve pleasure and avoid pain, but to do the will of God, come what may." - Martin Luther King Jr.

"If a Christian obeys the commandments of the Lord more, grace acts with him more, while if he obeys them less, grace acts within him less." - St. Nikodemus

"According to thy mercy, pour out upon me, who am miserable, at least one small drop of grace to make me understand and be converted, that I might make at least some small effort to correct myself. For if thy grace does not illumine my soul, I will not be able to see the carelessness and negligence that the passions have produced in me through my apathy and recklessness." - St. Ephraim the Syrian

- 6) How is deeper surrender related to deeper faith?
- 7) What is the role of grace in the last quote above? How does that coincide or conflict with your understanding of the role of grace in salvation?
- 8) Is there a place in your life where you feel invited to practice deeper faith?

# Into the Deep

## **Week Three: Your way or God's way?**

We are moving forward in the story of Luke 5. Our theme for this week is God's economy. Hopefully, you have been praying at 5:34. During this time, you could simply present yourself as available to God ("here I am, Lord"), ask what God would have you do as an act of obedience in the Serve Both Campaign, and pray for lost people. ***Also, you don't want to miss our event on April 29th. Please plan on attending.***

## **Scripture:**

Luke 5:1-11 | ***Focus Verse - Luke 5:5-8*** | Haggai 1

## **Sermon Refresher:**

Simon Peter's obedience opened the door for God's blessing. Notice that Peter had been working with his crew all night long and caught nothing. They had already toiled and they were tired. Jesus comes along and gives this fisherman a new way to fish - in obedience to Him. Rather than resist this way, Peter obeys and has a great catch.

Have you ever tried to do life your own way and found that it doesn't work? We all know what it feels like to work hard and come up with nothing. Maybe we end up making some money. But, even in the midst of the money, our lives still feel empty - like a big boat of nothing. The world tells us to gain, consume, pursue happiness. But, after all of our attempts at doing life that way, we come up empty-handed. Jesus says, "lay down your life, follow me, leave it all behind" and after doing life that way, we find immense blessing. Perhaps the first movement in welcoming God's blessing is to turn your back on your own ways of living and start living God's way.

After Simon Peter obeyed, he caught more fish than his boat could hold. He called over his friends and blessing continued. **Notice when the blessing was shared, it didn't decrease Peter's share.** Simon Peter's experience with Jesus was so full he was unable to keep it to himself. It spilled into other people's boats. Often times, we get so protective of God's "blessing," it becomes a curse. It would appear as though living a blessed life looks a lot like living a generous life! We do that, we start living in God's economy.

### **Family Discussion:**

- 1) Name one highlight from this week's service.
- 2) Get them talking: Would you rather...
  - a) catch a train or a flight?
  - b) catch a show or a game?
  - c) catch a shark or a fish?
  - d) catch a cold or the flu?
- 3) Have you ever caught a fish? What would it feel like to catch more fish than your boat could hold?
- 4) Peter was doubtful about fishing when Jesus asked him to. What do you think Peter felt after hauling in so many fish?
- 5) Why do you think Peter responded to Jesus the way he did in Luke 5:8?

### **Going Deeper:**

Consider reading/listening to this poem:

<https://malcolmguite.wordpress.com/2016/10/11/living-as-if/>

Augustine says 'God gives where He finds empty hands.'

"It is not your business to succeed (no one can be sure of that) but to do right: when you have done so, the rest lies with God...." - C.S. Lewis, *Yours, Jack*

- 6) To what degree is God's blessing contingent upon your obedience? Are there things God would only do for us through our obedience?
- 7) Take a moment to vocalize all the ways God has been generous to you and to humanity.
- 8) How does it impact your life to change your focus from working for yourself to working for God's kingdom?

# Into the Deep

## **Week Four: What's your legacy?**

This is the final week of our "Into the Deep" series. Be sure to come to the Serve Both Banquet on Sunday night. At this point in the series, you should be wrestling with Jesus's invitation to deeper faith, living in God's economy, and making yourself available to God. Hopefully, you've been praying at 5:34, "Here I am Lord, show me what is mine to do on the 29th, and send workers into the harvest."

### **Scripture:**

Luke 5:1-11 | **Focus Verse - Luke 5:9-11** | Matthew 13:44-46

### **Sermon Refresher**

What happened to that miraculous catch? Go ahead, read it (Luke 5:11). Two boatloads of fish was not only food for Simon Peter's family, it was a huge paycheck. It would appear that God's provision was left on the shore for other people to enjoy. How is Simon Peter able to leave his largest catch for other people? Jesus gave him a vocation in the Kingdom of heaven. Simon Peter was invited to join God in Kingdom expansion. That vision was larger than his life.

We all want to be a part of something bigger than us. I think we can sometimes think of Peter as super spiritual. It's as though he forsakes that large pile of fish for a life of wandering homeless with Jesus. But, we have to remember that Peter thought a life with Jesus was BETTER than a life lived on his own. He had become convinced that Jesus was offering him something much better than a huge paycheck. This should not be lost on us.

Jesus told a story about a man who found a treasure buried in a field. He went and sold everything he had in order to buy that field. Why would the man do that? THE TREASURE WAS MORE VALUABLE THAN EVERYTHING HE OWNED. Perhaps a life lived with Jesus is MORE valuable than anything you could imagine.

When we speak of living a life that is bigger than us, we are speaking about legacy. Peter could have sold those fish and enjoyed life for a while. Maybe he would have been famous as the "person who caught the largest catch ever." Maybe other fishermen would have whispered his name in awe as he walked past them. Peter caught a vision of a life that was larger than that. If we're going to leave a lasting legacy, we have to catch a vision of a life that is bigger than us.

## Family Discussion

- 1) What is a highlight from this week's sermon?
- 2) What is the most valuable thing you own (It might not be the most expensive thing you own...)?
- 3) What are the most valuable relationships you have?
- 4) Do these valuable relationships demand a cost on your part? How so? What kind of cost?
- 5) Do you see your relationship with Jesus as valuable to you? Why/Why not?
- 6) What does this relationship cost you? Is it worth it? Why?

## Going Deeper

"It would seem that Our Lord finds our desires not too strong, but too weak. We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased." - C.S. Lewis, *The Weight of Glory*

"The greatest legacy one can pass on to one's children and grandchildren is not money or other material things accumulated in one's life, but rather a legacy of character and faith." - Billy Graham

"...do not send your children to hell by leaving them your wealth. Have pity on them!"  
- John Wesley

- 7) What do you think John Wesley meant by the quote above?
- 8) How does leaving a legacy of faith impact those who come behind you?
- 9) What would be your legacy if you were to pass away today? Can that change? How?
- 10) What might happen if we focused less on being remembered and more on loving God and others?