

Getting Caught in God's Net

Luke 5:1-11

Introduction:

1. This is the first recorded miracle involving the Sea of Galilee. There were six.
 - Lake of Gennesaret – it's more ancient name.
 - Sea is 13 by 7 miles at it largest place.
 - Rich, large, and flourishing towns were built all along its shores.
2. Of course, fishing was a very lucrative business in this area. This is the backdrop of our story today. It's a story about fishing, fishermen, fishing boats, and a big catch of fish.
 - Any fishermen in here today? About the closest I get to catching fish is on a plate, fried, and rolled in corn meal.
3. The context of this miracle is Christ teaching God's Word to the people. vs. 1
4. The crowd was so big that Jesus decided to hop into one of the fishing boats and use it as a sort of elevated pulpit so that people could see and hear. vs. 2
 - Don't get the idea He is in some sort of a canoe or paddle boat. This was a ship used for commercial fishing.
5. It was Peter's boat and it appears that Peter is in the boat with Christ (vs. 3). Little did he know what was about to happen. vs. 4-7
6. What started out as a normal day in the fishing business ended up being the day of Peter's salvation! He placed his faith in Christ as evidenced by his actions. vs. 8, 11
7. Peter started out the day fishing for fish, but it ended up being the day that Peter got caught in God's net. There isn't a better place to be! I remember the day God reeled me in.
 - To get caught in God's net means that you are God's child, you have eternal life, forgiveness of all your sins, an eternal destiny with Christ in heaven, purpose and meaning to your earthly life, etc.
8. Jesus told Peter, "Now **you're** going to catch men for God." vs. 9-10 Peter's life would be forever changed – radically changed. Peter would in fact be used mightily by God to bring thousands of people to faith in Jesus Christ.

9. It wasn't an accident that Peter became a believer and a Christ follower that day. How does a person get caught in God's net?

First, you must be confronted by God's messenger.

1. Before fish can be **caught**, they must be **sought**. Somebody has to proactively seek after them. It doesn't just happen by accident.
2. In the same way, if a person becomes a child of God, it is because somebody cared enough to reach out to them and share God's good news with them.
3. In our text, Christ Himself is the messenger (See Luke 4:43-44.). Do you see the context? Christ is fishing for men and women. He said, "That's why I am **sent**."
4. He taught the crowds, but then He personally went after Peter (vs. 4). This is what it takes. If you know Christ today, you are one of God's messengers. God desires to use you to reach others.
5. Jesus was sent by the Father to seek after men and women, but Jesus said to His disciples, "...as my Father hath **sent** me, even so **send I you**." **John 20:21**
6. We too have been sent. Paul informs us that we are Christ's ambassadors on the earth today.

Second, you must have a heart to consider God's Word.

1. Peter obviously had been listening as he was washing his nets. Peter is still considering at this point. He is open-minded. He even gets in the boat with Jesus and takes it offshore a little. He's listening and considering.
 - Peter heard Jesus teaching God's Word to the people. As we cross-reference other Scriptures, it appears that Peter had already met Christ and seen his mighty power at work, but was obviously still undecided as to whether he should totally commit his life to Christ.
 - God's Word was the impetus for everything that happened after this – the miracle of the fishes and the changed life of Peter (and James, and John...).
2. In fact, so much so that he takes another step in the right direction by doing what Christ suggested – "*Launch out..., and let down your nets...* "). vs. 4-5

3. Over and over, the Bible encourages man to have a tender heart to consider – consider your ways, consider one another, and most importantly consider Christ. Hebrews 12:2-3a
 - No person ever trusts Christ who doesn't first consider Christ.

Third, you must have a heart to humble yourself before God.

1. Peter kept taking steps towards faith in Christ, not just as a man, but as Israel's Messiah. He listens, he gets in the boat, he listens some more, he launches out into the deep, and he lets down his nets as Christ instructed.
2. Then Christ revealed Himself to Peter in no uncertain terms (vs. 6-7). They had just come in from fishing and caught **nothing**. Christ clearly had dominion over the fish of the sea.
 - This is what Adam was to have when he was originally created. Genesis 1:28
 - But sin diminished that dominion greatly.
 - Every time a fisherman goes fishing and comes back empty handed, it bears testimony of the fall of man. It shows that loss of dominion.
3. But it was prophesied that the Messiah would regain that dominion over the earth and over creation. He would regain what Adam lost. To those with open minds and tender hearts, this miracle demonstrates that Christ was the long awaited Messiah of Israel.
4. Peter knew. He got it. Notice what he does in verse 8 – he calls Jesus, "*Lord.*" He completely humbles himself before Christ. His words do not mean that he wanted nothing to do with Christ. He loved Jesus. However, he was very aware of his sinfulness and unworthiness to stand in His presence.
5. It would have crushed him had Christ left him there.
6. But Jesus didn't! Jesus said, "*Fear not...*" vs. 10
7. God will not turn away a humble soul. That is exactly what God is looking for. James 4:6, 8a, 10
8. Peter fell to his knees, and Jesus lifted him up and said, "Fear not, I have plans for you Peter!"
9. Those who are prideful towards God, He resists and turns away. Those who humble themselves before God, He will embrace every time.
10. The Bible says that the goodness of God should lead people to repentance and humility before God (like Peter).

Fourth, you must have a heart to obey God in faith.

1. Those who get caught in God's net have a humble heart that leads them to trust God and follow His instructions. Look at verse 10-11.
 - This is true all throughout the Bible (Abel, Noah, Abraham, etc.).
2. Today, God has made known that His grace and forgiveness is available to all of mankind through the finished work of Jesus Christ.
3. The apostle Paul said that he proclaimed this good news for the "*obedience of faith*" among the nations. **Romans 16:26**
4. God says, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved." If a person has a humble heart of faith, what will they do? They will open up their heart to believe on Christ and trust Him as their Savior.
5. The moment you do that, you become God's child, and that is for all eternity. Jesus gave Peter's life true meaning and purpose. God used him in mighty ways, and if you will have the same heart, He will do the same for you today.