

“Launch Out Into the Deep”

Introduction:

1. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are often called “the four gospels,” they are also called “books of biography.”
2. These four books have a lot in common:
 - a. All are a part of that great book called “the Bible.”
 - b. All are inspired of God, 2 Tim. 3:16.
 - c. All inform us of the life and teachings of Jesus Christ during the days of His earthly ministry.
 - d. All inform us of the trial, crucifixion, and glorious resurrection of Jesus Christ.
3. This study involves a very interesting incident during the life of Jesus – a time when:
 - a. Jesus taught the people from a boat in “*the lake of Gennesaret,*” often referred to as “*the Sea of Galilee.*”
 - b. Jesus instructed Peter, who had toiled all night fishing, without any success, to “*launch out into the deep,*” and let down his nets for “*a draught*” or “*catch*” (NKJV).
 - c. The text is Luke 5:1-11. One person called this “a fishing trip to remember.”

Discussion:

I. Relate the Story as contained in these verses.

- A. The people (“multitude,” NKJV) pressed upon Jesus to “*hear the word of God,*” v. 1
 1. Rightly so, for He was the Master teacher. Cf. John 7:32,45-46.
 2. Jesus “*stood by the lake of Genessaret,*” v. 1.
 - a. The “more ancient name for the lake.”
 - b. An oval-shaped lake of fresh water, about 13 miles long and 8 miles wide, and nearly 700 feet below sea level.
- B. Jesus saw two ships (boats) standing by the lake, one of which belonged to Simon, v. 2-3.
 1. Jesus entered Simon’s boat, and asked him to “*put out a little from the land,*” v. 3.
 2. At which time Jesus “*sat down and taught the people.*”
 - a. The crowd had “*pressed upon Him,*” v. 1, so this made it easier for Jesus to instruct the people.
- C. Then Jesus told Simon to “*launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught*” (catch), v. 4.
 1. Peter’s reply: “*Master, we have toiled all night, and have taken nothing,*” v. 5.
 - a. Night time was generally the best time for fishing – during the cool hours, when the fish were nearer to the shore.
 - b. Peter was also a professional fisherman; he fished for a living; James and John were “*partners*” with him, vs. 7,10.
 2. “*Nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net,*” v. 5.
 - a. Doing it because Jesus told him to, not because it seemed the proper thing to do.
- D. The Amazing results, v. 6-7
 1. They caught a “*great multitude*” of fish, so much so that the net began to break,” v. 6.
 2. They then “*beckoned*” or signaled their “*partners*” for assistance, v. 7.
- E. Peter’s Response.
 1. He fell down at Jesus’ knees, saying “*depart from me: for I am a sinful man, O Lord,*” v. 8
 - a. “*For He was astonished...*” v. 9.
 - b. It is not the Peter really wanted Jesus to “*depart from*” him, but he recognized his own sinfulness. Reminds us of Isaiah 6:3,5; Job 42:5-6.
 - (1) People who are proud of their so-called “righteousness” are comparing themselves by the wrong standard!
- F. Jesus said to Simon, “*Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men,*” v. 10.
 1. “*Catch*” from *zogreo*, means “to capture alive.”
 - a. Make to likened to taking live fish for an aquarium.
 - b. Peter had been accustomed to catching fish, killing them, and selling them for food,
 - (1) Now he is to “*catch men,*” for Jesus that they might have **life!** Cf. John 10:10
- G. Their Obedience to the Lord’s instruction:
 1. They “*brought their ship to land; they forsook all, and followed him,*” Luke 5:11.
 - a. Forsook their boats, the net, and even the fish!
 2. It seems as if they learned the lesson of Matt. 16:24.
 3. “*Followed*” is said to be from a word which signified “the deepest inward attachment.”

II. “*Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets,*” Luke 5:4.

- A. There was nothing wrong with the boat they were in.
 1. It was sea worthy.

2. If they were going to catch fish they had to go to where the fish were.
- B. “*Let down your nets for a catch,*” Luke 5:4.
 1. The net would never fill up with fish until it was first let down.
 2. They could have washed and mended their nets for the next 20 years, and hauled them all over the lake, but they would never catch fish until the net was let down!

III. “At thy word I will let down the net,” Luke 5:5.

- A. We must learn to respect the word of the Lord!
 1. John 17:8, 17:17; James 1:21; John 12:48.
 2. The Lord’s “*word*” went counter to Peter’s experience as a fisherman, v. 5.
- B. The “*Word*” of the Lord often runs contrary to what People believe, and what they want to hear.
 1. John 6:60,66-68.
 2. The religious world often does not want to believe what the word of the Lord says about:
 - a. The reality and consequences of sin, Rom. 3:23; 6:23; Isaiah 59:1-2.
 - b. The nature and the necessity of repentance, Acts 17:30; Luke 13:3,5; 2 Cor. 7:10.
 - c. The “*mode*” and necessity of baptism for salvation, Rom. 6:3-4; Acts 2:38.
 - d. The one church, Matt. 16:18; Eph. 4:4; 2:16.
 - e. Marriage, divorce, and remarriage, Matt. 19:9.
 - f. How to live, Titus 2:12.
 - g. Etc., etc.

IV. Application:

- A. To Succeed we must follow the word of the Lord.
 1. It must be preached, 2 Tim. 4:1-4.
 2. It must be obeyed, 2 Thess. 1:7-9.
 3. It must become a part of us, Col. 3:16; 2 Pet. 3:18.
 4. It must affect how we live our lives, Rom. 12:1-2.
- B. Individually, we must “*launch out into the deep,*” and let down our nets.
 1. Go beyond our comfort zone, seeking to share the word. 2 Tim. 2:1-2; I Pet. 3:15.
- C. Collectively, we must “*launch out into the deep,*” and let down our net.
 1. The church is the pillar and ground of the truth, I Tim. 3:15.
 2. It must sound out the word of the Lord, I Thess. 1:7-8.
- D. Success crowns effort – when God’s people don’t give up.
 1. Simon and his partners had toiled all night; had caught nothing; were tired and no doubt ready to get some rest.
 2. But Simon did as he was commanded, and success crowned his efforts.
 3. The church in the first century was busy sharing the gospel, Acts 8:4.
 - a. They were greatly persecuted.
 - b. But they were very successful, Acts 4:4; 5:14; 6:1,7; Col. 1:23.

Conclusion:

1. We, like Jesus and the early disciples, must be fishers of men, Matt. 16:26.
2. We must not become weary in “*well doing,*” Gal. 6:9, but keep on fishing.
 - a. God is the one Who gives “*the increase,*” I Cor. 3:6.
3. But in order to succeed we must first become followers of Christ.
 - a. Illus. A man who lived near where I grew up talked about all the people to whom he supposedly had defended the truth. There was one problem: so far as I recall, he never got around to obeying the gospel himself!
 - b. Some people can talk a good talk; Jesus is more impressed with those who manage to walk a good walk!
Luke 6:46; Matt. 7:21; Rev. 22:14.

--Bobby Witherington, May 29, 2016