**Jesus and Peter**

**The Word**

Read together Luke 5:1-11

**The Big Idea**

Jesus moves into this broken world with a heart of compassion. Like a good fisherman, he is catching people into God’s kingdom, and once caught, he invites us to join him in his mission to bring others into the kingdom. So we are sent out as fishers of men, but the ultimate fruitfulness of the catch is entirely in his hands and by his power and Spirit.

**Questions for Discussion**

1. As with so many of the encounters we’ll be considering in this series, this encounter is a familiar story for many of us. What was a new idea for you this time, or what was an idea that struck you in a fresh way?

2. Jesus’ call to Peter and his companions (follow me) had built into it the call to bring others to follow Jesus (I will make you fishers of men). Do you think every believer is given that same responsibility to become a fisher of men, or do you think that was somehow unique to these apostles?

3. When Jesus looked out at the broken world around him, he saw “harassed and helpless” people, and he had compassion on them. Consider how the church (or you personally) look out at the broken world today. What comes up for you as you consider that?

4. As you consider your own life and how you might be a “fisher of people,” who are some specific people or contexts that come to mind (work, neighborhood, family, etc.)? How specifically can your small group be praying for you in that regard?

**Digging Deeper**

Read Matthew 28:18-20. Peter’s first command to the disciples based on Sunday’s passage was, “follow me and I will make you fishers of men.” His final command in Mt 28 is known as the Great Commission. How are the two commands similar? How does the Great Commission expand on and clarify what was meant in the first command?

**Sermon Outline**

I. Consider Jesus the fisherman

A. Notice how hungry the crowds are for his teaching (v. 1)

B. Jesus is literally teaching from a fishing boat. He is essentially fishing: casting out the net of the kingdom to bring people into the grace, truth, and authority of God

C. Consider Jesus’ heart for the people of the world

1. See Mt. 9:36: He sees that they are “harassed and helpless,” and he looks on them not with judgment but with compassion and a desire to shepherd them.

2. Do we look out at our world today with that same compassion?

II. Consider Peter and the other fishermen

A. They are washing their nets after a thoroughly unsuccessful night of fishing. Probably tired and a bit dejected.

B. Jesus’ call to let down the nets for a catch must have struck him as odd. Peter and his partners are professional fishermen with all the skill and local knowledge needed to catch fish. Jesus is a spiritual rabbi with no experience in fishing.

III. The miraculous catch of fish

A. This miracle completely overwhelmed the fishermen. This was no mere rabbi who was an expert in religious matters. He had authority over the fish!

B. Peter experiences the profound gap between the kind of man he was and the kind of man Jesus was (v. 8)

IV. The call to discipleship

A. “Do not be afraid”

Jesus was not going to use all his power and authority to condemn them

B. “Follow me” (recorded in Matthew and Luke’s version of this story)

1. 1st century rabbi’s didn’t usually initiate with would-be disciples. Instead people would ask to be disciples and would often have to follow the rabbi around through a probationary period before being formally included in the group.

2. 1st century rabbi’s usually only chose the brightest and the best.

3. So Jesus’ call to these ordinary fishermen totally overturned the expectations of the day.

C. “From now on you will fish for people”

1. That same devotion and intention they had brought to fishing for fish, they are now to bring to fishing to bring people into God’s kingdom.

2. Jesus clearly has the heart of a fishermen for people, and he’s inviting them to partner with him in that mission.

V. The catch of fish as a foreshadowing of their ministry ahead

A. Jesus intentionally put them through an experience in futility in their own strength the night before, so that they could see what his power and authority alone could do.

B. As they moved out into the world to make disciples, he was showing them that the mission was not up to them, their strategy, or their efforts, but it was ultimately up to his power and spirit working through them.

VI. Conclusion

A. Jesus is a fisherman. He catches for his kingdom and then invites us to partner with him in catching others for the kingdom (see Matthew 9:3-38)

B. “What is God’s plan for convincing the world that he’s good? We are.” – Gary Haugen

C. So we are sent out into the world to have Jesus’ heart of compassion. But the results are not up to us. We are freed to simply love and speak the truth, knowing that the power and fruitfulness come from Jesus alone.