

In A Boat Jesus Preaches

Luke 5:1-11 So it was, as the multitude pressed about Him to hear the word of God, that He stood by the Lake of Gennesaret, ² and saw two boats standing by the lake; but the fishermen had gone from them and were washing *their* nets. ³ Then He got into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little from the land. And He sat down and taught the multitudes from the boat. ⁴ When He had stopped speaking, He said to Simon, "Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch." ⁵ But Simon answered and said to Him, "Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing; nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net." ⁶ And when they had done this, they caught a great number of fish, and their net was breaking. ⁷ So they signaled to *their* partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. ⁸ When Simon Peter saw *it*, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!" ⁹ For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish which they had taken; ¹⁰ and so also *were* James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch men." ¹¹ So when they had brought their boats to land, they forsook all and followed Him.

What is the name of this room in which you are now sitting and hearing the word of God?

Often, we call it the sanctuary, which means a place of rest and safety from the troubles of the world like a bird sanctuary. This place is a sanctuary for sinners to hear their sins are forgiven and find rest in Jesus.

Another word which many of you may also be familiar with is nave. Nave is the Latin word for boat or ship. It is called the Nave for the same reason it is called the sanctuary. The ship provides refuge from the turmoil of the sea. As Noah's ark provided salvation from the flood so here you too receive salvation and by God's promise are kept safe and carried through the storms of this life into the new heavens and the new earth.

In the boat Jesus preaches the Gospel of the kingdom and delivers men out of sin into his eternal kingdom.

The final word of Jesus in the previous chapter of Luke and in our sermon last week was:

Luke 4:43 I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, because for this purpose I have been sent.

To you also Jesus desires to preach the "kingdom of God." And for this very purpose this room was built to be the boat from which Jesus preaches to the crowd.

In our text this morning we see Jesus modeling for us the preaching of the Gospel. Jesus doesn't just preach the Gospel but gives to us a living parable of the power His preaching and the manner in which He calls us and delivers us from this world.

This preaching takes place on the sea of Galilee

Throughout scripture the sea is used as picture of a place of evil and chaos.

In Psalm 89 God promises to be with us and protect us from the raging sea.

Psalm 89:9 ⁹ You rule the raging of the sea; When its waves rise, You still them.

In Revelation it is from out of the sea that the great beast comes.

Revelation 13:1 And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name.

Because it is a source of suffering, chaos and evil there is no sea in heaven.

Revelation 21:1 I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea.

Our lives are filled with turmoil, chaos and evil, but upon these waters comes Jesus preaching the Gospel of the kingdom, providing safety and a place or refuge.

The fish are the people of this world

Like the fish of the sea the people of this world are very busy swimming here and there and everywhere yet accomplishing very little and what they might accomplish is quickly washed away by the sea. They are busy and must always keep moving or they will die, but all their movement and turmoil accomplishes nothing.

Isaiah pictures this same truth with sheep.

Isaiah 53:6 ⁶ All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way;

We run around each in his own direction constantly butting heads and doing nothing of any value. Like fish we are easily distracted by shiny things and caught by Satan's hooks. From this meaningless life Christ desires to catch us through the preaching of the Gospel and pull us out of the evil sea into the safety of His ship, His kingdom.

We are caught and saved not by our will or by our choice but because we are caught by the power of God's word. The fish do not swim into the nets of their own will but they are caught and pulled by the power of Christ.

John 6:44 ⁴⁴ "No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.

We who were swimming around in our own pointless sin, without any will or deed of our own were caught by Christ when He comes preaching in the boat. We are delivered by His grace from our useless way of life into his kingdom

The nets are the preaching of Gospel

These nets receive their strength and power not from the ropes which make them but from the power of Christ. The catch of fish was so great that the nets would have broken. The fact that the nets held is just as much a miracle as the number of fish which were caught.

And so is the word of God, it is filled with the power and strength of Christ. The Holy Spirit is able by His power to save us

In the beginning of the text the nets are being cleaned. But why are they being cleaned? Many commentators have suggested that it was abnormal for fishermen to clean their nets when they had caught no fish. These are good fishermen who wish to be always ready and not only clean their nets but inspect them to make sure there are no breaks. Because they had their nets ready they were ready when Jesus told them to cast the nets again.

So it is that God calls us to make sure our nets are always ready for the work of the kingdom.

1 Peter 3:15 ¹⁵ But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always *be* ready to *give* a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you,

We never know when God is going to call on us to cast our nets here or there. We never knew when we will have an opportunity to share the Gospel. We need to always be ready.

How do we do this? By "sanctifying the Lord in our hearts," That is to say like Mary constantly pondering all the wonderful things that God has done, meditation on His word. Then we will always have something to share.

The power and strength is in God's word but Jesus call us to keep our nets clean and always be ready.

Jesus comes preaching the Gospel and we need to listen to His word and ponder it so that we are ready at His command to throw out the net.

The catch was so great that another boat needed to be called

Jesus reminds us:

Luke 10:2 ² Then He said to them, "The harvest truly *is* great, but the laborers *are* few; therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.

So great the power of God's word and so effective Jesus' word that there is never a shortage to the catch but only to the laborers. It is always astounding to us what God's word can accomplish.

The effectiveness of God's word to catch sinners and save them is always astounding to us, who have trouble believing in his power and promise

Jesus preaches in a boat and the effect is greater than we could ever guess.

Peter confesses his sin and receives absolution

When Peter sees all that is happening his eyes are open to see the truth of who Jesus is. Such a revelation of Jesus to a sinful man like us and Peter can always only have one result. As did Isaiah so does Peter, he fell down in contrition and fear. Yet as the Lord did for Isaiah he did for Peter and for us. "Your sins are forgiven."

This absolution is needed to purge and cleanse Peter and make him ready for so great a task, but it is also needed because it is the message which he is to proclaim. As Peter is sent out to be a fisher of men, he is given the power of absolution, the authority to forgive sins. It is that power by which he can fish for men. Paul reminds us

2 Corinthians 5:19 God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

God has both forgiven our sins and given to us the message that enables us to be fishers of men, the forgiveness of all the sins of the world.

Jesus came preaching in a boat, and what he preached was the forgiveness of all sins, the reconciliation of the world. It is that message that makes this room a true sanctuary, a nave, a boat where Jesus preaches. It is that "word of reconciliation" which enables you to find rest from the weariness of the world here.

Wherever that message is proclaimed there you find a true boat from which Jesus preaches. There is a true sanctuary which gives rest from the world because there is the preaching of the forgiveness of sins.

In a boat Jesus preached the forgiveness of sins.