

Greetings from God the Father and from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and from the Holy Spirit. Amen

Luke 5:1-11

The 4 f's (faith, forgiveness, fishing, following)

Is that the way you feel many days, like Peter? Failure, Failure, Failure, Failure (it is spoken four times to relate the four "F")

On one occasion, while the crowd was pressing in on him to hear the word of God, he was standing by the lake of Gennesaret, and he saw two boats by the lake, but the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. Getting into one of the boats, which was Simon's, he asked him to put out a little from the land. And he sat down and taught the people from the boat. And when he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch." And Simon answered, "Master, we toiled all night and took nothing!

Peter is feeling failure, failure, failure, failure this morning. They have been fishing all night and they have not caught anything, not enough a piece of junk, nothing, zip! And Peter and the others are feeling defeated.

They were fishermen; they are fishing for their livelihood, feeding their family and selling fish for their income. They are sitting there cleaning their nets and mending them and feeling sorry for themselves. Have you ever felt that way? It is normal to be tempted by the world, the devil, and our sinful flesh to view yourself and view others, our job and even our church, sometimes as a total failure. When you begin to believe that you are a failure according to the world's standards then it has become not just a temptation but a sin as you act and portray to others occasionally with the defeatist attitude here in church and outside the church, to the community that you are a failure and God does not care or love you and or even God does not love them either.. An attitude as such is not helpful in showing God's love to others , expressing positively in word and actions, "YES GOD LOVES ME," "I AM A CHILD OF GOD," GOD LOVES YOU ALSO," "CHRIST DIED ON THE CROSS FOR YOU AND ME." And saying nothing because you feel defeated is as loud as someone who has expressed their defeatist attitude toward others.

We as the body of Christ, the church, should put forth to all what Christ has given us to proclaim, the Gospel, the Good News, the 4 f's, which are the following: faith **in** Christ is the only way for salvation;

forgiveness to the penitent sinner **from** Christ; fishing for people **under** Christ, our proclamation and work of such is blessed and accomplished by Christ Himself; following Christ, Christ promises to be with us always. For we read in Luke;

“But at your word I will let down the nets.” And when they had done this, they enclosed a large number of fish, and their nets were breaking. 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. But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus’ knees, saying, “Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.” For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish that they had taken, and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon.

Peter speaking: ***But at your word I will let down the nets*** shows faith. For similar words are used by Mary, the mother of Jesus, at the Wedding in Cana to express faith in the capability of Jesus: ***“Do whatever He tells you”*** [JN 2:5].

The net in our text is the Gospel, the “how to” of bringing people into the church alive. It’s not a program design by man to lure people into the

church like advertisements or campaigns for a product but by the power of the Word to bring forth faith in one's heart. And the boats are the church. The believers are brought into the church; for nowhere else in this world is the Gospel spoken and the means of grace offered by our Lord, Baptism and Lord's Supper. Forgiveness is given by Christ by means of His church, as it was spoken to Peter, ***And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching men." And when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed him.***

The boats and amount of fish caught show that the growth is caused by Christ, everyone help to bring the fish into the boats, not just Peter but the others in both boats. For we have covered in the past three weeks that all of you are part of the body of Christ, all members are to work together so as the body of Christ as "fishers of men", people, Alive in the Gospel. For God's Word, the Gospel brings life, alive, by hearing, and hearing believing, all who believe are saved. Each one of you as a member of body of Christ use your gift, it enables the church to cast the net of the Gospel, more widely. Christ brings forth the growth as He brought forth the overly abundant amount of fish caught.

Following Jesus, continue to follow Jesus we are enabled where and when to cast the net, the Gospel. Jesus will lead you where to cast the nets of the Gospel. You are empowered to cast the nets of the Gospel from Jesus filling you, guiding you, and sustaining you by His Word and Sacraments. You show forth Christ because Christ is in you showing forth. You can rest in the fact that He is with you, He will never forsake you or leave you, holding onto your hand, or upholding you with His hand. He was the one who made sure that you were caught in that net, hearing the Gospel. You can rest also in the truth that He has gone before you and He will protect and keep you safe in Himself as you cast, those nets of the Gospel. We need not fear the unknown for it is known to our Lord and Savior. Christ has gone before you. Christ who has done everything for you, He has walked ahead of you, to bring you to Himself.

And may the peace of God, which is beyond all human comprehension, keep your hearts and minds through your faith in Christ Jesus. Amen