

## Viral wk 2: Lower Your Nets

Jan. 13, 2019

(If Gathering Video – Feb 8-9, \$5)

We are in our 2<sup>nd</sup> week of our viral series. We are using viral videos as a launching point to talk about the things that Jesus did that made him famous-and how we might make him famous again.

Without a doubt my favorite type of viral video are the funny ones; especially the ones that were really just capturing a moment to be shared with friends and for whatever reason it blows up. Share 2 quick ones with one – first one, you have these moment as a parent where you can't laugh/but it's funny-and it clues you in that you are in trouble... (LINDA)

2<sup>nd</sup> video is one that a lady made for her facebook friends-having no idea that it would be viewed millions of times... (Chewbacca Lady) We talked a little last week about God being the author of Joy and there is so much joy in the video...

Today we are going to look at a miracle that probably didn't immediately make Jesus famous-but it set the stage for those that would be given the charge of telling his story and being his first witnesses; it seems like only 4 or 5 people knew what had happened.

It's a fascinating account because it changes the course of not only the lives of those witnesses-but on countless people ever since.

It is found in **Luke 5:1-11** – Story begins Jesus is teaching a crowd of people on the shore of the Sea of Galilee, the crowd is pressing up against Jesus wanting to hear what he has to say and see what he's going to do next – at this point he hasn't called his 12 disciples but if you put the Gospel accounts together it looks like Jesus has at least met Andrew and Peter...

They are cleaning their fishing nets in the boats near Jesus after what we find out has been an unsuccessful night of fishing.

2 kinds of people in the world – those that like to fish and those that don't...

Some of you in here like to fish –and let’s be honest, one of the reasons that you like to fish is that you are probably pretty good at it. **TONY story – 1 cast 1 catch... then we didn’t catch anything for another hour....**there is a reason it’s called fishing and not catching – I’d like it more if I could guarantee I would catch something every half hour or so...

I realize there are people that find it relaxing and just love being on the water – so not catching something might be a little frustrating but ultimately not that big of a deal. But that’s not who Simon and Andrew are – they are fisherman, it’s what they do – they are there to catch fish-it’s their livelihood and they just spend a night fishing and got nothing – but now they have to take care of the equipment so they can do it again soon. They are close enough to hear Jesus but we don’t know if they were paying attention to Jesus.

Then Jesus goes and gets in the boat Simon Peter is in and asks him to set out just a little bit to get some distance between he and the crowd – water carries sound – so Peter does it and continues to work.

One of the interesting things to me about this passage is that what Jesus taught about-what he said, is a mystery to us, Luke never lets us in on it if he knows because what we need to know is what happened next, because it helped lead to where you are right now...

**Luke 5:4 NET When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, “Put out into the deep water and lower your nets for a catch.”**

The crowd is dispersing and this little conversation – put out into deep water and lower your nets for a catch.

Have you ever had someone who doesn’t do what you do-tell you how to do what you do? How do you handle that? (occupational hazard for many of us – teachers, coaches, cops, financial advisors, pastors – getting ordained on the internet, same thing right?)

Jesus had been a carpenter by trade, we don’t know if Simon Peter knew that yet or not –but he’s seen him teach; knows he’s a rabbi who is now telling him how to fish after an unsuccessful experience and he’s just finished cleaning up... You can

feel it in Peter's reply-but there is something about Jesus that compels him to do it.

**Luke 5:5 NET Simon answered, "Master, we worked hard all night and caught nothing! But at your word I will lower the nets."**

We don't know if Peter is thinking maybe this will work-or maybe I will get a chance to explain how fishing works when this is a bust...but he does it.

**Luke 5:6-7 NET When they had done this, they caught so many fish that their nets started to tear. <sup>7</sup> So they motioned to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both boats, so that they were about to sink.**

They had just spent all night fishing-caught nothing and now they have the biggest catch they've ever seen. While all that is still going on-Jesus has Peter's attention because he knows this isn't normal.

**Luke 5:8-10a NET But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!" <sup>9</sup> For Peter and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish that they had taken, <sup>10</sup> and so were James and John, Zebedee's sons, who were Simon's business partners.**

Peter realizes he has had a brush with the holy-and it makes him keenly aware of how unholy he had been. Maybe you are here today and of all the things we are going to talk about-this is what you relate to the best. You know what you've done-you are hoping no one here knows what it is. Yet there is something about Jesus that just draws you-maybe you aren't sure if you dare hope that this stuff you've heard about forgiveness is possible for you. Jesus reply to Peter's response is for you too.

**Luke 5:10b-11 Then Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching people." <sup>11</sup> So when they had brought their boats to shore, they left everything and followed him.**

Don't be afraid – you are about to find out why you are here. That's what Jesus is telling Peter.

You see up to this point maybe Peter's highest goal was to have the biggest catch around – to have a story that couldn't be topped.

Part of the nature of fishing – is fishing stories –the ones that got away, how big or how many or what lured them in... **Biggest fish I ever caught – caught using a hot dog off a dock, big channel cat...**

In this moment, Peter had his fish story, but an amazing thing happened. **In giving Peter what he had wanted and worked for – Jesus showed him who he needed.**

Within moments of what was probably the biggest achievement of his professional life – Peter walks away, leaving everything to follow Jesus. I believe he knew in that instant that his life was never going to be the same.

When Jesus gave Peter this miraculous catch-he actually gave him a new calling-a purpose, to catch people. Now that can sound a little funny so we have to stay in the metaphor – he's not Santa trying to catch people being good or a cop catching bad people. Jesus is using a fishing phrase on a fisherman to open his eyes to his new purpose.

Peter would spend the next 3 years getting to know Jesus. He had the incredible highs of seeing his miracles and confessing that Jesus was the Son of God. He also was rebuked, he denied Jesus the night before he was crucified – and there would be a very similar experience to this catch of fish that would remind Peter of who he was and what his new purpose was.

Peter would eventually be the spokesman for the first sermon of the church, he would testify before the same people who had Jesus executed; he was the one to first witness about Jesus in a Gentile home...the church multiplied virally because of this new purpose of Peter – to catch men; to be a witness for Jesus.

The purpose of a fisherman – the ultimate goal, is to catch fish. The purpose of a church is to make disciples who make disciples. That is both a collective and an individual mandate.

A fisherman can have a lot of resources tied up in his pursuit of catching fish. There are different types of rods and reels or for commercial fisherman types of

nets or pots and bait that is used. Fisherman will gather information about where the fish are biting or schooled – use a fish finder...and if they don't catch fish, they try different methods.

Sticking with that metaphor, churches need to use a variety of methods and tools to bring people in...

We want to have an invitational atmosphere, quality music that appeals people who are trying us out, a website and social media that helps communicate important information in engaging ways; children's and youth ministries that kids have a great time and know that they are cared for as they get to know Jesus... Donuts and Coffee – all tools

And if we find that something isn't working well-we need to be able to evaluate it and make corrections. That's part of what motivated us to remodel our downstairs environments-our screen in here – our bathrooms... to provide an environment that will help you and your friends be drawn closer to Christ...and begin to take more steps behind him.

There is a progression or a continuum that Peter is on in this story that I think each of us find ourselves in varying points in our lives today. This story starts with Peter on the fringe and he moves in little steps to the place where he eventually leaves everything behind to follow Jesus.

Maybe you are here today and like Peter in the beginning you are in proximity to Jesus. You have some familiarity with him. You aren't deeply involved but you are close enough that you are getting little pieces and you are at least interested.

Maybe you are at the place where Peter was when he was in the boat and Jesus was teaching-but he had nets to clean. You are a little closer in proximity but you have other things that are occupying your mind and your time that you just aren't sure what to do with Jesus...but you like being around him.

But what Peter finds – and what you will find is that the more you are in proximity to Jesus, you start to pick up what he's talking about you are going to be faced with a choice. **Will you do what he is asking of you?** For Peter at first that was

just letting Jesus share the boat, then it was put it in a little deeper water; eventually it was put your nets in the water –

Will you trust Jesus in an area that maybe you've been doing on your own- because you know better than anyone else about this part of your life. Will you follow what he says about –

Your finances – Jesus talked about money more than almost any other subject...

Time – Jesus talks about service and he talks about rest...service

Sexual Conduct – will you honor God with your body, flee from promiscuity...

Forgiveness – will you turn the other cheek, overlook an offense

### **Where are you being called to take a step of faith?**

When you take those steps of faith you will find that things are hard to predict, but Jesus will lead you to more places where he asks you to trust him-eventually asking – **“Will you let down your nets?”**

Jesus told Peter that he would become a fisher of men, yet every disciple who has followed Jesus since has that same purpose-to bring more people into a relationship with him.

The churchy word for this is evangelism – seems to scare people-but all it really involves is bringing more people into your relationship with Jesus. How?

**Start with Prayer** – Seems simple, yet we often aren't great about it – walk in the hallway with names; go pray over those names, take a picture of a section –pray for them...write more names – who in your life, in your sphere of influence

**Invite – Bring w/You** – A few months ago we talked about the parable of the lost sheep, coins, and Son; in that sermon we talked about how God was concerned with what was missing and looked for the one. Have you identified your one? If you have (pray for, look for an opportunity to bring/invite) Research has shown repeatedly that the majority of people who don't attend a church, would be willing to go if they were invited by a family member or close friend.

Do what you can here weekly to make sure we are ready for somebody's one...

**Expand Your Community** – According to Christianity Today people who are skeptical of the faith are often attracted to the Christian community before they are attracted to the Christian message. Therefore, introducing people into the relational network of a local church community becomes an important aspect of their journey to the faith. As a culture we have become increasingly isolated-even though connected, and a personal invitation into church helps alleviate the fears of not knowing anyone-and when people feel accepted they are free to ask questions and grow.

This is one of the reasons that we try to do home groups the way that we do. The Bible study is important-but almost equally important is the idea that we can do life together; we can journey together even as we wrestle with matters of faith. Look to add people to your groups...

There are two things that are true about this miracle and our church's efforts to bring more people to Jesus. While Jesus ultimately determined the outcome of the size of the catch-he does not do so until we trust him enough to lower our nets.

My prayer for you as an individual is that you take one step in trust this week, even to the point where you become a fisher of men.