

CAST OUT FURTHER

Luke 5:1-11

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INTRODUCTION

Last Saturday we went fishing. Our little 2 year old grandson Sam had been asking every time he saw or spoke on the phone 'I go on grandpa's boat', 'I go fishing?' – and every time he came into grandpa's office he got a fishing rod out and cast it all over the office. I even cut out a paper fish and put on the end of the line to pretend.

So we went out Saturday in grandpa's boat. In the boat there were five of us...
Sam - The young and inexperienced: holding the rod, modelling on the 'fishermen'
Me - the conservative fisher – line only, near or under the boat
Gladwyn & Andrew – father and son – had the rods, one had a new rod, the experts – they can describe the hooks, the tackle, undo tangles, and get the fish off the hook....

Blessed – the gifted Filipino fish catcher - the casual 'I'll have a go' for fun
Then we met up with Troy who came alongside our mooring in the Hacking River in his rubber ducky; he looked on – catching nothing, enjoying being part of the scene.
We had the fish finder – the technology was happening – the fish were there! We had the burley....

But we caught nothing (about three little ones we needed to throw back)... and then the key snapped off in the ignition!! At the least that was the end of the fishing expedition...I smelled like fish, but had none in the bag....well...

It was the end of a frustrating, unsuccessful, night shift for Pete. They were cleaning up, ready to knock off, have a shower and a long sleep, maybe wondering how they would tell their wives they had no fish to sell, and no fish for the kids' dinner. It was always a long cleanup, more toilsome after a night with no catch to show for it.

*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.*

1. THE LONG, DARK NIGHT, FOR NOTHING

Peter and his friends had fished all night – fishing is hard work for the one who would earn their living doing it! This was with nets and no technology or powered boats. Then, the cleanup was long – they had to wash the nets without the joy of knowing there was a good catch to take home.

Sometimes we are at that point in our lives – it seems there has been a long, dark night when we have applied ourselves, worked hard, been committed to something. Perhaps it is a prayer project – someone or something we have been holding up earnestly to the Lord, needing a breakthrough. Maybe it is a task we have been diligently working at and feel we have not seen fruit or result from it. Maybe it is a desert area of our life where it seems to have gone on forever – a long, dark night – and we feel like we have nothing to show for it.

It was into this sort of situation that Jesus came...Simon Peter was cleaning down his nets, ready to take a break – and Jesus climbed into his boat, and asked him to push out from the land, and began to preach to the crowd. At the end of the sermon he spoke to Peter...

2. LAUNCH OUT INTO THE DEEP, LET DOWN YOUR NETS FOR A CATCH

This was Jesus' command. It was, for Simon Peter, the Word for NOW. It didn't matter what had gone before. Jesus' words were the changing point for Peter that day. They pierced into Peter's familiar world – he knew his job of fishing, he knew the lake, he knew his gear, he knew the time of day and the weather. Peter may well have been initially shocked at Jesus' instruction. But something resonated with work-weary Peter....Jesus had given him a word, and faith was rising....

3. NEVERTHELESS, AT YOUR WORD

Peter said: *Master we have toiled all night and caught nothing; nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net.*

Nevertheless at Your word – **His Word created**, His word was the springboard of faith and action for Noah, Abraham, Moses, Joshua – so many heroes in the Word – His Word cancels the 'nothing has happened' drought/desert/famine. His Word is creative, powerful, miraculous. Faith comes by hearing the Word of God.

His Word **might contradict present circumstances** – that's the miracle of it. For Peter, Jesus' instruction was the opposite of all Peter's natural knowledge and know-how. How often the things that the Lord asks us to do – just go deeper, cast out further – may not add up with our human reasoning – all the more glory to God! The catch of fish was totally Jesus' doing. It's all about Jesus and His mighty power at work in vessels of clay. He could have made the fish jump into the boat, or onto the

shore. But He chose to use the vessels of clay, people, who will, despite their human expertise, trust His word...and say 'nevertheless at Your Word I will let down the net' – despite the long, dark, night, despite the discouragement of 'no catch', despite the fact I know that fish don't net in full daylight when they can see the net and swim away from it. He uses people who will go into deep water and again let down the net, trusting His Word.

It was 'at Your word' – Peter responded and obeyed immediately – we need **immediate obedience when Jesus speaks** - don't delay – launch out and let down your nets.

This is about the situation in **your everyday life**, it's about your situation in **business**, it's about what you have been believing for in **your family**, it's about **your personal walk** with the Lord, it's about **your marching orders** - 'make disciples of all the nations'. What has gone before today, until now, may have been a long night of catching nothing – but you and I have His Word...launch out into the deep – cast out further.... Let's not be the conservative 'line under the boat' fisherman; let's not just look like we are fishing, copying the 'experts', with no line and bait; let's not be casual 'just for fun' once in a while fisherman when we are called by Him to let down a net for a catch; or maybe we are even like those in total earnest, doing it all 'right' but there has been a long, dark night with no catch – right now, Jesus is in the boat – and He says launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a catch – cast out further.

Peter didn't choose to 'take it easy' – he had 'done his bit' overnight. He could have said it was time to rest. But no. Some of us say: I did my bit in kids church, in youth – now it's time to take it easy. But Jesus says – launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch. This is a fresh command, a now order.

What if Peter had said 'no' – as he did another time. What if he had said 'I have worked all night and caught nothing, nevertheless, at Your word I will NOT let down the net' – that would have been disobedience to God. What if we say we are called to be fully devoted followers of Christ (disciples) get never let down the net? Could it be that we never speak out the gospel? Could we be one who is 'the light of the world' but never shine? Have we been trusted with seed that we just hold and forget where it is and never sow it? Could our life be wasted in terms of its eternal purpose and destiny? Have we ever helped cast a net or helped pull one in? Launch out into the deep and let down your net for a catch – that is His Word to us today.

It's about soul winning especially – Luke 5:10 – everyone was astonished at the catch...the net was breaking...two boats were sinking with the weight. Can you imagine coming in at Yowie Bay boat ramp and yelling for help – 'we have too many fish – we need help, we're sinking' or calling the Marine Police – help, we are sinking, we have too many fish! Peter was overawed by the miraculous catch, and felt ashamed of his personal sinfulness in the presence of awesome God. Jesus said: 'Do not be afraid, from now on you will catch men'. This miracle was a prelude and picture of 'catching men'...kingdom work, saving work. It was when the boats came to land, they left everything and followed Jesus. What is this story saying to us today? Are we totally committed to the work of soul winning – fishing for people in the sea of humanity where we live. He has given the command. We need to be in

total earnest about the work of soul winning. The young believers, the babes in Christ, are always asking 'Can I go with you in the boat' or 'take me out in the boat' – or they just go. What's happened with some of us? Are we casual, just for fun, fishermen? Are we onlookers in the work? Are we 'safe zone' fishermen? Have we been faithful to the task, but feeling discouraged because we have an empty bag? Jesus says again today: launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch – and faith rises...it's coming! All the promises of God, in Jesus, are 'yes' and 'amen' – let it be!

Into the deep – it's OK to be out of your depth, when Jesus is in the boat. Early today a tsunami warning was issued for the Pacific rim, after an 8.8 magnitude earthquake in Chile. In Hawaii, cruise ship passengers were anxious and troubled when their ship followed orders and put out to sea, to ride out the expected tsunami. Little did they realise, that going into deep water, launching out into the deep, following orders, was the safest place to be, not tied to the land, if the tsunami came their way. We are safest with Jesus in the boat, following His orders.

The **younger ones in the boat are watching** keenly to see what you do. They will copy it exactly, just like Sam. Launch out now, let down your net, let them be a part of seeing God show up. Don't say 'I have done it all night, and it's no use' – say 'nevertheless, at Your word I will let down the net'.

CONCLUSION

Whether you feel like you need a rest, whether it has been a long, dark night and you feel like you want to take a break, whether you feel empty-handed in what you have been asking the Lord for – Jesus is in the boat. He says...come on, this is the time to launch out into the deep with Me, and let down your nets for a catch.