

LAUNCHING OUT INTO THE DEEP

Luke 5:1-11

The following are resource questions that you can use with your Care Group for discussion. They are based on the sermon preached on Sunday, July 11 2010, by Rev Dick Hugoniot at the Grace Baptist Church, Singapore. The sermon is available online at <http://www.gracebap.org.sg/worship/series.html>.

July 11, 2010

The Missions Preparation

It seems to have been a pattern God has often followed in dealing with people – to ask them to do what is seemingly foolish. Obedience to Christ's word brought immediate and surprising results. So many fish came swimming into the nets that they began to tear! This was an amazing catch of fish. First, their weight made the net begin to tear. Then, as the men got the fish into Peter's boat, it began to sink! And when the partners came to Peter's assistance, both boats began to sink!

Note: The miracle did not occur apart from human involvement. Peter and his friends had to row out into the sea to the deep water and cast their net overboard. And the fish did not jump into the boat but the men had to haul the fish on board. The men even needed more help from their partners.

Jesus performed the miracle but the people did the work.

The Missions Call

Jesus' call to the disciples is in three simple words "Come Follow Me." Jesus demonstrated His divine power and authority to assure those who follow Him that they would have no fear or worry – Jesus had the power to heal broken minds and bodies. He had the power to forgive sins, to make people whole, and to empower them to do His work. Followers of Jesus are assured that they will be given the power to catch people for Jesus, to spread His church and to bring masses to hear the gospel.

The Missions Challenge

If Luke's account of the miraculous catch ended with the nets bursting with fish, it would be an interesting but inconsequential miracle. It might feed our desire for a gospel of success in business and good grades in school (health and wealth gospel), but it would hardly be worthy of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Simon Peter saw more than just the miracle. He was captured by the Lord behind the miracle. Instead of responding with the bravado of a winner, he pleaded for forgiveness, "Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!" (v8).

At first glance, this may seem an unlikely reaction to a moment of success. Sometime, however, it is the experience of achievement that forces us to see how superficial our victories are. When we find ourselves suddenly so financially secure, we may come to realize how little our wealth really means, how superficial our success can be.

Sinful Peter did not have to fear when facing a holy God. God accepted him as he was and made him something new. Interestingly, the call to mission came in singular to Peter, not in plural to the partners. A person who recognizes his limits and stands fearful before God finds God coming not with a hand of judgment and discipline but with a call to join in dedicated labor, seeking others for the kingdom.

Discuss:

1. What does it mean to be in the business of catching men? Would you or your Care Group fit into this category? Time, energy, interest, what other factors can be included in the business of catching men for Christ?
2. Do you see mission as finding other people for Jesus? Would this include or exclude certain people?
3. How can we include these people into our circle of friends? Invite them for meals and celebrations (including Christian holidays such as Good Friday and Easter, Christmas, etc.)
4. Is God the power source in every area of life, even in your business? If yes, how does it manifest itself so that our colleagues, our business partner and clients will know we are Christians?
5. Do we see that one day, Grace Baptist Church will launch a new work in Singapore (local mission) as well as overseas (global mission)?

Reflection & Prayer:

One of the greatest obstacle for following Jesus' call to mission is the financial cost. The disciples left everything – help us to see clearly what are the things that hinder us from following after You and be fishers of men for You? Amen.