

Call to Worship.

Psalm 62:5-8 (Dependence on God Alone)

1. All Hail the Power of Jesus Name.
2. Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee
3. A Mighty Fortress is Our God

Doctrine.

Proverbs. 3:3-7 (Dependence on God)

4. You Are God Alone.
5. In Christ Alone.
6. Living Hope.

Offering Prayer

Sermon Text.

John 21:1-8 |God's provision or Man's skill?

V.1-11 After these things Jesus manifested Himself again to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias, and He manifested Himself in this way. Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, and two others of His disciples were together.

Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We will also come with you."

They went out and got into the boat; and that night they caught nothing.

But when the day was now breaking, Jesus stood on the beach; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus.

So Jesus said to them, "Children, you do not have any fish, do you?"

They answered Him, "No."

And He said to them, "Cast the net on the right-hand side of the boat and you will find a catch."

So they cast, and then they were not able to haul it in because of the great number of fish.

Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord."

So when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put his outer garment on (for he was stripped for work), and threw himself into the sea.

But the other disciples came in the little boat, for they were not far from the land, but about one hundred yard away, dragging the net full of fish.

So when they got out on the land, they saw a charcoal fire already laid and fish placed on it, and bread.

Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish which you have now caught."

Simon Peter went up and drew the net to the land, full of large fish, a hundred and fifty three; and although there were so many, the net was not torn."

Intro.

Have you ever gone fishing before?

Deep sea, off shore, off the shore, from the dock, from a boat, from the pier. Fishing is a common recreation and in Israel at this time it is a common profession.

You know there are all kinds of fish in the sea. There are big fish and small fish, there are slow fish and fast fish. There are bottom feeders and ones on the top. There are ones that flip and ones that flop.

There are fish that are flat, there are fish that are round. There are fish that flash and fish that are dull.

There are all kinds of fish in the sea.

But there is one thing is certain about fish no matter what kind of fish it is, whatever you catch them with, is what you keep them with.

You want those critters to keep coming back you better give them the content they like.

You keep them with what you catch them with.

Did you get them with the power bait, a big hook or a shiny lure? How did you catch all those fish?

You notice here, the skilled and experienced fisherman, Peter, has caught NO FISH!

It's a bad fishermen who has no fish. What gives? Does Peter lack the skill or the will? OR is something else at work here?

Is Christian fishing a matter of technical skill, or passionate will? Or is it a matter of Christ's calling?

Did you know that Jesus calls Christian converts, Fish?

There used to be this bumper sticker people used to put on their car, it was a fish. The idea was that you were a Christian convert and that you were looking to win other people to your school of fish.

Jesus tells the disciples that He is going to make them **Fishers of Men**.

Jesus is not calling them to be converts of Carp and Catfish. Jesus is calling them to convert Men and Women into the religion of Christianity.

Well, how in the world are they going to do that?

Friends, if you catch a crowd with carnal bait be prepared to keep them with that same food source.

If you catch the convert with Christ's power and Christ's call, it will be no challenge to you to keep them, because they are not kept by you, they are kept by Christ.

It will require no convincing, because Christ already did the converting.
It will require no cover-ups, because Christ has already exposed.

Catching Christian fish will not require fancy tackle boxes and clever approaches.

A great example of this is Spontaneous Baptism.

Now I understand and I believe that a number of people that receive spontaneous baptism, genuinely are making a heartfelt decision. But I also think many of them are genuinely being manipulated by the circumstances of the events.

Recently there was reported a mass, spontaneous baptism event at a on-campus Christian rally at the University of Georgia.

Truck beds were filled with water. Co-ed's were dunked in this water. And a mass revival on the campus of Athens was reported.

Were these genuine fish? Are these legitimate converts?

Recently there was a mass exposing of Steven Furtick's Elevation Church reporting have over 2000 baptisms at single event.

Unfortunately, just after this, a private document was brought to public light instructing Elevation Church members that upon Furtick's cue in his sermon, they were to initiate walking an aisle, as if coming forward to be baptized, and this should help inspire others to make a similar decision.

In others words, pre-planned, and coordinated, manipulation of people's behavior.

Further, it has come to the light the staged manipulation of events at the Stronger Man Conferences where men are built up in false bravado.

This made national headlines with the Assemblies of God's flagship church in James River Missouri, where John Lindell and Mark Driscoll had what seems to be a pre-staged public rift followed by a public reconciliation, that all seemed as well-coordinated as a Hollywood production.

What's astounding is how thousands of grown men flock to these this bait!

What kind of a fish consumes this material? Is it a Christian fish?

Following these events, Justin Peters, a skilled Biblical Apologist, and Phil Johnson, the long-time editor of John's MacArthur's, Grace To You, did a thorough reporting on the mass manipulation of people through John Lindell and Mark Driscoll's ministries.

It seems that the whole event was a type of publicity stunt to promote a new book by Driscoll.

A true Christian ministry is seen in this Epilogue by the events that are happening to Peter.

These events happen to Peter in **four part**: 1st, he can no longer succeed in his previous profession, **2nd** Peter is called to forsake worldly affections for that profession, 'do you love me more than these' **3rd**, Peter is commissioned to care for God's people and **4th** Peter is going to ultimately be martyred for his service.

Peter is the leader. For something to happen to the group, it has to happen to the leader first.

Like people, like priest.

Tell me what the priest is caught with and I'll tell you what catches his people.

Is the priest caught up on the modern decor, the people will flock to design their digs as such.

Is the priest more about publicity, the people will lack a prayer life.

Does the priest lack vision, the people will perish.

Does the priest lack love, the people will be hardened.

Does the priest lack truth the people, the people will grow in weary, and worldly, and wayward.

Is the priest faithful, the people will be fit for service.

Is the priest steady, the people will be strong.

Is the priest humble, the people will grow tall like oaks.

But the principle remains, the people will be no different than their priest. Therefore, Jesus must deal with Peter first.

The Priest must have a close relationship to Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is the High Priest and He is calling Peter to be a priest of a nation priests.

'You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession' 1 Pet. 2:9

The priest must know his race, His calling/vocation, his nationality, and who owns Him.

If the priest lacks this knowledge, it is not likely he will ever catch a Christian fish.

Peter is being called into ministry here. But let explain something about Calling.

You can understand a Christian calling like this;

Conviction. The motivation to do the task.

Capability. The ability to do the task.

Confirmation. The agreement others who do the task.

Character. The character to embody the task.

Conversion. The fruit of the task.

If a minister gets no conversions, that minister is not called by Christ. Period.

But I will have you know, that you must not evaluate conversions by truckbed baptisms on the Bulldogs campus.

You must not evaluate conversions by conference attendance. You must not evaluate conversions by social media followers or book sales, or rates of baptism.

Evaluate Conversions by what that Ministers' people LOVE!

Conversion is what you caught them with.

Every week businesses evaluate conversion rate. It is a part a profit analysis to evaluate what is called conversion rate.

The conversion rate in business is the rate by which or percentage of people who have completed the decision to make a desired outcome.

In sales, it is the ability to take a new lead and turn that lead into a customer.

Well, what Jesus is showing Peter here is no worldly means will work when it comes to serving in Christian ministry.

Now there are people that use those means, but my conclusion is that those are not Christian ministries.

Christ drives the conversion rate in the Sea of Christian Faith, and it is Christ that builds His church.

Body.

Exposition.

V. 1 'After these things Jesus manifested Himself again to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias, and He manifested Himself in this way.'

After these things - refers to an unspecified time after Jesus first and second appearance to the disciples after the resurrection.

Manifested Himself - Jesus has shown Himself plainly in a variety of ways to the disciples.

This is the 3rd time in the Gospels that we see that Jesus has show Himself in plain sight to the disciples.

Sea of Tiberias - this is just another name for the Sea of Galilee. It has also known as the Sea of Chinnereth in Num. 34, Josh. 13, and it was known as the Sea of Tiberaius has Herod Antipas named it in honor of Emperor Tiberius.

V. 2 'Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, and two others of His disciples were together.'

7 of the disciples are listed as being present.

Two others - likely refers to Andrew and Philip.

V. 3 'Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We will also come with you." They went out and got into the boat; and that night they caught nothing.'

I am going fishing.

Peter determined that he was not going to wait around. Peter was going to return to his previous vocation.

This was not recreation. This was not sport. This was his previous profession.

Peter was not going fishing because he was bored on a Sunday. Peter was not going fishing because he was tired of this church thing and was more interested in fishing.

Peter was returning to fishing because it was all he knew. It was his way of life. It was the old wineskins. It was the same old, same old. It was his livelihood.

Peter was a fisherman. Peter caught fish, sold fish, and ate fish.

Fishing was the way he made money and had food to eat. It was what He did for a living.

We will come with you.

The other disciples did not have the natural leadership skills of Peter. Peter was a born-leader. He was quick to talk, quick to do, and quick to fail.

But the disciples still followed him.

On this night, they are falling short of the glory of a fisherman.

The boat.

Definite article 'the' denotes that it was problem one of the sevens personal fishing boat.

That night.

Fishing is often best down at night. A reverse cycle.

They caught nothing.

They were failing in their profession. It was not working out.

Peter knew the fishing spots. He knew the time to go. He knew the depth to drop the lure. He had the right bait.

But tonight it's just not working out.

Q: Have you ever been in a situation where it's just not working out?

The job is a dead end. The relationship just isn't going anywhere. The fish are not biting but the bugs are.

You haven't caught a fish, but you got a sunburn.

You've got nothing to show for it and no vision for where to go.

You're out fish, out snacks, and out of patience.

Has it ever crossed your mind at this junction in life that this is the time to trust in God?

I'm not talking about fishing. I'm talking about **YOUR CALLING**.

Your calling is NOT what you want to do, it's what you have to do. Your calling is an obligation, NOT an option.

I want to see a church of people who know and live their calling in their church, their community and their specific calling.

If you have a jigsaw puzzle the goal isn't to get more pieces. The goal is to make the pieces you have fit together to make the proper picture.

So if you have 50 pieces, fit them together. It does you no good to just go from 50 to 500 to 5000 pieces if you couldn't even fit together the first 50.

So many people in American culture chase the allure that bigger is better. Often bigger is the fast-track to bitterness. Worldly gains and spiritual emptiness.

Your fulfillment will come by knowing your calling and becoming your personal best at your calling.

Now with that you must wonder what is your calling? Because I will tell you if you are a Christian you have a calling.

You are first called to Salvation, then you are called to Service. Every Christian needs Salvation and they need service.

Salvation saves the soul, service feeds the soul.

Salvation rescues the life, Service rescues others.

To have Christian salvation without Christian service will result in maladies you would prefer I do not describe. So I will save you the agony.

Merely, see this example of 7 men, who knew what to do but got no results.

Know this, the reason wasn't because they had a bad boat or needed new nets.

It's a poor craftsman who blames his tools.

The point is not the boat, the net, the time of day or any other assessment that can be offered.

The point is not the means of doing the task.

The point is this; That when God calls a man to be His man, you will be allowed to do nothing else other than serve Him.

Your old way of life IS OVER.

I have seen a large group of men who are bitter, sarcastic, cynical, and hopeless because they have failed to acknowledge Christ's command over their life.

They chose Mammon over the Messiah.

They chose pleasure over patience.

They chose fishing over finishing well.

They chose hunting over hoping.

They called dreaming big, sinful, when in reality, the bigness of the calling just tested their faith, and they declined.

And here they are, with one last ditch effort to say, in this new season of life, will I remain the same or will I die on the vine?

Will Christ cure my apathy through service OR will He curse the fig tree of my life?

Will I humble myself, acknowledge that I've come this far and caught nothing?

Then, you've got the other guy, that guy says, yeah well that's all well and good, but before we go fish we better check with the state. We better register our boat. We better tag and report all the fish.

Well, here's my advice 'let the dead bury the dead' - If bureaucracy commands more allegiance than Christian service you already know who your God is.

Taxation of the Christian life.

Governments are known for their taxes and the Kingdom of God is no different. God has a way of taxing our lives and if you think it's a scaled system, I'm here to tell you that's not how it works with God.

Tax season is finishing up and maybe you haven't gotten yours done yet. That's ok, you can file an extension.

But hear me know, there will be no extensions with God. The taxation system will be paid to the King. There will be no standard deductions. There will be no child tax credits. There will be no write offs.

Hear ye, Hear ye, the King has called a Decree. There is a new taxation system. You can complain about the price of tea in China, and you can throw the Earl Gray over in Boston, BUT in the New Jerusalem, The Lord Jesus requires of you 100% taxation. The taxation system of the King we can still call the IRS. That's fine. But it does not stand for the Internal Revenue Service any longer.

We will keep the acronym but it will mean this. **In Righteous Service.**

And your taxes are not 10% to the poor, 20% to the middle class, and 30% to the wealthy.

In the King's kingdom there is no wealthy, no not one. There is no middle class. It is a serf system. It is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.

Only the poor will enter. 'Blessed are the poor for theirs is the kingdom of God' Matt. 5:3

Take heart, There is a Social Security system, the Security is found in Unity, and the social mandate is loving one another.

Hear ye, Hear Ye, the King has established a new taxation system.

You will not evade His taxes, His eyes are everywhere. You will not be afforded a default on your student loans. As a matter of fact, the Lord Jesus is now enrolling everyone back in school.

Night classes begin tonight. Some of you will be taking a full load.

Peter is taking one of these classes right now, on the Sea of Tiberias. He is learning that He doesn't have the answers.

I've noticed a peculiar thing about adults. They reach an age where they think they no longer need to learn. They will think only the kids need teaching, only the kids need preaching. Far from it!

Learning is work, and life is work, and life and learning and work all go hand in hand.

If you stop learning that's when you will start losing. Never stop learning. Be a student of life. Be a student of God. Be a student of the church. Be a learner.

V. 4-5 'But when the day was now breaking, Jesus stood on the beach; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus.' So Jesus said to them, "Children, you do not have any fish, do you? They answered Him, "No."

That's just like a good friend to highlight where you are deficient.

'Faithful are the wounds of a friend' Prov. 27:6

So you spent all night out there and you caught nothing! Funny how that works! - (the disciples) Who is this guy?!

Children - Jesus has called them slaves, he has called them friends, he has called them brothers, and here he calls them children.

Children are the part of the human population that are not capable of providing for themselves. That's a large part of the point!

'Bring the children unto me!' 'you must become as children'!

You know something I've never heard a child worry about? Taxes.

Children are free from the impediments of adult priorities.

Do you know what children are free from? They are free from the concern of providing for themselves.

Children do not think about mortgages. They don't know who Fannie Mae, they think Freddie Mac is a meal at McDonald's .

The interesting thing about a child is that everything is a big deal.

You get to a certain age and things are still a big deal to you and then somebody says 'ah grow up!' - So you start to think, oh I should think those things are a big deal anymore.

Well, ironically enough, Jesus tells us to make a big deal about His things. To be like a little child about the things of Him.

Jesus Christ wants you to be free from the concern of thinking that you need to provide for yourself.

Jesus DOES NOT want you to think you are free from serving Him, He wants to you realize you are free from the outcomes of that service.

Jesus Christ wants you to arrive at the understanding that He created the fish, He knows where they are swimming, and He will give you all the fish you need, even more than you can haul in.

You and I think that we have to provide, that we have to go back to the old ways, that we have to pick up the old profession.

Here's what I would say and have you understand; You don't have to provide, that's what Jesus is doing.

You don't have to provide, you have to serve.

And if you are faithful to serve, Jesus is always faithful to provide.

Q: Why does Jesus know where the fish are? Because He's God! He created them. He commanded them.

V. 6 'And He said to them, "Cast the net on the right-hand side of the boat and you will find a catch." So they cast, and then they were not able to haul it in because of the great number of fish.'

Cast the net.

Deploy the agent that captures the goods! Don't expect the answer if the request has not been made!

The Right-hand side of the boat.

The Lord Jesus, right now, is sitting at the right hand of God. Cast your prayer to the right-hand side of His royalty. He hears you. He loves you. He wants you to walk up to the beaches of Heaven, and say, Lord, give me fish! And He says, 'A fish?'

Are you still trying to find Nemo? Children, I've got far more for you than that!

Pray and do not doubt.

What is the Great Doctrine of the Christian faith? Is it Sovereignty? Is it Love?

If it's Sovereignty, fall under it.

If it's Love, fall in it.

But here, in this passage, it is FAITH.

God's Sovereignty is something to be believed. God's Love is something to be believed. And Faith is the matter of believing in God's Sovereign Love.

We see the Sovereign Love of Jesus Christ right here!

You will find a catch.

Not able to haul it in because of the great number of fish.

The provision was so great they couldn't handle it all.

V. 7 'Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord." So when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put his outer garment on (for he was stripped for work), and threw himself into the sea.'

It is the Lord.

The Lord. The person with the power. The person with authority. The master over the events. The controller of Creation.

He put his outer garment.

Peter didn't have all of his clothes on because of the difficulty of the task, he was stripped down for the purpose of working as a fisherman.

V. 8 ' But the other disciples came in the little boat, for they were not far from the land, but about one hundred yards away, dragging the net full of fish.'

Application.

Well you all go fishing with me? What should we do? Should we

How many babies were born in Manson last year? But oh how many babes are in the faith?

How many of senior citizens do we have only has freshman's in the faith?

How many middle aged still only middle schoolers in their doctrines?

Brothers, Sisters, can we be more without Christ? Should we be more without Christ? God forbid.

We have fish to catch. And I'm not talking about little scaled things under the surface of the water out here. I'm talking about people.

Winning souls.

Souls need things that only God can give.

A soul is not filled with material goods. It's useless to a soul.

A soul is not bettered by bread. Jesus says to **Peter 'do you love me more than these' v.15**

A soul is not battered and fried.

A soul is not baked and caked.

A soul is not broiled.

A soul can only be fed and sustained by its Maker.

A soul is the only aspect of the human life that will make it into the next life.

Your strength will fade, your wealth we evade, your health will decline, and eventually you will be lying supine in a box of pine.

And the only thing at that moment that will matter is where did you cast your net.

Let me encourage you today, to live your life focused on the Lord Jesus Christ.

Who is Jesus Christ and what does He command? What has He asked of you?

Conclusion.

We now come to the point of the sermon where we go to the 'We' to the 'Me' - What does this matter to me?

Let me close with this.

We are now in the final stages of John's Gospel, **the Epilogue.**

The final lap. The last stretch. We're on third base and we've got to tag home plate.

Now you might look back at your life and say, 'My goodness I got hit by a pitch and made it to first. I limped my way to second, and the only reason I'm on third is because the pitcher walked the third batter. And now you want me to make it to home base.'

But what you haven't considered is who is batting clean up.

The Lord Jesus Christ was in the dugout and he's about to hit a 500 yard home run and your going to walk right in.

Place your hope in Him.

The final phrase of v. 8 says Peter 'threw Himself into the sea' - Just trust God. Just trust Christ.

He has a plan. He knows where the fish are. He knows what you need.

Let's pray.

7. Blessed Assurance.

Benediction.

Isaiah 41:10

Small Group Questions.

1. What needs are you struggling with and need prayer about? How can we lift up our needs to Jesus and trust in Him?
2. What has Jesus called you to do to serve Him in your family, in your church, and in your community? What can you do consistently?
3. What was Jesus showing Peter by his inability to catch fish?
4. Are you struggling to trust Christ in your life?
5. Where can you yield yourself in service and watch Him work?