

PUT AWAY YOUR **SWORD**
and
GRAB YOUR NET

— PART TWO —



Part Two - "Better Nets"

Scripture Reading

Luke 5:1-10 (NKJV)

1 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."

The Need for Better Nets

In reading this text in Luke, we see that Luke goes into greater detail than Matthew and Mark in the recounting of this first miraculous encounter with Jesus. Luke gives us the details in how Jesus first got into the boat with these fishermen and the Words that he spoke to Simon Peter. And in reading this text we see how Jesus addressed a few of the immediate problems that Peter and his friends were facing hours before.

1. They had been fishing all night before and caught nothing
2. Experience taught them that it just wasn't their night
3. They were content to go home without catching anything
4. A long night of work with no product to show for it
5. "Sometimes that's life"

But Jesus tells them to "Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch."

Why Jesus' idea was illogical

- Most fishing in that time was done in shallow or mid-depth waters at night
- Jesus telling them to go into the deep water during the day was unusual
- Fish normally come closer to the surface when it's cooler and darker
- Nets are harder for fish to see at night
- Fish normally stay Near Shore at Moderate Depth
- For fishermen these are predictable fish patterns

Jesus was asking Peter to

- Fish at the **wrong time** (daytime)
- In the **wrong place** (deep water)
- After a **failed night** of effort

Peter's response makes more sense now:

Luke 5:5 (NKJV)

"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.'"

"This is not how fishing works... but I trust You."

"We tried that years ago and it didn't work... but I trust You."

"No one has ever been successful at that before...but I trust You."

Jesus was teaching Peter that The Kingdom doesn't operate by your experience—it operates by His word—Obedience!

Jesus was already teaching them that what they possessed wasn't going to be enough or where He was about to take them.

The Deep represents a deeper revelation, experience, insight and awareness of the things of God and what it means to walk with Him.

The Net has a two fold meaning for today's message:

1. it represents what they could comprehend, carry and what they could handle
2. it also represents how they would be fruitful and how they gather

Their current nets were beginning to break

The Breaking Net

Luke 5:6 (NKJV)

6 And when they had done this, they caught a great number of fish, and their net was breaking.

The physical nets began to break once they realized the sheer amount of fish that were caught in their nets. But before their physical nets were shown to be inefficient, their spiritual nets were initially insufficient also.

1. their initial net was woven with talent and experience
 - time tested gifts are often advertised as the most effective resource for the job even in untested situations. The gifted and experienced person is known for applying what they know to situations that are unusual but they feel their skills can still apply.
 - but time tested gifts are not always applicable to God orchestrated situations. Our experience and expertise are not the pre-requisites here lest we corner the market on the exceptional. We fail to understand that God wills to show what He can do, not just give you a chance to show what you can do.
 - In supernatural scenarios, nets woven with talent and experience alone will break.
2. Simon's net was only wide enough to work in isolation.
 - Simon was used to being able to haul in his catch by himself
 - Working in isolation cannot handle the abundance that God has reserved for you in the deep!
 - **His net was breaking because he needed more than a net; he needed a "NET-WORK!"**

Sometimes God puts us in situations where what He's asking us to do is beyond our capacity to handle on our own. We rejoice that WE heard Him and that He spoke to US but we don't recognize that although we are talented, experienced and capable, He's greater than we are and His plans are bigger than ours.

The Stretching of the Net

Luke 5:7-10 (NKJV)

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."

When Simon and Andrew called James and John to come help them haul in the catch, they were astonished at the amount of fish that they caught.

- Even with their partnership, their nets were stretched.
- Their expectations were stretched beyond the experience and expertise of these fishermen

But this wouldn't be the only time Jesus stretched their capacity to handle the limits Jesus was exceeding time and time again.

In Matthew 14:14-19 Jesus' compassion moved Him to minister to the multitude and heal their sick. And afterwards as it was getting late, the disciples wanted Jesus to send the crowds home so they could get their own food. **Jesus said "they don't need to go away. You give them something to eat."**

17 And they said to Him, "We have here only five loaves and two fish."

18 He said, "Bring them here to Me." 19 Then He commanded the multitudes to sit down on the grass. And He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, He blessed and broke and gave the loaves to the disciples; and the disciples gave to the multitudes. 20 So they all ate and were filled, and they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments that remained.

But if this stretching of their faith and their capacity to handle the magnitude of what Jesus could do wasn't enough, He stretched them again!

Matthew 15:32-37 shows us Jesus once again having compassion on the multitudes that followed Him to hear Him teach and perform miracles, He knew that they would be hungry and may not make it home without food. **His disciples ask Him, where are we going to get enough bread in the wilderness to fill such a great multitude.**

34 Jesus said to them, "How many loaves do you have?"

And they said, "Seven, and a few little fish."

35 So He commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground. 36 And He took the seven loaves and the fish and gave thanks, broke them and gave them to His disciples; and the disciples gave to the multitude. 37 So they all ate and were filled, and they took up seven large baskets full of the fragments that were left.

Things that puzzled me about this:

1. If the disciples saw the miracle of the feeding of the 5000+ in Matthew 14 and saw what Jesus did with 5 loaves and 2 fish why did they say to Jesus "where are we going to get enough bread in the wilderness to fill such a great multitude" of 4000+
2. If Jesus did it before, could He not do it again?
3. Is it possible that we have history with God, but we also hesitating with Him?

Matthew 16:8-10 (NKJV)

8 But Jesus, being aware of it, said to them, "O you of little faith, why do you reason among yourselves because you have brought no bread? 9 Do you not yet understand, or remember the five loaves of the five thousand and how many baskets you took up? 10 Nor the seven loaves of the four thousand and how many large baskets you took up?"

What Jesus says next sounds mysterious but it's profound.

Matthew 16:11 (NKJV)

11 How is it you do not understand that I did not speak to you concerning bread?—but to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees."

- The disciples saw the miracle of the 5000+ but hesitated to believe He could do it again with the 4000+
- The pharisees and saducees were goading Jesus to perform another miracle yet they didn't trust Him.
- **Jesus was saying , 'be careful that your hesitation doesn't mature into conditional trust.'**
- "God do it so that I'll trust you."
- "Show me again before I trust you again."
- "Immature faith asks, 'Can You do it again?'
- Mature faith says, 'You've already shown me who You are.'"
- You don't need another miracle for you to trust God—you need a better memory!

How easily His disciples would forget or lose focus on what Jesus had done and what He had to do on the cross. And even after His resurrection He still had another lesson to teach them.

The Net that Held

When the disciples first met Jesus, the net broke. But this time, the net held.

John 21:1-7 (NKJV)

1 After these things Jesus showed Himself again to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias, and in this way He showed Himself: 2 Simon Peter, Thomas called the Twin, Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of His disciples were together. 3 Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing."

They said to him, "We are going with you also." They went out and immediately got into the boat, and that night they caught nothing. 4 But when the morning had now come, Jesus stood on the shore; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. 5 Then Jesus said to them, "Children, have you any food?"

They answered Him, "No."

6 And He said to them, "Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some." So they cast, and now they were not able to draw it in because of the multitude of fish.

7 Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment (for he had removed it), and plunged into the sea.

Once again, the disciples talent and expertise at a lifelong trade still came up short and they caught nothing all night. Jesus in His resurrected Body calls out to them from the shore and gives them an instruction:

Not - launch out into the deep

Not - go where you don't normally go

Not - go against what you now know

This time, "just do it the way I tell you." In both circumstances, Jesus was teaching them the power of obeying Him. Whether He wanted them to do something so counter to the norm, or simply to do something simple.

Interesting that God didn't change the miracle—but He did change the men.

Your Net is Stronger Now

Our nets become stronger when we realize how to trust God and perceive what He's teaching us with deeper observation.

1. Your obedience is greater than your experience
2. Your net will break without a net-work
3. Don't overthink obedience - sometimes it's unusual and other times it's simple—both produce exceedingly and abundantly above all you can ask or think.
4. Don't hesitate to believe when God has already proven Himself.

Are you doubting God in an area of your life?

Is He stretching your nets during a critical time in your life right now?

Are you in a place where you need a miracle bigger than you?

Prepare yourself to let down your net one more time.