

Listening for the Promise

Sola Publishing – Weekly Devotions

Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany – February 9, 2025

“And Jesus said to Simon, ‘Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching men.’”

- Luke 5:10b -

It was a typical summer evening in the Pocono Mountains of Pennsylvania when I, along with my brother, cousins, and uncle went fishing at the lake. It was a memorable time in that as quickly as we cast our lines into the water, we'd be catching fish. It was almost as if the fish were fighting as to who would get caught next. Of course, there were many other times when I've gone fishing where it seemed like the only thing I accomplished was to drown worms.

We see both of those situations in the reading from the 5th chapter of Luke. Simon Peter and the others relied upon a good catch of fish. This was their livelihood. When Jesus arrived by the lake of Gennesaret, he told Simon to go out into the deep waters and let down the nets for a catch. We can imagine the frustration of Simon who spent many hours fishing, with nothing to show for it. Even so, he obeyed and went out again. This time, there was such an abundance of fish that it almost tore apart their nets.

From this event comes the invitation of Jesus for Peter, James, and John to follow him. They do so willingly, leaving behind all that was important. When we are invited to follow Jesus, what keeps us from laying it all aside to follow him? Perhaps a better question to ask is what is to be gained from following Jesus? What is gained is an abiding relationship that endures beyond this world. We gain the blessings of who Jesus is, that as we walk with Jesus not only do we live with him, we join him on his mission. With Jesus we love the stranger, feed the hungry, cloth the naked, visit the sick, only to discover that Jesus is already present with these individuals as is stated in Matthew 25:31-45. With Jesus, we abide in the living Word which teaches us how to live lives of loving service.

Even more fundamental to what we do as disciples is the point that discipleship isn't about creating a list of things to do. Discipleship is about identity. We are made children of God by Baptism, and we are made disciples of Christ when we are yoked together with him.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, help us to be fishers of men and women, that all may know and abide in your abundant love. Amen.