

12.10.25 am A return to Fishing

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Preacher: Scott Macleod

- [0:00] Good morning. Good morning. Warm welcome to everyone this morning.! We pray our time together would be blessed by God.! Just a couple of intimations to make.
- There'll be tea and coffee available after the service. So you can stay behind for that. All are welcome to stay behind for that. There's Cresce behind us in the room here.
- Any wee ones you can go into Cresce at any time. Just in the back there, any visitors. We welcome any visitors as well with us. We pray our blessing for you too.
- And just an intimation. Anthony will lead the service this evening. Another intimation that wasn't on the email is that it's for Rooted.
- And I just hope that Rooted would start again after the holidays. But at present they're looking for more volunteers to help with that. So if anyone could think that they have time on a Friday evening to help with...
- [1:03] What time is it, Stuart? Half six. Anyone could help on a Friday evening, half six. Speak to Stuart. He'd be grateful for any help that he could get with that.
- All intimations have been on the screen. So they are all God willing. And we'll begin ourselves. So let us worship God.
- And we'll sing in beginning in Psalm 25. Psalm 25 from verse 4. Show me thy ways, O Lord.
- Thy paths, O teach thou me. And do thou lead me in thy truth. Therein my teacher be. We'll sing down to verse 10.
- The whole paths of the Lord are truth and mercy sure to those that do his covenant keep and testimonies pure. We'll stand to sing these words to God's praise.
- [2:02] Show me thy ways, O Lord. Show me thy ways, O Lord.
- Thy paths, O teach thou me. And do thou lead me in thy truth.
- Therein my teacher be. For thou art all that God.
- To be some nations send. I'll lie upon thee all the day.
- Expecting to attend. Thy tender mercy, Lord.
- [3:27] I pray thee to remember. And love in kindnesses for thee.
- Have been of old forever. My sins and faults of you.
- Do thou, O Lord, forget. After thy mercy think on me.
- And for thy goodness, grace. God good and upright is.
- The way he'll sit and show. The meek in judgment he will guide.
- [4:57] And make his path to know. The home of the Lord. The home of the Lord. The home of the Lord.
- And truth and mercy sure. To those that do is covenant key.

We pray for David as he preaches in Gerlach. We pray for them as they remember and sit at your table. We pray for them as they remember and pray for them as they remember and pray for them. We pray for them in their vacancy and we pray for others that are in likewise circumstances. We pray that you would raise up men to fill these positions. We pray that you would bring many to trust in you.

[11:07] We thank you for Stuart. We thank you for Gordon. We pray that many more will come in faith and trust to declare and to follow your will and to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ.

A gospel message that is so precious. A precious seed to be sown. We pray that it would just go with your love and spirit and grace. We pray for the children as they have a time of holiday. We pray for all that will travel. We pray for those that will head to the mud. We pray your safety over them. We pray that you would keep them safe and that they would return. We pray that they would enjoy their time from school.

And we pray, Lord, in their young lives that they would come to know Jesus Christ. That they would trust in him as for their Savior. We pray for our nation. We pray for a nation that has largely turned their back against you. We pray for their back against you. We pray for those that are in rule and government.

We pray that you would guide them by your wisdom. We pray as we look abroad. We look at nations in war. Nations that are at unrest. We pray for your peace. We pray that your power would be made evident.

We pray for your missionaries that go out with bread and food, water to those that are in need. We pray that the gospel would feed them most of all. We pray for the Mackellers. We remember them.

[12:58] We pray that they would see fruit for their labor. And it's often so difficult that they may not in that place. But we pray that you would encourage them as they trust in you and be faithful to you.

We pray for those laid aside. We pray and remember for Finley in hospital. And we pray that you would be near to him. And we pray others who are likewise in hospital and know the weakness of the flesh, that you would encourage them and comfort them and be with them. We remember Lydia and the family.

And we pray for them too. That you would be with them and near them. So we ask all these things in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior, your Son. Amen.

I'll just ask the younger ones who'd like to come down to the front. Probably a few less today, holiday time. You come round, take a seat. Front here.

You're very far away. You want to come a wee bit closer? Something to show you. That's better. That's better. Right. I want to show you. I've got a book here. It's a... You might be able to tell what it is. Smell it. What does it smell of?

[14:33] Cinnamon? Cinnamon? What did you say? Smells like curry. Yeah. You're right. It smells like curry. Because it's a book that tells us how to make curry.

Tells me how to make curry. And someone told me about this book. And he said, great it was. Great. We will tell you how to make lots of... Because I like a curry.

And in Scalpy, there's not that many places where you can go and buy a curry. So I was told by my neighbour, get this book and I'll tell you how to make a good curry.

So I thought, great. I'll buy this book and I'll be able to then make my own curry. But what I have to do is I have to... It'll tell me all different sorts of curries.

All different things. But I have to follow the recipe. I have to look in it and I have to see. Well, it tells me I need chicken. It tells me I need spices. It tells me I need an onion.

[15 : 39] It tells me all the things I need and a lemon. And then I need to follow the instructions. And it'll tell me how to make a curry. But I need to... The book... Having the book doesn't make a curry.

I need to do it. Isn't it? I can have the book. It doesn't mean that I'm going to have a curry. I need to open it up. I need to look inside. See what it says. And then it'll tell me how to make a curry.

And I enjoy the curries that I make. Me and Fiona enjoy the curries. And we had friends down last night. So I was able to make a curry for them. And share about just how good this book is.

And how good it is. For it teaches me how good things are. I'm only small scale. So don't get any ideas.

For any big curry pots. Still learning. But I think this book is much like the Bible. Okay? This book.

[16 : 42] My friend told me. My neighbour told me about this book. How good it was. And how it helped me. And so is the Bible. We should be like that with the Bible. We were telling our friends.

This is a great book. It tells us. Loads of things in it. It tells us all about how good God is. And it tells us.

It tells us. Lots about ourselves. It tells us how we are to live. And we are to open it. And just like the recipe. Tells me what I need to do.

The Bible tells us how we are to live our lives. And live the best lives that we have. So I want you.

Maybe next week. To tell someone about how good the Bible is. Tells us about Jesus that has died for us. And it tells us how to live a great life.

[17 : 47] And to share it with one another. And to treasure it. Because it's a really important book. Far more important than this recipe book.

It'll help us each and every day. We need to follow what it says. Jesus tells us lots of things in it. Tells us to follow him. And it tells us to follow the word of God.

And to trust in it. Just like I need to follow all the things. And I trust that when I do all these things. I'll have a curry at the end of it. A nice curry hopefully. Jesus tells us.

We're sinners. And Jesus tells us that we need to believe in him. And if we do that. And we trust in him. He will help us in our lives.

To live lives that are enjoyable. Good. Good. But lives that we share with one another. And as other people see you live in your lives.

[18 : 52] When you trust this book. They'll see how good God is. When you share the life that you have with other people. So the Bible is really important.

And we should read it every day. Okay. We should read our Bibles every day. And it'll help us each and every day. To live good lives for God.

And it'll tell us that we need to believe in God. And to follow him. Okay. Do you remember that? Yeah. Share the Bible with your friends.

Tell other people. All about Jesus and our good years. Okay. So we'll pray. Let's pray together. Our Father in heaven.

We thank you for the Bible. And we thank you that we can open it up. And we can read it. And it can tell us all about ourselves. But we thank you most of all that it tells us about Jesus.

[25:42] So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, a hundred and fifty-three of them. And although there were so many, the net was not torn.

Jesus said to them, come and have breakfast. Now none of the disciples dared ask him, who are you? They knew it was the Lord. Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them.

And he said to him, yes, Lord, you know that I love you. He said to him, feed my lambs. He said to him a second time, Simon, son of John, do you love me?

[26:51] And he said to him, Lord, you know everything. You know that I love you. Jesus said to him, feed my sheep. Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were young, you used to dress yourself and walk yourself wherever you wanted.

And after saying this, he said to him, follow me. Amen. May the reading of God's word be a blessing to all who have heard it.

I'll read it in English. O love the Lord, all ye his saints, because the Lord doth guard, the faithful and he plenteously proud doer doth reward.

[illegible]

CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS

CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS to do is just condense it and really look at what's going on in the whole thing and have that last line, that last instruction, follow me in the back of our minds. Last time I was with you, I preached on Luke chapter 5, which is a passage that talks about the disciples at the Sea of Galilee. Malcolm McLean also preached on that passage last weekend of the Communions. The disciples are at the Sea of Galilee. They've been out fishing all night. They didn't catch a thing.

- [32 : 24] They're washing their nets. Jesus comes along and starts teaching everyone there. And then Jesus tells them to put out their net. And they come back with this great catch of fish that was tearing the nets. They had so many fish. We find Jesus then telling Peter and the disciples to follow me. And there's lots of parallels here between that meeting and this meeting.

And the first one was at the beginning of Jesus' ministry. And then this one here is kind of the last moments of Jesus' earthly ministry. Jesus has died. Jesus has been resurrected. He's appeared to the disciples on two occasions before this account. This is one of the last appearances that he would make to them. But he says to them, in the same way that they began, he says to them, follow me.

So with that in the background, that image of fishing, catching nets, Jesus is teaching, follow me.

I want to look at this passage this morning. I want to have four points. And the first one is returning to the wrong fishing. That takes us in this chapter, verses 1 to 3.

A Christian life can have great blessings for us. There's often days where we're left asking, well, what now? What does it mean for us now? And the disciples knew great blessings following Jesus.

- [34 : 19] But as we see them here in this passage at the beginning, it's almost as if they're asking, what now? The disciples, they're struggling to understand what it means. Jesus has died.

Jesus has appeared to them twice. They're to continue doing his work. He's told them to come to Galilee, which they've done. But they don't know what's next. So you can picture them almost.

These disciples, we have seven accounted for here. Back to where it all began, sitting at the Sea of Galilee, Sea of Tiberias, Sea of Gennesaret, all these three names, it's the same place. So these disciples, they've returned to this place, a place we're very familiar with. You can see them almost sitting on the banks of the seashore. It's evening time, we can assume. And you can assume that they're watching the other fishermen heading out for their night's fishing. You can see Peter there watching us, probably frustrated, not knowing what Jesus wants them to do, not knowing why they're here, seeing his old friends, seeing his old boat even there. And the impulsive character that he was. You can see him just jumping up and going, I'm going fishing. There's probably many men that have stated that in their frustration. I'm going fishing. But you see this Peter here, doesn't know what to do.

It's always as if he's just going to return back to what he knows. I don't know what to do. We're going to need food for tomorrow. He said, I'm going fishing.

And we see the other disciples there say, we will go with you. We will follow you. And the endeavour of that fishing trip has the same effect as it did all eight years ago.

- [36 : 39] The Sea of Galilee, when Jesus came to teach them, they caught absolutely nothing. Their nets were absolutely empty. I don't think the Bible actually records Peter catching a fish without Jesus' help.

But when he does catch a fish with Jesus' help, he has an abundant catch. He has a net full of fish. But does that mean then that Jesus wanted him to be a fisherman?

No. We know Jesus didn't want him to be a fisherman. He was called to be a fisher of men. And then you would have known that deep down.

That was what they had been called to do. To be fishers of men. Now, in our own lives, we can experience great blessings, as we were saying.

But it can come all too easily to us to return to the old paths. Return to doing things that we knew that probably aren't good for us.

[37 : 49] Going back to do things that the world draws us to and our eyes see and are attracted to. And we find ourselves being lured again back into these things.

But as the Bible teaches us, they're empty. There's no meaning in it. We can chase after the world and it can leave us empty. What shall profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his soul?

We can have everything in this world. You look at the net at the end of the day. It'll be empty. We can go so wrong when we start doing things the way we think.

When we're being selfish, it's what's happening. We start to reason it out ourselves. I'm going to do it my way. We often, it leaves us empty.

And deep down, we know these things that aren't good for us. Deep down, we know these things that the Christian shouldn't be doing. These habits that maybe we love in the deep secret of our heart.

[39 : 06] But selfishly, we go the wrong way. And a commentator said on this passage that Christ here is not allowing his disciples to prosper while following the wrong course.

Returning to the wrong fishing. But they've been taught to remember the right method. That's our second point. Remember the right method.

We have that between verses 4 and 6. Luke tells us that it's Jesus that's standing on the shore in this passage. Although the disciples don't recognize that it's Jesus.

And he begins this conversation between the two of them. And Jesus says, the unknown Jesus says, children, do you have any fish?

There in verse 5. And that word, it's not children really. It's guys or lads that you would naturally shout out to people if you needed to.

[40 : 17] Guys, you got any fish? That's really what that term children means. Or guys or lads. That's what the commentators say. But it's a wee bit different like that in the Greek even.

It's not, do you have any fish? It's, do you not have any fish? That puts a different slant on it really with the way he's asking. If I was to say, do you have any sweets in your pocket?

You would think, well, I would expect you to have some. But if I said, do you not have any sweets in your pocket? You would know that I thought you didn't have any.

Do you not have any? But even when it speaks here about any fish, it's not even a fish, I believe. It's a word that resembles a small fish.

So it's like a sardine. So I'm asking you, do you have a sweet in your pocket? It's not a softment even. It's like, do you even have a tic-tac kind of thing? Do you not have anything at all?

[41 : 17] That's what Jesus is saying to the disciples. Guys, do you not have any fish? And they're saying, no, I've got nothing.

We've got absolutely nothing. what Jesus is saying is saying getting them to admit their complete failure. To acknowledge as a fisherman that returns to land the embarrassment of having no fish after being out all night.

Not a bean to show for all their effort, all their work, all their labour as they went out to do it their own way. They didn't have anything to return with.

But Jesus then says to them, cast your net on the right side of the boat and you will find some. Again, in the passage in Luke, they're told to put their net back out in circumstances that are not the best for fishing.

A fisherman would have known daytime is not the best time. Near the shore probably wasn't the best place. And even casting on the right side, some of the commentators say that they would have had a steering wall on the right side of the boat.

[42 : 41] So they would have normally been fishing from the left side. And to cast from the right side at this time of day didn't make any sense really. It's a different method.

But the method was as Jesus had taught them all these years ago to listen and obey to him. That Jesus would use these men that would trust him, that would follow him.

this is Jesus' method. Using men that have failed to reveal his works.

Using weak men that have gone wrong to show his glory in this world. And the blessing comes to those who obey.

That's what Malcolm said here. The blessing comes to those who obey. They didn't know what laid ahead of them. Nothing.

[43 : 55] They didn't know what the next steps was in their lives. Jesus had ascended. They were taught again to listen and obey.

The blessing and the success comes by casting the old net in a new way. That's what Joseph Excel, the commentator, says. And what it is is it's saying we can do nothing without Jesus.

we need Jesus in our lives. And when there's willing men, women, boys and girls to listen and obey to this word, to trust in him, he'll do great things with them.

Without Jesus we'll have nothing to show for it. living without Christ will leave you empty. Four things to remember.

If you live without Christ at the end of the day it'll leave you empty. The lesson here was for them to remember that Jesus is still in control.

[45 : 14] They need to listen. They need to hear his voice. Even though so much has changed in the last few days, he's saying to them I'm the same Jesus doing the same works.

I can do the same miracles. You just need to keep listening. You just need to keep obeying my word and the blessings will come.

And when they see this miracle or at least one, when one sees this miracle flags a memory in his mind.

I've seen this before. This man that's shouting out to tell us to put this net down. Seen this before.

They recognize the risen Lord. That's our third point. They remember the right method and they recognize the risen Lord.

[46 : 17] Verse 7 to 14. You know it's good to have someone with you. When you're working, whatever you're doing, it's good to have another set of eyes on the job.

I often find that as an electrician. Having someone with you, even if it was an apprentice, a little experience, even just to them to cast their eye on it and go, how are they doing this? It made all the difference.

And we have a man here, the one that disciples, whom Jesus loved, recognizes Jesus, this man on the shore. He says to Peter, it is the Lord.

What a catch they had. Again, this great catch they had, just like all these years ago, tells us specifically it's got 153 fish in this net.

You probably want to know, well, what does 153 mean? Many people have asked what the 153 mean? The answer is nobody knows. There's so many different things that you can read about, nobody knows.

[47 : 24] But I think it just clarifies just how much fish they had caught. And the net did not tear like it did in Luke chapter 5. Jesus reveals himself to them, not by his voice, not by his sight, but by his works.

John takes up on this. This is Jesus doing the same works that he has done before for us. And even when the disciples come to sit with Jesus, they don't recognize him in the same way.

They're asking between themselves, almost, they're not 100% sure that it's Jesus, but they knew it was, but they didn't ask.

There was something in their mind, like it says there in verse 12, who are you? They didn't ask that. They knew deep down it was Jesus, but there's something obviously different about Jesus here as he makes his appearance to them.

And if anything, I think it's teaching them not to rely on the visual, not to rely on what they can see, but to trust in this work that has been evident in their lives.

[48 : 40] Jesus is still at work. Jesus is still going to be with you. And he helped you. The Lord is going to continue to use them, not to catch fish, but to be fishers of men.

You know, if Jesus would appear to us, it would be all so clear, we think. If we could see him, we desire that we would see him. We desire that we would hear this audible voice that we could hear.

But often he makes himself, reveals himself to us in his work. The work of the spirit, speaking into our hearts.

The work that we see in the lives of other people. The work of his hand in providence, when we don't understand what is going on. It is these things that make us say it is the Lord.

Peter, he does something strange. He puts on his clothes, he jumps into the sea. Completely different reaction from what we had in Luke. when he recognized Jesus, he bowed to his knees and he told Jesus, depart from me.

[49 : 58] But here in this passage, he goes straight to Jesus. In Luke chapter 5, it says, depart from me for I am a sinful man. Was he more sinful here in this passage?

Or let me ask you, did he know his sin in a greater sense in this passage? For sure he did. Because he had denied the Lord. Three times he had denied the Lord.

He knew he had made a huge mistake. He knew his selfishness of his sin ruled his heart and he had denied Jesus. He was a fool.

But what does he do? He doesn't tell Jesus. He doesn't stay away from Jesus. He doesn't tell Jesus to depart from him. When he truly realises his sin, he runs to Jesus, swims to Jesus, whatever.

He gets to Jesus as quick as he can. No obstacle in his way would stop him from coming to Jesus. And it's the same for us today.

[51 : 06] we pray that we would all see Jesus who he is truly as a son of God that loves us so much not that we stay away from him when we see her at heart, when he realises the sins that we have committed, when we wonder if he would love me at all, when we realise who we are and when we realise who Jesus is, we should run straight to him.

Not let any obstacle get in our way. Nothing would stop us from being with Jesus. He used him to catch fish, but when he reached the shore, there was already fish there for him.

He recognised that even the Lord has done great works through me and yet he didn't need me. I went out there to catch fish so I could eat, but Jesus had fish the whole time.

Jesus had food for me the whole time. They recognised truly who Jesus is and then our last point, that he is restored with repeated confession.

The restoration of this pita here we have in this last section verse 15 to the end. And there's lots in this passage but what I want to just say in conclusion is as we draw the time together to a close is that what Jesus says to him there Simon son of Peter in verse 15 do you love me more than these?

[53:16] They ask what are these? What are these things that Jesus is saying to him? As he comes to Jesus as he comes to Jesus and he who knows what conversation they had when they met?

I wonder what Peter said. In many ways it's a private thing. It's a private thing for ourselves to come to Jesus. What sins did he confess to Jesus?

Saying that he was sorry. the sins that we have within our heart that we confess to we don't want anyone else to know what they are. But Jesus says to him do you love me more than these?

Is it these people? Is it these disciples that are with them? Or is it these fish that you have just pulled in? He is saying do you love me more than these things of the world?

That you returned to that you went back to you want to do you want a fishing board? Do you want a fish a net full of fish?

[54:28] This is what you went out for. This is what you went looking for. Is this what you want? Again if we gain the whole world what does it profit us?

Do you love me?! He asks! three times. Do you love love each time a blow and a reminder of his denial. Each time he remembered all the mistakes that he had made.

He knew his sinfulness for sure. Like he probably hadn't had before. But he couldn't walk away from Jesus.

He was standing there on the shore waiting for him to come. he couldn't walk away from him. And he did love him deep down.

And as Jesus says, Jesus is saying to him, you've denied me. You're a sinful man. You've made foolish mistakes.

[55:43] You've so easily gone back to the world. God, maybe even after experiencing so great blessings, after I've left you and you've gone back to the world.

But what does Jesus do? He doesn't pick up on these things really. There's a reminder there of what he's done wrong. But Jesus feeds him.

Jesus gives him food. And Jesus in each time he asks if he loves him, he tells him to feed the sheep, feed the flock, feed the other.

If you love me, you'll go out to all other people so that they would be fed. Even if these other, follow my example, even if these other people do not like you, even if these other people have sinned against you, even if these other people have hurt you, which Peter would have done to Jesus.

Jesus feeds him. Jesus loves him. And he's telling Peter, love the people of the church.

[57:08] love all people, even, with the same love that I love you with. I'm feeding you with the love, my own love, even though you have hurt me, even though I'm not holding these things against you, nor should we be holding things against each other.

Peter, the man that loved Jesus, the man that made many mistakes, the man that knew his own sin, but the man that came to Jesus.

Nothing would stop him coming to Jesus. And this man, in his weaknesses, learned to listen and obey, follow Jesus, trust in him.

And as the Lord promised him to go out to be fishers of men, he did have a great catch at Pentecost, the sermon that he preached there, 3,000 we heard last week.

He trusted Jesus. He was and did become a fisher of men. And this story comes full circle from when he was called all these years ago at Jesus' beginning of his ministry.

[58 : 40] He told him to follow me. And when Jesus leaves him, he's saying to him, I'm still the same Jesus that has called you at the beginning.

I'm not here physically with you, but I'll still do the same works for you. I'll still enable you, and provide for you. But the same command still stands, even though things are so radically different.

Even though you have to cast your net in such a different manner. He's saying to Peter, listen and obey.

Follow me. So whether we are beginning out in a Christian life, he commands us to follow. whether we've been on the road for many years, and we've made many mistakes, he's still saying, follow me.

As we go on, as we go on, he's saying, follow me, follow me, follow me. I pray that will be a blessing to us all.

[59 : 50] we'll conclude by singing in mission praise, 1209, my heart is filled with thankfulness to him who bore my pain, who plumbed the depths of my disgrace, and gave me life again.

So we'll stand to sing these words that conclude with, so I will give my life, my all, to love and follow him. My heart is filled with thankfulness to him who bore my pain, who plumbed the depths of my disgrace, and gave me life again.

who crushed my curse of sinfulness, and clothed me with his light, and hold his awe of righteousness, with power upon my heart.

My heart is filled with thankfulness to him who walks beside, who floods my weaknesses with strength, and causes here to lie, who there in promise is enough for every step I take, thus saving me with arms of love, and guiding me with grace.

My heart is filled with thankfulness to him who reigns upon, whose wisdom is my perfect peace, whose heavy thought is love.

[62 : 08] for every day I have on earth is given by a king, so I will give my light, my all, to love and follow him.

Conclude with prayer. Lord, we pray that we would learn to follow you, that you are a saviour that loves us, and does not keep himself separate from us.

We pray that you would teach us, teach us and convict us in the depths of our heart, that we need you and we must follow you each and every day.

We pray your blessing over this time that we've had to go, and we pray your blessing for the service this evening, and we pray that it would be all for your glory.

In Jesus' name, Amen.