

9.1.22 am

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Date: 09 January 2022

Preacher: Gordon MacLeod

- [0 : 00] A couple of intimations. Service this evening will be at 6pm and will be taken by our session clerk, Duncan McPherson.
- Ladies' Fellowship will meet on Monday at 8pm and all ladies are welcome. And for any more information please contact Lucy Tour. Little Fish's meets on Tuesday morning at 10am till 12 noon here in the church.
- The Road to Recovery meets on Tuesday at 7pm in the church. And continue to pray for the work of Road to Recovery. And encourage any that are struggling with issues of any addictions to come along for a time of confidential support and informal fellowship here in the church.
- The prayer meeting is on Zoom on Wednesday evening at 7.30. Anyone that doesn't have the connection codes for that can speak to me after the service.
- And Friday clubs. Do we have any Friday clubs this Friday? Just Rooted. So Rooted will be on this Friday at 6.30 in the church.
- [1 : 13] And all secondary school pupils are warmly invited along. And the service is next Sunday at 11am and 6pm. Will God willing be taken by our minister.
- We will begin our worship this morning. Singing to God's praise in Psalm 119. Psalm 119 and we will sing from verse 57.
- Down to the end of verse 64. Psalm 119 the 8th part of the psalm. Thou my sure portion art alone. Which I did choose O Lord.
- I have resolved and said that I would keep thy holy word. And we will stand and sing to God's praise. Thank you. Psalm 119 the 8th part of the psalm.
- Forgive thy holy word. With my whole heart.
- [2 : 39] Thy dead entry. Thy face and favor free. According to thy gracious word.
- Be merciful to me. I thought upon my former ways.
- And did my life well tie. And to thy testimonies pure.
- My feet then turned I. I did not sin or linger long.
- As those that sought the Lord. But is still thee thy laws to keep.
- [3 : 55] My self I did prepare. Bands of ill men be robbed.
- Yet I thy presence did not slide. I'll rise at midnight.
- I'll rise at midnight. To praise him for thy judgments right. I am companion to all those who fear and thee obey.
- O Lord thy mercy fills the earth. Teach me thy laws. Teach me thy laws.
- I pray. Let us now bow in prayer.
- [5 : 10] Let us pray. Let us pray. Our gracious and our blessed Lord. Our blessed Lord. We thank you that we can come and sing of your mercies this morning.

And we can thank you that your mercies are indeed new every morning. And great is thy faithfulness to us. We come heavenly father into your presence this morning.

And ask. That our hearts would be stilled before you. That we would know what it is to be still and know that thou art God. That each one of us heavenly father no matter what may be going on in our lives this morning.

Those of us here in the church. Those that listen online. That heavenly father that as we come into your presence. That we would indeed be still before you.

That we would be still and know that you are a God of comfort. That you are a God of refuge. That you are a God of strength.

[6 : 13] That even as we come this morning and our earth may have been moved and shattered. That heavenly father that you have promised. That you will be with us.

You will not forsake us. And even in the wildest storm you teach us do not be afraid. So heavenly father as we come into your presence this morning.

As we come and acknowledge. That you are indeed God and that you are Lord and sovereign over all things. We know there are many heavenly father that come with a heavy heart.

Many within our own community this morning that mourn the loss of a brother. And we do indeed remember the gun family this morning heavenly father. We pray for each one of them.

You know them all by name. And we pray, Heavenly Father, that as they mourn this morning, that they would know your comfort, that they would know your peace, that in these coming days, Heavenly Father, and all there is before them, that they would indeed look to you, that they would look to you for strength, that they would look to you for guidance, that they would look to you and see you as a saviour, that, Heavenly Father, that though they're going through this dark valley at this time, that they would recognise that you are there with them, your rod and your staff, the comfort and guide, and that, Heavenly Father, even as you take us through the dark valleys, you do indeed promise to take us to the green pastures and beside the still waters and restore and refresh our souls.

[8 : 02] So we pray, Heavenly Father, for each member of the family this morning and ask that your hand would be upon them and that you would guide them and that they would know your very presence with them.

We pray, Heavenly Father, for those that are in hospital this morning, those near and dear to us. We pray in particular, Heavenly Father, for Ina, who so often would be with us here if her strength allowed.

And we pray, Heavenly Father, that as she is looked after in the hospital there, that you would be with the doctors, the nurses, that you would give them wisdom, that you would give them insight to be able to care for her there.

And we pray again for the upholding of the family. That, Heavenly Father, that as they lean on you, as they seek you daily in prayer, that they would know, Heavenly Father, your presence with them and your upholding in this time.

We thank you, Heavenly Father, that we can come to you, that you are only a prayer away. And you ask us, Heavenly Father, and you teach us in your word to ask and we will receive, to seek and we shall find, to knock and the door will be opened unto us.

[9 : 20] So as we come, Heavenly Father, and as we bow in prayer this morning, in the quietness of our own hearts, as each one of us come and ask that the burdens that we have would be lifted, that the peace that we seek, that we would find it in you, and that, Heavenly Father, if we have not already heard you knocking on our hearts door, that, Heavenly Father, that we would listen for your knock, that we would open our hearts to you and allow you to come in and sup with us.

That, Heavenly Father, that our lives would be changed. We start a new year. We come out of a year, Heavenly Father, that there has been so much in way of lockdown, that doors have been closed to us, there have been restrictions placed upon us.

Heavenly Father, may we step into a new year, seeking that doors would be opened. But, Heavenly Father, that as we have waited in these past years, these past months, Heavenly Father, waiting to be able to come together as a fellowship of your people, being able to go out with your work.

That, Heavenly Father, that we would indeed be equipped and that we would be ready. That each one of us, Heavenly Father, would look and come to you and ask, use me, Lord.

Use me according to your purpose. Use me according to your will. That, Heavenly Father, that we would indeed go out and answer the Great Commission. To go and make disciples of all nations.

[10 : 56] As we have been taught that we would teach. That, Heavenly Father, not seeking glory for ourselves, but in all things, Heavenly Father, seeking to pass your word to those that are in need.

That, Heavenly Father, hearts would indeed be revived. And that there would indeed be rejoicing in heaven. So, Heavenly Father, as we come, we come and seek your guidance at this time.

And we pray that all that we do on this day, all that we read, all that we speak, would be to your honour and to your glory. And we ask this in Jesus' precious name.

Amen. Boys and girls, would you like to come down? How are you all this morning?

Good. Everybody's good. I'll ask your mums and dads. Sure? Okay. I've got one or two things in my bag.

[12 : 07] I'm sitting at the desk and the phone in the house started ringing. The phone that was beside me wasn't ringing.

I had to run down the corridor and answer the other phone. I've now lost one. Oh, there we go. Michael, have you seen a phone like that before?

Yes, I've got one. You've got one. Can you tell me what that phone says on it? Are you able to read it? No battery. No battery. So what's wrong with it?

It's been used a lot. It's been used a lot. Now if I take the back off it, if I can get the back off it, what do we see?

Batteries. It's got batteries. What's happened? What's happened? What's happened? What's happened? What's wrong? What's wrong? What's wrong? What's happened with it? The batteries are dead.

[13 : 08] The batteries are dead. I'll try plugging it in. What's it saying, Michael?

Can you read it? No battery. No battery? But we see there's a battery in it, don't we? Yeah. It's now connected to the power. What's wrong?

It's charging. It's charging. It's charging. It's charging. Oh, you know this. I charged it for an hour and a half before I came to church this morning. What's wrong?

John Roddy? It needs new batteries. It needs new batteries. Batteries are dead. They're rechargeable batteries. So they should work. But they're dead.

Can you show you, you're ready to get something that you stick in the wall that you put the batteries in and you're in the charger? Well, you do get ones like that. You get a charger that you can put the batteries in. But these ones are supposed to charge while they're in the socket.

[14:09] So I've got the other phone. Oh, it's making a noise. What's that one saying? Nothing. Nothing? It's flashing.

What's it saying? Searching. Searching. So this one's got a battery. I'll take it off there so it stops beeping.

This one's got a battery in it. What's it doing now? It's trying to find us. What's it trying to find? Jono. Connection.

It's trying to find the base station for the phone. So that one didn't have a heart in it. The battery was dead. This one's got a heart in it because the battery's doing something.

And what's it? Searching. It's searching for a signal. It's searching for a connection. What's that?

[15:05] I don't know. Do you have Bluetooth here? We don't have Bluetooth in here. No, so it doesn't work. No, so it doesn't work. The first battery, the first phone, it had a battery in it, but the battery was dead.

So we would need to change the battery. But when we had found another phone that had a battery in it and the battery was working, what did we find? The phone was searching.

How many of you have got a heart? The doctor's looking to see if you're all putting your hand up. Everybody's got a heart.

And what are you searching for? Because we're all searching for something, aren't we? Jesus. Yeah. We're searching for Jesus. And what does Jesus tell us?

Look unto me and be ye saved. Okay? It's all very well having a heart, but if our heart isn't working, we need our heart to be changed.

[16:08] But even when we change our heart, we're still searching for something. And are we searching for the right things? Michael's telling us that we need to search for Jesus, and you all agree with that.

But what are the things that we can sometimes search for and look for that are wrong? Money. Money? Is that what you were going to say?

Sin? Yeah. Anything that takes us away from God is sin. So we need to make sure that one, our heart is open, and that we are searching for Jesus each and every day.

Because if not, what do I need to do with this? Get new batteries. Or, if the batteries aren't going to work, even though I've charged it and charged it, I just...

It's binned. It's of no use. You know what I did notice this morning? In between taking the phone off, it said that it was searching.

[17:19] When I came down here, first of all, I didn't think it was going to work for me and come up with searching. Because you know what the phone showed? Unavailable. And what happens when you're unavailable?

It won't work. It won't work. You can't get through. You're caught up doing something else. I'm busy. But we should always be searching for God.

Not searching for things that take us away from God. Not being caught up in things that take us away from God and say that we're unavailable. That's not for me. We need to be searching for God each and every day.

And you're going to go through Sunday school and you're going to learn some more. But before you do so, we're going to sing a song. And the song says, As the deer pants for the water, so my soul longs after you.

And that's how we should be looking for Jesus each and every day. We should be thirsting and searching for Jesus that he will fill us. What's it like when you're really thirsty?

[18 : 26] You're desperate for water. Aren't you? And it's so refreshing when you get that water. Isn't it? Yeah? You always want it.

And you love the taste of it. And that's how we should be searching for Jesus. That only he will satisfy us. And only he will fill that void that is in our lives.

So as you grow, remember to focus on searching for Jesus. Because you'll always be looking for something. It might be that you're looking for the next Lego set that you want.

It might be a new doll that you want. It might be a puppy. There's always something that you're looking for. But the real thing that you have to look for is to look for Jesus. And maintain that connection with Jesus all the time.

Okay? We'll say a word of prayer and then we'll sing. Dear Heavenly Father, we thank you that we can come as little children before you. And we can come and we can acknowledge that you are our Lord and that you are our Saviour.

[19 : 29] And we pray this morning that as the young ones here go off to Sunday school that each one of us would remember to pray for them. That Heavenly Father, that as they grow, that they would grow in your love, that they would grow in your grace.

That they would grow to know you as their Lord and as their Saviour. That they would maintain that connection with you, Heavenly Father, all through their lives. seeking you, knowing that you are the only one that can satisfy.

And we ask all this in Jesus' precious name. Amen. Okay, we're going to sing Mission Praise number 37. As the deer pants for the water, so my soul longs after you.

You alone are my heart's desire and I long to worship you. We'll stand to sing. at the deer pants for the water, so my soul longs after you.

You alone are my heart's desire and I long to worship you. You alone are my strength, my shield.

[20 : 59] To you alone may my spirit yield. You alone are my heart's desire and I long to worship you.

I want you more than gold or silver, only you can satisfy.

You alone are the real joy giver and the apple of my eye.

You alone are my strength, my shield. To you alone may my spirit yield.

You alone are my heart's desire and I long to worship you. You're my friend and you're my brother even though you are a king.

[22 : 10] I love you I love you more than any other so much more than anything.

You alone are my strength, my shield. To you alone may my spirit yield.

you alone are my heart's desire and I long to worship you. As the kids go off to Sunday school you can maybe look up Colossians chapter 3 Colossians chapter 3 and you can maybe also put a finger in Luke chapter 5 Colossians chapter 3 and we'll read the first 17 verses.

Since then you have been raised with Christ. Set your hearts and things above where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.

Set your minds and things above not on earthly things for you died and your life is now hidden with Christ and God. When Christ who is your life appears then you also will appear with him in glory.

[23 : 54] Put to death therefore whatever belongs to your earthly nature sexual immorality impurity lust evil desires and greed which is idolatry.

Because of these the wrath of God is coming. You used to walk in these ways in the life you once lived but now you must also rid yourself of all such things as these anger rage malice slander and filthy language from your lips.

Do not lie to each other since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self which is being renewed in knowledge and the image of its creator.

Here there is no Gentile or Jew circumcised or uncircumcised barbarian Scythian slave or free but Christ is all and is in all.

Therefore as God's chosen people holy and dearly loved clothe yourselves with compassion kindness humility gentleness and patience bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone forgive as the Lord forgave you and over all these virtues put on love which binds them all together in perfect unity let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts since as members of one body you were called to peace and be thankful let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms hymns and songs from the spirit singing to God with gratitude in your hearts and whatever you do whether in word or deed do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus giving thanks to God the Father through him and then if we turn to Luke chapter 5

[25 : 52] Luke chapter 5 and we'll read verses 1 down to verse 11 one day as Jesus was standing by the lake of Gennesaret the people were crowding around him and listening to the word of God he saw at the water's edge two boats left there by the fishermen who were washing their nets he got into one of the boats the one belonging to Simon and asked him to put out a little from shore then he sat down and taught the people from the boat when he had finished speaking he said to Simon put out into deep water and let down the nets for a catch Simon answered Master we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything but because you say so I will let down the nets when they had done so they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break so they signalled their partners in the other boat to come and help them and they came and filled both boats so full that they began to sink when Simon Peter saw this he fell at Jesus knees and said go away from me

Lord for I am a sinful man for he and his companions were astonished at the catch of the fish they had taken and so were James and John the sons of Zebedee Simon's partners then Jesus said to Simon don't be afraid from now on you will fish for people so they pulled their boats up on the shore left everything and followed him Amen and may God add his blessing to the reading of his own holy word again turn to God in prayer dear Heavenly Father we thank you for your word that you have given to us as the only rule to direct us on how we may glorify and enjoy you forever and as we read your word Heavenly Father may we indeed meditate upon it may we indeed Heavenly Father come and seek to learn what you are seeking to teach us from your word as we have already prayed Heavenly Father that we would be still and know that you are God that your word has to teach us

Heavenly Father so much about how we should live our lives for you and even as we read here Heavenly Father that at times when we may be afraid that you say to us do not be afraid so we pray Heavenly Father that as we come and as we seek to dwell in your word that you would guide us as we have already prayed Heavenly Father for those that mourn for those that are in need we come and we thank you Heavenly Father for being able to gather together this morning and that you have placed it upon our hearts Heavenly Father either to come to the church or to tune in this morning to hear your word we thank you again that we have the technology available to be able to connect with one another to be able to hear your word to be able to sing your praise to encourage one another to uphold one another and we pray

Heavenly Father that we would indeed know your blessing in coming together this morning we pray again for our minister David we thank you for all that you have blessed us with through the preaching of the word here and we pray Heavenly Father after a week of rest as he returns this week that Heavenly Father that you would indeed have your hands stayed upon him that you would be with him in the study as he searches your word as he breaks it down Heavenly Father as he preaches it first to himself and then to us here as a congregation we pray Heavenly Father that you would bless him in that and that in blessing him Heavenly Father that that may indeed be a blessing to each one of us here we pray Heavenly Father for our time together may it indeed Heavenly Father be a time that each one of us draws closer to you that Heavenly

Father that we would indeed know what it is to draw close to you to walk close with you and if our hearts are unavailable to you this day Heavenly Father we pray that you would break down the walls that are there that Heavenly Father that we would indeed seek that true connection with you that it would not just be a passing connection that is intermittent here for a moment and then gone but Heavenly Father that it would be a true fixed connection that we would be dependent on you each and every day and as we spoke with the children Heavenly Father that they would indeed grow to know and to love you and that they would search for you each and every day and as we sang Heavenly Father that you alone would be our heart's desire and Heavenly Father the things of this world would grow pained in the light of your glory and grace so as we come and as we sing your praise again Heavenly

[31 : 31] Father may we indeed know what it is to lift our hearts unto you and that Heavenly Father as we hear your word again as we break it down that our ears would be open that our hearts would be ready and receptive to hear and absorb your word in Jesus precious name Amen We'll sing again to God's praise from Psalm 40 we'll sing this time in Gaelic Psalm 40 and we'll sing from verse 16 verses 16 and 17 in Gaelic In thee let all be glad and joy who seeking thee abide who thy salvation love say still the Lord be magnified and remain seated as we sing I MUSIC

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Now, laying my cards on the table right at the start. I was born and brought up in Glasgow. I'm not a fisherman. I didn't fish. But we're going to speak about fishermen this morning and what we learn. And I know there are fishermen in the congregation. There are probably some fishermen reading online.

[37 : 00] We learn something from the fishermen that we have before us here in the passage. We're first introduced to the fishermen, not by name, but by the activity they're undertaking. We're told in verse 2 that they were washing their nets. We learn further on in verse 5 that they'd fished all night and they'd caught nothing.

So despite having caught nothing, they still went through the process of preparing their nets for their next fishing. And that takes us to our first point this morning.

They prepared their next time. They prepared their next time. They had fished all night. They'd caught nothing. But when they arrived back at shore, they did what needed to be done. They needed to wash their nets and they needed to mend them.

Even though they'd been unsuccessful in their fishing. Even though they'd been unsuccessful in their fishing. Or even had they been successful in their fishing. They would have still done the same thing. They would have washed the nets. The type of nets that they had in Jesus' day. They would have been heavy nets. They would have made of flax or linen.

And when they were thrown over the side of the boat. They would have gone to the bottom of the lake. And they would have been dragged along between the boats. And as they were dragged along, they would have picked up silt from the bottom of the lake.

[38 : 35] And any weeds or reeds that may have been growing. They would have had to take the nets in and wash them. If they didn't wash them, the silt would be caked in the nets.

They'd become heavy and awkward to use. The reeds that were caught in the net would then be visible in the water. And might put the fish off going into the net. So they had to fish.

They had to clean their nets. The other thing that we learn is that they fished at night. They fished at night so that the nets wouldn't be so visible when they were hanging in the water.

If the sun was high, the sun shining through the water into the nets would make them visible. That's why nowadays we have monofilament nets and various different thin nets for fishing.

But in those days, they didn't have that type of technology available to them. So they were heavy flax and linen nets. She said failing to clean them would have made them awkward to use.

[39 : 44] During the process of washing the nets, they would have also mended any holes that appeared in the nets. Again, failure to mend the nets.

The holes that were there would have been disastrous for them in terms of fishing. The fish would have swum out through the holes in the net. The nets, the fish was, the catch was big.

The nets may have torn further. And they would have been rendered useless. The fishermen wanted to make sure that they were ready for their next fishing trip.

Their heads may have been down. They hadn't caught anything all night. But there was a job that had to be done. No matter how mundane or unnecessary it may have felt, they did it.

What do we learn from this? Well, if we jump ahead in the story, we read in verse 10 that Jesus says, From now on, you will fish for people.

[40 : 49] We know, those of us that are Christians here this morning, that we've been given a great commission, as given in Matthew 28, to go and to make disciples.

And then again in Acts chapter 1 and verse 8, to be witnesses of Jesus. When Jesus said, from now on you will fish for people, he wasn't saying that they were going to go out with physical nets to catch people.

What they were going to do was, they were going to be living witnesses for Jesus. And their lives had to reflect Jesus.

Are your nets needing washed and mended? The last two years have been difficult for everybody.

Christian, non-Christian. The last two years have been very, very difficult. Going through a pandemic. Restrictions. Lockdown. Restrictions changing.

[41 : 53] What do I do? What do I not do? Can I do this? Can I not do this? I can't go here. I can't go there. We've been restricted in coming to church. We've been restricted in being able to go to various different places.

We're starting a new year. Yes, some of these restrictions are still in place. But in being prepared, going out into a new year, I ask you the question, are your nets needing mended?

Are your nets needing washed? What do I mean? Well, as the fishermen in Jesus' day dragged their nets in the lake, it wouldn't have just been fish that they picked up.

I spoke earlier on of the silt that they would have picked up, the reeds that maybe got caught up in the net, and they needed to be washed daily.

They caught nothing, but they still washed their nets and mended them for the next day. We operate in a world, or we live in a world, and no matter how much we think that we aren't part of the world, we're still stained by it.

[43 : 10] If we look back at what we read in Colossians chapter 3, Since then you have been raised with Christ. Set your heart on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

Set your mind on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

We think back to the illustration that we had with the kids, with the phones. We might be totally disconnected, because our heart is closed to God.

We might be unavailable, because we're so caught up in what's happening in our own lives, in somebody else's life, or because we choose not to seek God.

Or, we could be in the third position, and that would be my prayer for each and every one of you, that you would be searching for God each and every day. And in searching for God, that we would daily set our heart on things above, not on the things of this earth.

[44 : 28] Because Paul goes on, put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature, sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires, and greed, which is idolatry.

Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. But now you must also rid yourself of such things as these, anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips.

Do not lie to each other since you have taken off your old self with its practices, and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its creator.

Now you might sit there this morning and say, that doesn't affect me. I don't do these things. Well, Jesus has taught us that it's not just doing them, it's even thinking about them that stains our life.

And as I said, the fishermen had fished at night, and we knew why that was that their nets wouldn't be visible to the fish. We've been called out of darkness into light.

[45 : 43] Do our nets need washed? Are they stained? Are there holes in our net that other people see that don't impact us directly, but they do directly impact our witness for Christ?

Do your nets need washed? Are they prepared? if we fail to wash ourselves of the sins and stains of this world, whether we think it or not that it's visible to other people?

It is. And the sad thing is that people judge on what our witness is. They don't look to Christ, they look to Christ's witnesses. Are our nets prepared that when God calls on us to witness that we are ready?

And Paul goes on as we read in Colossians, Therefore as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.

Bear with each other and forgive one another. If any of you have a grievance against someone, forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over these virtues put on love which binds them all together in perfect unity.

[47 : 06] Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns and songs from the Spirit singing to God with gratitude in your hearts.

And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus. We are called to be witnesses. Are we coming each and every day before Jesus, searching for him, seeking to draw closer to him, asking for cleansing of our sins?

It's a quote that's quite often given. It's attributed to a man, Paul Gilbert. You're writing a gospel, a chapter each day, by deeds that you do, by words that you say.

Men, read what you write, whether faithless or true. Say, what is the gospel according to you? You're a Christian here today.

[48 : 30] What gospel are you writing for others round about to see? We don't often have to speak to share God's word.

People should be able to see it in the way that we live our lives. Are we preparing our nets to be ready to be used? Which brings us to our second point.

The fishermen, their nets were ready for use. We see in verses four and five of Luke, when Jesus had finished speaking, he said to Simon, put out into deep water and let down the nets for a catch.

And Simon answered, Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. but because you say so, I will let down the nets. Let's just focus for a very short time on that exchange between Jesus and Simon.

Jesus says to Simon, put out into deep water and let down the nets for a catch. They were to leave the comfort of the shore. They were to go into deep water and they were to let down your nets.

[49 : 47] Is God calling any of you here this morning to leave the comfort of what you have at the shore to go out into deep water and put down your nets for a catch?

Have you prepared your nets for that? The fishermen had. We can go back again to Matthew 28 and 19, therefore go and make disciples of all nations.

Those that are Christians, that is a commission that has been given to each one of us. You may tire of me saying it, but as someone who's got a role in discipleship, each one of us needs to recognise that that is the call on the lives of each one of us as Christians and are we ready for that?

Simon's response, how many of us stop at the end of the first sentence? Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything.

Imagine that had been Simon's response there. We've fished all night, we've caught nothing, we're not going back out. How many of us make excuses?

[51 : 06] We may not say it in the same way as Simon. We might be intent to say I've tried but it didn't work. I'm too old, I'm too young. No one's listening. Why are you asking me?

That wasn't Simon's final response. Simon recognised who was asking him and he obeyed. But because you ask, we will go.

How could he say that he would go? Because his nets had been prepared and they were ready. And what do we see in terms of Simon going?

He received far greater than he could have ever expected. We read that he received a great blessing. But that blessing wasn't only for Simon, was it?

He called his partners to come and help him. The boats were overflowing. Not only did Simon and those in the boat with him, but those in his partner's boat, James and John, also received of that blessing.

[52 : 20] Those that waited on the shore saw the great catch and received of that blessing. Are we ready? Are we prepared to use what God has given us?

Some of us might say, I don't have much. They've got far more than me. They're better at it than I am. God has given each and every one of us talents.

Let's not bury them in the sand. Let's use them for his honour and for his glory. So they prepared their nets and when required, their nets were ready for use.

Final point. It's probably the question I've been asking throughout. Are you preparing your nets and are you ready? Or are you prepared and ready?

Simon received a great haul of fish. What did we learn from Simon about that?

[53 : 30] What did Simon answer and what did he say to Jesus? Well, we read that when Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus' knees and said, go away from me, Lord.

I am a sinful man. He had seen what Jesus could do and in seeing what Jesus could do, he recognised that Jesus wasn't an ordinary man, that Jesus was sent of God and in that moment, Peter couldn't measure up and asked that Jesus go away from him.

He recognised his sin. Are you recognising your sin the more you search for Jesus? Are you pushing Jesus away or are you going to say, as Simon said later, Lord, to whom else can we go?

You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God. You are here this morning and you're running away from God, pushing him away because you see that you don't measure up.

What does Jesus say in answer to that? Do not be afraid. I will make you fishers of men. What is it you're afraid of this morning?

[55 : 04] I'm looking through and preparing for this. There's 72 different times in the Bible. The Old Testament, the New Testament, there's maybe other variations depending on what version of the Bible you use.

But on 72 occasions, God speaks to his people or speaks to an individual and says, do not be afraid. He said to Abraham in Genesis 15, do not be afraid, I am your shield, your very great reward.

God when Isaac could find nowhere to stay, because every time he settled somewhere, he was blessed so much by God, others chased him. And God said to him, do not be afraid for I am with you.

I will bless you and will increase the number of your descendants. When Jacob was going down to Egypt to see Joseph, again, God said, do not be afraid to go down to Egypt.

For I will make you into a great nation there. When Joshua took over the reigns of the children of Israel, God said, have I not commanded you, be strong and courageous?

[56 : 19] Do not be afraid, do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go. Do not be afraid.

You may recognize your sin, you may see your sin, but come to Jesus because he has promised that while you may be afraid of what is ahead, that you cannot be afraid if you are in him because he will be with you, he will walk with you.

what is the other thing that we learn just in closing from the disciples. Jesus said to them, do not be afraid, I will make you fishers of men.

What did they then do? In verse 11, it tells us, so they pulled their boats up on the shore, left everything and followed him.

they took their boats right out of the water, pulled it right up on the shore and left everything and followed Jesus. What's the significance of the boats been taken up out of the water?

[57 : 37] It removed any distraction from the fishermen. Do you speak to any fishermen or anyone that has a boat? If the weather's changing, if you get a yellow warning, an amber warning or a red warning, for bad weather, your first thought is the boat.

Is it secure? Do I need to go down and tether it? Is it anchored properly? It becomes a distraction. If the boat's still in the water, when the going gets tough, it's easy to go back to the boat, return to the fishing.

There's no effort involved in it. The boat's there. We just jump in and we go. If the boat is out of the water, there's a bit more thought required, a bit more planning on how to get it back in.

But the other thing is, when it's out of the water, we know it's safe. the distraction isn't there. What are you holding on to and not prepared to give up to see God's blessing?

What are you trying to juggle thinking, this will be okay, I can manage this? Because it teaches us elsewhere in scripture that you cannot serve two masters.

[58 : 55] You will love one and hate the other. If we truly want to serve God, we have to do what the disciples did, get rid of the distraction and follow him.

And we can read these 12 men that gave up everything to follow Jesus, the blessing that even now we continue to receive because of their faithfulness.

If you're running away because you've seen your sin, come to Jesus. Do not be afraid. If you're holding back and something's tethering you to this life, give it up.

Don't hold on to it. Don't try and juggle thinking, oh, I can do my work for God and I can still do this. Be fully dependent on God. Don't hold back.

Let us pray. Amen. Amen. Amen. Dear Heavenly Father, we recognise that we may not all be fishing, but we can learn, Heavenly Father, from your word, of the need for each one of us to come before you daily and to ask for cleansing, to ask for our hearts to be mended, to ask for sin to be taken from our lives.

[60 : 25] that, Heavenly Father, as we come and as we obey you, we know that we will receive blessing. It may not be material blessing, but, Heavenly Father, the joy of knowing and walking with you, of seeing sinners saved, of seeing your word shared, of seeing, Heavenly Father, those that once walked in darkness coming into light and life with you.

we know that there is rejoicing and having over that and we pray, Heavenly Father, that we would know that blessing, that rejoicing here, that each one of us, Heavenly Father, would search our hearts this morning, that we would not run from you, but that we would come to you, that we would not seek, Heavenly Father, to chase you away, that we would recognise that we cannot come to any other for you have the words of eternal life, and that Heavenly Father, that we would cast aside the distractions of this world, and that we would give our all to you, and, Heavenly Father, that we would be prepared to go out into deep waters, and put down our nets and receive a catch for you, not for our glory, but, Heavenly Father, for yours, and to see the work of your kingdom extended.

In Jesus' precious name, Amen. And we close in singing, mission praise 760, when we walk with the Lord, let us trust and obey, and we'll stand to sing.

Amen. trust and obey, trust and obey, and we'll do it.

He abides with us still, and with all who will trust and obey, trust and obey, for there's no other way, to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.

[63 : 03] Not a shadow can rise, not a cloud in the skies, but a smile quickly drives it away, obey, not a doubt, nor a fear, not a sigh, nor a tear, can abide while we trust and obey, trust and obey, for there's no other way, to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey, not a burden we bear, not a sorrow we share, but our toil he doth richly repay, not a grief, nor a loss, not a frown, nor a cross, but is blessed if we trust and obey, trust and obey, for there's no other way, to be happy in

Jesus, but to trust and obey, but we never can prove the delights of his love, until all on the altar we lay, for the favour he shows, and the joy he bestows, are for them who will trust and obey, trust and obey, for there's no other way, to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey, and in fellowship sweet, we will sit at his feet, or we walk by his side in the way, what he says we will do, where he says we will go, never fear, only trust and obey, trust and obey, for there's no other way, to be happy in

Jesus, but to trust and obey. To him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy to the only God our Saviour, be glory, majesty, power and authority, to Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore.

Amen.