

***Main text: Luke 5:1-11***

***Setting the context: Psalm 138***

Sermon Title: "Finding Faith in the Midst of Failure"

"This sermon is about experiencing the power of the Gospel through Jesus Christ, our Lord".

***The Calling of the First Disciples***

**5** One day as Jesus was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret,<sup>a</sup> with the people crowding around him and listening to the word of God,<sup>2</sup> he saw at the water's edge two boats, left there by the fishermen, who were washing their nets.<sup>3</sup> 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.

<sup>4</sup> When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into deep water, and let down<sup>b</sup> the nets for a catch."

<sup>5</sup> 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."

<sup>6</sup> When they had done so, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break.<sup>7</sup> So they signaled 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.

<sup>8</sup> When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus' knees and said, "Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!"<sup>9</sup> For he and all his companions were astonished at the catch of fish they had taken,<sup>10</sup> and so were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, Simon's partners.

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<sup>a</sup> That is, Sea of Galilee

<sup>b</sup> The Greek verb is plural.

Then Jesus said to Simon, "Don't be afraid; from now on you will catch men." <sup>11</sup> So they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed him.

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## What is the Gospel?

**gospel, Gospels**, the English translation of the Greek *euangelion*, which means 'good news.' In the NT it refers to the good news preached by Jesus that the Kingdom of God is at hand (Mark 1:15) and the good news of what God has done on behalf of humanity in Jesus (Rom. 1:3-5). The background for the noun is found in the OT where the verbal form 'to bring good news' or 'to announce good news' appears rather than the noun. So in Isa. 40:9; 41:27; 52:7; and 61:1 the messenger announces the good news of Israel's redemption from Exile. In Luke 4:18-19 Jesus takes up the words of Isa. 61:1-2 to announce his glad tidings. And in Matt. 11:5 and Luke 7:22 Jesus' response to the messengers of John, that the poor have the good news preached to them, is a way of affirming his messiahship. In addition to this background the NT also reflects Hellenistic usage. The Roman proconsul Paulus Fabius Maximus, for example, honored Caesar Augustus by reckoning Caesar's birthday as the beginning of the new year. In doing so, he called Caesar's birthday 'good news' (*euangelion*) for the whole world.

Although the word 'gospel' is commonly associated with the writings of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, it is Paul who uses the noun more than any other writer of the NT. On several occasions he employs it without further qualification (Rom. 10:16; 11:28; 1 Cor. 4:15; 9:14, 18), thereby showing that his audience readily understood its content. At other times he offers a description of the gospel as 'the gospel of God' (Rom. 1:1; 15:16; 2 Cor. 11:7), 'the gospel of Christ' (Rom. 15:19; 1 Cor. 9:12; 2 Cor. 2:12; 9:13; 10:14; Phil. 1:27; 1 Thess. 3:2), and 'the gospel of his Son' (Rom. 1:9). The first phrase usually refers to the origin of the gospel, which is in God, while the last two point to the content of the gospel, which is Jesus Christ. In Rom. 1:1-6 and 1 Cor. 15:1-8 Paul gives his most detailed descriptions of the gospel. It comes from God. It was promised through the prophets. Its content is Jesus, a

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<sup>1</sup> *The Holy Bible : New International Version*. electronic ed. Grand Rapids : Zondervan, 1996, c1984, S. Lk 5:1-11

NT New Testament

OT Old Testament

descendant of David according to the flesh, designated Son of God by the resurrection. Paul bears witness to this resurrection.

<sup>2</sup>

### Questions for reflection and discussion:

1. Why did the crowds press upon Jesus? Give two reasons.....
2. What did use as a pulpit for teaching? Why was that unique?
3. What instructions did Jesus give Simon Peter?
4. What did Jesus mean when he said "launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch?"

Digging Deeper: Are you resisting launching out into the deep? What area of your spiritual life needs more development or more attention?

### The major lesson we must learn:

We can not be overwhelmed by failure or a first attempt which does not bear fruit. We must always be willing to yield to the voice of the Holy Spirit, and we must attempt to serve and please God in all situations, remembering the "Good News"...

Personal Prayer Focus: Ask God to give you the strength to try again even when you experience failure, remembering that all things are possible through Christ.

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<sup>2</sup>Achtemeier, Paul J. ; Harper & Row, Publishers ; Society of Biblical Literature: *Harper's Bible Dictionary*. 1st ed. San Francisco : Harper & Row, 1985, S. 354