

## The Fifth Sunday after Trinity

Hymns: 239, 380, 377, 50

The INTROIT

(Ps.27:7,9,1)

*P: Hear, O Lord, when I cry with my voice;*

**C: Thou hast been my Help.**

*P: Leave me not, neither forsake me;*

**C: O God of my salvation.**

*P: The Lord is my Light and my Salvation;*

**C: whom shall I fear?**

The COLLECT

O God, who has prepared for them that love Thee such good things as pass man's understanding, pour into our hearts such love toward Thee that we, loving Thee above all things, may obtain Thy promises, which exceed all that we can desire; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end.

The FIRST LESSON

**Jeremiah 16:14-21 (NKJV)**

“Therefore behold, the days are coming,” says the LORD, “that it shall no more be said, ‘The LORD lives who brought up the children of Israel from the land of Egypt,’ but, ‘The LORD lives who brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north and from all the lands where He had driven them.’ For I will bring them back into their land which I gave to their fathers.”

“Behold, I will send for many fishermen,” says the LORD, “and they shall fish them; and afterward I will send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain and every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks. For My eyes are on all their ways; they are not hidden from My face, nor is their iniquity hidden from My eyes. And first I will repay double for their iniquity and their sin, because they have defiled My land; they have filled My inheritance with the carcasses of their detestable and abominable idols.”

“O LORD, my strength and my fortress, My refuge in the day of affliction, The Gentiles shall come to You From the ends of the earth and say, Surely our fathers have inherited lies, Worthlessness and unprofitable things. Will a man make gods for himself, Which are not gods? Therefore behold, I will this once cause them to know, I will cause them to know My hand and My might; And they shall know that My name is the LORD.”

The GRADUAL

(Ps.84:9,8; 21:1)

*P: Behold, O God, our Shield:*

**C: and look upon Thy servants.**

*P: O Lord God of hosts:*

**C: hear our prayer. Hallelujah! Hallelujah!**

*P: The king shall joy in Thy strength:*

**C: and in Thy salvation, how greatly shall he rejoice! Hallelujah!**

## The EPISTLE

1 Peter 3:8-15 (NKJV)

Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous; not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing.

For “He who would love life And see good days, Let him refrain his tongue from evil, And his lips from speaking deceit. Let him turn away from evil and do good; Let him seek peace and pursue it. For the eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, And His ears are open to their prayers; But the face of the LORD is against those who do evil.”

And who is he who will harm you if you become followers of what is good? But even if you should suffer for righteousness’ sake, you are blessed. And do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled. But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear.”

The SENTENCE for the Season

(Ps. 119:124)

*P: Hallelujah! O Lord, deal with Thy servant according unto Thy mercy and teach me Thy statutes. I am Thy servant, give me understanding:*

**C: that I may know Thy testimonies. Hallelujah!**

## The HOLY GOSPEL

St. Luke 5:1-11 (NKJV)

So it was, as the multitude pressed about Him to hear the word of God, that He stood by the Lake of Gennesaret, and saw two boats standing by the lake; but the fishermen had gone from them and were washing their nets. 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.

When He had stopped speaking, He said to Simon, “Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch.”

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.”

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

When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus’ knees, saying, “Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!” For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish which they had taken; 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.”

So when they had brought their boats to land, they forsook all and followed Him.

## Luke 5:1-11 — “Depart from Me, for I Am a Sinful Man, O LORD”

### INTRODUCTION

- I. DEPART FROM ME, FOR I AM A SINFUL MAN, O LORD
- II. DO NOT BE AFRAID. FROM NOW ON YOU WILL CATCH MEN.
- III. THEY FORSOOK ALL AND FOLLOWED HIM

### CONCLUSION

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Luke 5:1-11 — “Depart from Me, for I Am a Sinful Man, O LORD”

Grace, mercy, and peace to you all from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.  
Amen.

The sermon text is the Gospel reading appointed for the Fifth Sunday after Trinity, Luke 5:1-11:

**So it was, as the multitude pressed about Him to hear the word of God, that He stood by the Lake of Gennesaret, and saw two boats standing by the lake; but the fishermen had gone from them and were washing their nets. 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.**

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**And Jesus said to Simon, “Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch men.”**

**So when they had brought their boats to land, they forsook all and followed Him.**

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

### INTRODUCTION

This is quite an exceptional text on evangelism. It gives the true definition of evangelism. It also gives the true definition of discipleship. Discipleship and evangelism are really quite the opposite of what we sinful humans imagine. Let’s listen to this accounting by St. Luke and learn the meaning that is recorded for us.

#### I. DEPART FROM ME, FOR I AM A SINFUL MAN, O LORD

Luke records for us a startling revelation about the Lord Jesus. When we recognize Him for who He really is, His presence shows us our sinfulness. When we realize that Jesus truly is the LORD God Almighty, perfect and holy in every way, His holiness convicts us of our sin. His omnipotence shows us our corrupt and dead condition and our helpless and frail nature. When

we truly recognize the LORD Jesus when He comes to us, we find that we must respond as Simon Peter and say, **“Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!”**

This is true not on account of who the LORD is nor on account of how He presents Himself to us, but because of who we are and what His presence reveals about us. We are entirely sinful according to our inheritance according to the flesh. We are rotten and stinking corpses, dead in our sinfulness. We are without any hope of drawing near unto the LORD of Life and Love. We are without anything of value. We are worthy by our own identities and our own works and lives only of being abandoned and cast away.

The presence of Jesus reveals this as inescapably true.

Thus, like the publican in chapter 18, we come into the holy presence of the LORD confessing and pleading, **“God, be merciful to me, a sinner.”**

Yes, even as those who have been baptized into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, still we approach God as those who desperately need to confess our sinfulness and to beg God to be merciful unto us. Our daily lives leave us with no choice. We cannot claim to be holy by our own actions. We dare not pretend to be acceptable to enter into God’s presence by our own thoughts, words, or deeds.

Simon and the others had been out all night fishing. Throughout the long hours of the darkness they cast out their nets and dragged them in without taking in even a single fish. They used all of their knowledge that they had acquired from their ancestors and from their own experience. They went to all of the areas where the fish were known to be plentiful. Yet for their knowledge and skill and effort they received nothing. Their reward for their long hours of toil was only dirty nets that needed to be washed.

Jesus came to Simon and got into his boat and asked him to go out into the water a little way so that Jesus could preach to the multitudes. The multitudes and the fishermen all heard the Word. But then Jesus added a miracle. He filled the fishermen’s nets with fish. Where no fish were to be found in the hours when the fish would be too deep for the nets to reach, Jesus filled the nets with fish.

It is interesting to note that in this account Luke only used the name of Simon’s discipleship, that is, Peter, in connection with his confession. Simon is used in every other part of this account. But when the full recognition of the presence of Jesus is realized, Luke refers to Simon Peter and records Simon Peter as confessing, **“Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!”**

This is what true evangelism effects in the person who hears it. True evangelism brings the hearer to recognize that he dare not approach God in that God’s presence is condemning. **“Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!”** In other words, true evangelism strips us of our delusions of goodness and leads us to despair of our own righteousness, so that we beg God to withdraw from us the condemnation of His holiness.

II. DO NOT BE AFRAID. FROM NOW ON YOU WILL CATCH MEN.

**And Jesus said to Simon, “Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch men.”**

This is the completion of true evangelism. What God's holiness teaches the sinner is countered by God's mercy. God's holiness teaches the sinner that he stands condemned. But God is not only holy but He is also merciful. While God is absolutely holy, His attitude toward us is merciful compassion. His will is not that we should be driven from His holiness, but that we should be converted to be like Him. His desire is that rather than being driven from His holiness that we should receive His holiness.

This is something that we cannot ever do for ourselves. We cannot chose it. We cannot commit ourselves to it. We cannot reach out and grab it. We can only receive it as God gives it.

Did you notice that after Simon Peter confesses his sinfulness that Jesus gives the words of comfort to Simon? Luke only refers to the converted man of repentance as Simon Peter. The terrified and condemned Simon is given the Word of Peace. Simon is commanded to be not afraid. And what is the basis of this command to be unafraid? The basis is that Jesus is converting Simon from one who catches fish to one who catches men.

This conversion is a very great miracle. First is the fact that this is a conversion worked by God. This is not a choice that is made by Simon. Jesus does not command Simon to decide to follow Him nor to choose to change from a catcher of fish to a catcher of men. Jesus commands that the fear no longer be in control over Peter and then Jesus declares what will be. **“From the now, men you will be catching alive.”**

### III. THEY FORSOOK ALL AND FOLLOWED HIM

With these words Jesus converted not only Simon, but the other fishermen as well. Luke records, **“So when they had brought their boats to land, they forsook all and followed Him.”**

What did they do with the large catch of fish? They forsook all and followed Jesus. They left their boats and their nets and their catch of fish and followed Jesus.

Why? Why did they do this? They had no choice. They had been converted by Jesus. They had been changed from fishermen to fishers of men. They had been converted to be disciples or followers of Jesus. They had been converted to be like the LORD and so like the LORD they were filled with the mercy and grace of God, filled with a holy desire to share the Gospel with the world so that by means of this great net that reaches down from heaven, many souls would be caught and dragged into the kingdom of heaven.

Truly, fear was converted to faith in God's mercy. Where previously existed self-reliance, from the now existed God's grace. Where previously existed desire for building a life for themselves, from the now existed a holy desire to build upon the life that is in Jesus.

The lives that we seek to build for ourselves are meaningless. The life that is given freely in connection with Christ Jesus gives purpose and meaning to our lives. For Simon and the others, the lives that they had built for themselves no longer meant anything to them so that they forsook all and followed Jesus. After working all night to catch fish to earn their living, now they left the fish and followed Jesus. What would be their reward? Like Jesus, they would be catching men alive. They would be sacrificing themselves and their possessions and their very lives for the sake of the pure administration of the means of grace. They would be witnessing the great day of Pentecost, with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and the conversion of over 3000 souls. They would see the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit to catch many more men alive, working through their words of faith. They would experience the inexpressible joy that the

angels of heaven experience whenever a sinner is brought to repentance and faith in Christ. They would see God work through them to bring healing and comfort and peace and forgiveness and everlasting life to their fellow sinners. They would see God use them to build up His Church on earth where the pure administration of His means of grace would be available to all who will receive it.

#### CONCLUSION

#### **“Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!”**

Truly these are blessed words. How grateful we can be that God works this conversion within us so that we turn to God and beg Him to take away our condemnation and our fear of condemnation. When the Holy Spirit works in us so that we fall to our knees like Simon Peter and confess our sinfulness, then we hear the blessed words of absolution through which the Lord Jesus commands our fear to be no more. Through the words of our baptism He gives to us the answer of a good conscience as St. Peter declares in 1 Peter 3:21. Then we are free to forsake all and follow Jesus, heeding His call to come to Him at the Holy Table to receive the meal of life. Here we receive the comfort of the unity of His body. Here we receive the life of the forgiveness poured out in His blood. Here we are strengthened and renewed as our fears are commanded to leave us and we are converted yet again by the proclamation of the Lord’s death till He comes. Here we gather in the name of Jesus and we proclaim to one another and to the world the peace of God that surpasses all understanding, and we give witness to the new life that is freely given to all who will receive it through these blessed means of grace. This is true evangelism. This is true discipleship. This is the work and will of God. In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus forever. Amen.