



Campbell Chapel

Sermon by Bob Bradley



Jesus Leads to a Place of Blessings

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- Luke 5:1** And it came to pass, that, as the people pressed upon him to hear the word of God, he stood by the lake of Gennesaret,
- Luke 5:2** And saw two ships standing by the lake: but the fishermen were gone out of them, and were washing *their* nets.
- Luke 5:3** And he entered into one of the ships, which was Simon's, and prayed him that he would thrust out a little from the land. And he sat down, and taught the people out of the ship.
- Luke 5:4** Now when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, **Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught.**
- Luke 5:5** And Simon answering said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net.
- Luke 5:6** And when they had this done, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes: and their net brake.
- Luke 5:7** And they beckoned unto *their* partners, which were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came, and filled both the ships, so that they began to sink.
- Luke 5:8** When Simon Peter saw *it*, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord.
- Luke 5:9** For he was astonished, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken:
- Luke 5:10** And so *was* also James, and John, the sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, **Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men.**
- Luke 5:11** And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and followed him.

Here is Jesus down by the lake of Gennesaret. It is called by different names in the scriptures. However, more commonly, we would know it as the Sea of Galilee. That is where He is at. If you study a little bit about this lake; it is probably eight miles wide and twelve or thirteen miles long. It wasn't a very big lake. It is 650 or 700 feet below sea level. There were steep banks and steep mountains that went up from the water and from time to time and would create great storms of wind. We read that in the scriptures. You have before.

Here Jesus is on this particular lake. If you look and study a little bit you will find out that there were at least nine cities that lined the shoreline here of the Sea of Galilee. The smallest city that was there had a population of at least 15,000 people. One of the

cities, Capernaum was upward of 300,000 people that lived there. So, there were a lot of people around where Jesus was at. The Bible says that people were pressing upon Him to hear the Word of God, as He stood down by the lake. Again, we can understand why that would be, because of all the people that were there. Jesus' ministry is not very old here. He is having great success and changing people's lives. People want to see Him and be around Him. They want to hear what He has to say.

He is down by the lake. He is standing there down by the lake. Picture that in your mind just for a moment. He is standing down by the lake, down by the edge of the water. Again, the banks went up steeply. Here are all these people. I don't know how many people are here but there were probably thousands and thousands of people here listening to Him as He is trying to talk. If Jesus is going to do something, do you know what He wants? He wants everybody to hear what He has to say. There are some boats here. He says to Simon, "I want to use your boat for a few minutes. I want to preach from your boat. I want to use your boat as pulpit."

The Bible says that He gets in Simon's boat. They had been out washing their nets. They had fished all night. They had been washing the junk out of their nets and drying them out. Jesus is in the boat and they push it just a little way out, probably just a few feet out from the bank. Do you know what that did? That made His voice able to go to a lot more people. A lot more people could hear what He had to say.

If you are in a room this size or around people outside, you could have 50 or 100 people may be able to hear you. However, if you get on a boat and your voice echoes off of the water and you have a steep bank behind you then no doubt thousands and thousands of people are going to be able to hear Him and the message that He is going to teach.

Keep in mind that it is Simon Peter. Andrew, James and John were fishermen. We know they were. If you look at the scriptures you will find out that most of the disciples, most of the apostles were fishermen. Fishermen are people who have to be patient. They are people who do a lot of work. These guys were not fishing with poles but they were fishing with nets. It was a lot of work to fish. It took a lot of energy. It was hard work. These guys battled the sea when it was rough and all the issues that came along. Therefore, not only did you have to be a hard worker, but you had to have somebody that had some courage and had some backbone because the storms were going to come. You had to be patient because you were not going to catch something every time you went out. Here they are.

Keep also something in mind. Before this story has happened, immediately after Jesus had been baptized and went into the wilderness and so forth, you will find out that He was going down by this same lake one day and He spoke to Peter, Andrew, James and John. Do you remember the story? He said, "Fellows, come and follow me." This is a different story now. The Bible says they went and followed Him. However, somewhere along the line, I don't know what happened, but somewhere along the line, they quit following Him and now they went back to fishing. Do you know what? Jesus is going to

teach a lesson here that I want you to get. Jesus is going to teach Peter a lesson. Peter, I can take care of you. If you will just follow me, Peter, I can take care of you. I will take care of all your needs, Peter, if you will just simply follow me.

That is something we need to understand today. Every need that we have today, if we will just simply be obedient unto the Words of Jesus Christ and follow Him; He will take care of us. He will take care of us through all the problems, all the issues, all the storms as they come. It takes obedience in my life and it takes obedience in your life.

The Bible says here He is out there and He is preaching. When He is finished preaching, He says something to Peter. He says, "Peter, launch out into the deep. Go out into the deep water." Now if you would have been Peter, you probably would have had a lot of the same things to say that Peter had to say. Peter was married. Peter had a family at home. Peter no doubt, was tired. They had been out all night. You threw these big, heavy nets out into the water then you would pull them all in and get the fish out of them. It was hard work. It was very, very hard work. It wasn't a time of relaxation like we do today.

If you get a boat and go out and sit on the lake; drink lemonade and eat Twinkies and just relax. It was totally different then. It was really hard work.

Here Peter is and he has been out all night. He has worked all night. He is probably disgusted. He hasn't caught anything. We know Peter, a lot of times spoke before he thought. Especially at this time in his life. Jesus says, "Peter, I want you to do something for me. I want you to launch out into the deep water." Do you know what Peter knew? Peter knew a whole lot more about fishing, he thought, than Jesus did.

He fished of the night. That is when you caught fish in the Sea of Galilee. The water was very clear. You did not catch any fish during the day time, especially in deep water. You fished in shallow water during the nighttime and you would catch fish. However, Peter had done all of that. He had done everything. He had probably gone to every spot that he had caught fish before. Everything he had gone but he had no success in life.

Sometimes—get this and remember this—sometimes in life, everything you do goes right. Sometimes in life, whatever you do is just right. It goes right. It is a good time. It is just a great time. However, there are also times in life that you make the same decisions that you made yesterday or last week, or last month and everything seems to go wrong.

Peter, no doubt, had gone to every place he knew to catch fish. There wasn't any there. However, in life—I mean this—sometimes in life if we are going to receive the blessing that God wants us to be blessed with then we have to get beyond the normal. We have to go to some new places. Peter went like he always would. He probably went to the same places. He did the same thing he always did. However, he did not catch anything.

Sometimes in life we go through the same routine. Sometimes in life we do the same thing. Sometimes in life we do all the same things the same way but we don't have the same success. If you are going to get to the place, sometimes, in life that God wants us to get to then we are going to have to do some things out of the ordinary. We are going to have to do some things we normally wouldn't do. We are going to have to do some things here that may not make any sense to us. we are going to have to do some things here that when we do it, we are going to do it but we really don't want to do it. to get to where the Lord wants us to bless us, there are some things that we have to do differently sometimes.

We come to church, sing songs, preach and testify. In life, we read our bibles and we pray. We go through sometimes the same routine and some times things work and sometimes they don't work. Sometimes there are times we need to do things differently. Sometimes where the Lord is leading us to won't make no sense to us. it absolutely will make no sense at all. When Jesus tells Peter here to launch out into the deep water it probably made no sense to Peter whatsoever. It probably made no sense to Peter whatsoever.

As I read this story, I think in my own mind that Peter probably has put up an argument. I think Peter probably has had some things to say here. We have been up all night. I know we got what we got recorded here. We know that he said that. However, somewhere in the conversation, do you know what Peter said? He said, "Hey, okay. I believe that He is the Master. I believe that He is the Messiah. I believe that He is the king of Israel. Since I believe that then I am going to do what He asks me to do." Therefore, here they go. You are Peter and here are the guys that are with you. You have been out all night. I don't know how many people were on the boats. There were more than just Peter's boat here. I don't know all the people that were on these boats and ships that were there but there were probably a bunch of them. Here they go on a boat ride in the middle of the day, in the daytime. They were out in deep water. They are going to let down their nets where they know, or they think they know, there is not a fish out there nowhere.

Sometimes in life that is how we think things. Sometimes in life, God says this is the direction we need to go and what you need to do. It may not make any sense to us whatsoever. However, the thing we need to understand the thing we need to do to make sure that we are listening to His voice and we are obedient to His voice then He will lead us to blessing. Do you believe that? You should believe that.

Now I am going to say something here and you may not agree with me and that's okay. Not everything in life that God does is a miracle. Is it? Not everything that God does in my life and your life is a miracle. There have been miracles in my life and in your life. I personally think it was a miracle when He saved us. When He saved us and took our old stony heart of sin out and put in a brand-new heart of flesh and came into the throne of our hearts and sat down there. I think that is a miracle. Don't you? However, not everything that happens in life is a miracle.

I am going to say something here so hear me out. I don't think this story here is about a miracle. I don't think that at all. I think Jesus performed a bunch of miracles. I think Jesus did some absolute, tremendous miracles, but this particular day, in this event; I don't think necessarily that it was a miracle.

Do you know what Jesus knew? Jesus knew where the fish were. I don't think He goes out there. I don't think Jesus is going to go out there and create a whole school of fish for Peter on this day. I don't think He did that.

Get this. I do know that He knew where the fish were at. In my life and in your life the Lord knows where the blessing is at. Do you know what the Lord knows? The Lord knows who we need to talk to. The Lord knows which doctor we need to see. Amen! Do you know what the Lord will do?

Peter was reluctant. I thought about that today. The word *reluctant* is a word that—he was opposing. He did not like this thing—he did not want to go. He strongly disagreed with the thought about going into deep water but he went.

In my life and in your life, if we will simply follow the leadership of Almighty God; He knows where; He wants to lead us to a place of blessing. Does everybody get that? God wants to lead us to a place of blessing. You will not get there in life if you don't follow Him. If you don't follow Jesus Christ, you will not get to the place of blessing. I'm not talking about that you will have a million dollars and a big home. I'm not talking about that. I'm talking about God wants to bless us and God wants to prove himself unto us that He will take care of us.

He simply gave a small command. First of all, He said, "Peter, push out a little bit from the land." If Peter had not done that with the boat, Peter would not have had an opportunity to go out in deep water. He would have never had an opportunity for that. However, he does and he goes.

Again, I don't think the Lord has created two boat loads of fish here for Peter. I don't think that at all. I do know that Jesus knew where every fish in the lake was at. He knew that if these guys were going to fish and they were going to catch anything; He knew exactly what spot they needed to be in.

Do you know what God knows in our life? God knows exactly where you need to be for Him to be able to shine blessing and favor upon your life.

Do you know what Peter would have never got? Do you know what Peter would have never understood and realized and saw? If Peter said, "Lord, I'm tired. I'm going home. The rest of the boys can go if they want to but I'm heading out. I'm tired." Peter would have never got to see what the Lord did. Amen!

I think so many times in my life and in your life; that we miss out on so much because we don't want to go. I'm tired. I have already done all of that. I have already taken that trip. That will never work. We have tried that before.

A deacon told me that one morning, I think it was the first morning, or the first evening I went to a church and pastored many, many years ago, "If you think you are going to do anything here, you are wasting your time. We have tried it all here. It is not going to work. If you think you are going to change anything here, you just might as well move on down the road." Do you know what God did? God did some great things.

Just because it did not work yesterday, doesn't mean it isn't going to work today. Get this. Just because it did work yesterday, doesn't mean it is going to work today.

Here is the thing. Peter listened. Peter listened to the voice and to the words of Jesus Christ. The greatest thing that you will ever do in life is listen to the voice and listen to the words of Jesus Christ and be obedient to what He says. He has a place in mind for you. Everyday in life. I believe this. He has a place for us where He wants to take us to where He can bless us and show favor upon us. He can do great things with us and through us if we will just follow Him.

Peter listens through all the complaining he probably did and muttering under his breath. He goes out and get this—he is worn out, been up all night, dragging those nets and they are heavy, and they are wet. They have been out there dragging those things probably they are absolutely worn out. He is probably thinking about biscuits and gravy that the wife is going to have fixed. He is going to go home and eat and rest. He probably thought about all of that. He throws out the nets and something happens. Do you know what happens? The nets are full. They start pulling them in. The nets are full. Amen!

The fished all night. Every spot they went to and they thought they knew where the fish were at. However, simply listening to the voice of Jesus to go out and do something different. Go out in an out of the way place. Go do things out of the ordinary. He does that. They cast out the net. They begin to draw it in, and the Bible says their nets break.

Luke 5:6 And when they had this done, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes: and their net brake.

Here Peter and Andrew are on the boat. James and John are on the other boat. Do you know what they start doing? Get this. They holler at James and John and say, get over here man. Our nets are full and they are breaking. We have all these fish. Get over here. Peter was worn out and he was complaining. However, I would say he got a second wind when he saw all the fish in the nets. Wouldn't you?

It is amazing when things change, we can go from being not able to do anything to getting involved. Here is what happens.

They come over. Now they have another problem. Their nets are breaking. They fill both of the boats up; the Bible says that I read to you and they started to sink. Now they have another problem. Amen!

Do you know what God wants to do? God wants to bless us. God wants to fill up our boats, our lives with so much. He wants to bless us. He wants to lead us to a place where He can bless us. Do you know what He could have done? He could have created a miracle on the shallow water where Peter had fished all night before. They could have got a boat load of fish and it would have been no big deal. He could have done that. But He didn't do that. He led these guys to where the fish were at. So that they could be blessed. Where He could show favor upon their lives, where He could prove to Peter, if you will just follow me and listen to me and be obedient to me—listen and be obedient, Peter—I will take care of you. You don't need these boats. Peter, all you need to do is just simply follow me.

These boat loads of fish, I don't know how much they would have been worth; a lot of money. These guys were professional fishermen. This is how they made their living. They filled both boats up and they began to sink. They get it back to land...

Luke 5:10 And so *was* also James, and John, the sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, **Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men.**

“Peter, you need to follow me. Peter, I want to bless your life. I want to make you a success in life. This was money to Peter. This was a livelihood for Peter, for his family, and for men that worked for him. Jesus is saying, Peter, if you will just follow me I will take you to a place of blessing. I will take you to a place where I can show favor upon your life. Peter, it wasn't on the bank. It wasn't in shallow water. Peter, it wasn't all the places you were at last night. Peter, where I led you to today, in the middle of the daytime is a place I can bless you and show favor upon your life.”

I know this tonight. God wants to do the same thing with everyone of us here at Campbell Chapel and everybody listening to me tonight wherever you are at; God wants to lead you to a place that He can bless you and that He can show favor upon your lives.

Do you know what happens? The Bible says...

Luke 5:11 And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and followed him.

When they got back, do you know what Peter did? The Bible says, he forsook the boats and he followed Jesus. Do you know what you will find out on down the road, just a short time down the road from here? The Lord calls them into fulltime ministry. He calls them to be apostles. He lays His hand upon him on the day of Pentecost and the Spirit came. Do you know what Peter did? The same guy—get this—the same guy that was complaining about that he had been up all night and did not catch anything, the same guy that worn out and tired; he was the same person that Jesus used to preach one message on one day and three thousand people got saved. Amen! That is what God wants to do with us. However, if Peter had not obeyed the first command, “Thrust out a little bit from the land.” He would have never got to go to deep water. If Peter would

have never gone to the deep water then Peter probably would have never preached on Pentecost.

We are missing out on so much today folks because we are not following Him. We are listening to all kinds of voices. There are all kinds of voices out there and we are listening to a lot of them and we are following a lot of them. Do you know where they are taking us to? They are taking us to an awful place. There is no blessing there. God's favor is not there. God wants to lead us there. God wants to take us to a place of blessing. God wants to take us to a place where He can show favor upon our lives. That is for all of us. That is not just for me or two or three. God wants to do all of us that way. He will bless your life.

Come and pray—