

Called to be Disciples

The gospel for this coming Sunday (Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany) is Luke 5:1-11. This reading teaches about the calling of his first disciples. Four of Jesus most important apostles were two pairs of brothers: Simon Peter and Andrew; and James and John (sons of Zebedee). They may have run a sizable fishing business. (TLSB)

Up to this point Luke has pictured Jesus as going it alone in proclaiming the good news of the kingdom. He seems to have no companions as He makes His way through the synagogues. If we had only the Gospel of Mark, the call of the first disciples would appear to be something “out of the blue” (Mark 1:16-20). But by reading the Gospels of Luke and John we realize that Jesus and the first disciples were rather well acquainted even before their call to follow. In the previous section we heard how Jesus had gone to the home of Simon and healed His mother-in-law. When now He makes use of Simon’s boat, it does not seem at all strange. Simon was simply returning a favor.

The Word of God (v. 1) is a Lukan expression for the preaching of Jesus and the apostles, i.e., the Gospel. In verse 3 Jesus gets into Peter’s boat. Jesus initiated the contact. In John 15:16 Jesus says to his disciples: *“You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you.”*

The comforting message in this for us is that he did not wait for us to find him but he came into our lives through baptism and claimed us to be his own.

In verse four Jesus asks Peter to do something that defies all human logic: after a long night of fishing without success to go back out into the deep and let down his nets to fish. In the OT, the depths of the sea have the connotations of chaos, evil and death. At times there are some upside things in our lives but Jesus can use them to bring us close to him and even bring others into his kingdom.

In verse ten Jesus tells Peter that he should be afraid because from now on Peter would be catching men. With Jesus at our side there is nothing to fear when we go about doing his work.

Prayer: Dear Lord Jesus, thank you for bringing me into your kingdom and making me a disciple for your work of sharing the good news that you died for the sins of the world. Continue to strengthen me and help to gladly share your wonderful message to those around me. Amen