

St Marc Grenoble  
Sunday 6th February 2022  
Isaiah 6: 1 - 8  
Psalm 138  
**Luke 5: 1 - 11**  
**'Sent'**

**Good morning Everybody!** It's good to welcome all of you, both here and those joining us on Zoom.

We've heard two remarkable readings this morning, both Old Testament and New Testament could occupy us for hours.

But, first, let me ask you to share what struck you in today's readings. Was there anything that was special to you? Anything that fascinated you? Anything that made you want to dig a bit deeper? There are NO wrong answers, I'd simply like you to share your thoughts ...

Thank you ... Now I want to go straight to the Gospel reading; there are four headings, which summarise it; I'll flag them up as we go through.

Luke sets the scene by 'the Lake of Genneserat'. Does anyone know another name for Lake Gennesaret? – *Sea of Galilee (also sometimes the Sea of Tiberius. Tiberius means the navel - the belly button?)*.

Gennesaret is a name usually given to part of the Lake around Capernaum towards the North end of the Lake. Why Gennesaret? It's a translation of a Hebrew word 'kinnaret', from 'kinnor', which means 'harp' – because it's shaped like a biblical harp, or lyre.

The river Jordan runs through the lake, which is Israel's largest freshwater lake - it's about 21k long, 11k wide and only about 43 metres deep. It's also 209 metres below sea level and is the lowest freshwater lake in the world. [The only lake in the world, which is lower is the Dead Sea, but that's a saltwater lake.]

Back to our story: The crowd was pushing in on Jesus - so they'd hear the Word of God better. People wanted to hear God's good news from Jesus; they really wanted to hear what He had to teach them. His teaching was direct, personal and encouraging; not impersonal, unattainable legalistic religion. And I believe that is still true today 2,000+ years later.

Jesus noticed two boats tied up. The fishermen had left them and were scrubbing their nets on the shore.

Without asking, Jesus stepped into Simon Peter's boat and asked him to push it out from the shore, so that He could use the boat as a pulpit.

Peter already knew Jesus, and probably recognised His Godly authority; because, apparently without hesitation, he did exactly what Jesus asked him to do – Jesus was able to speak to the people from the boat. He could see them, and everyone in the crowd could see – and hear – Jesus! (sound carries better over water)

NB In that first simple act of obedience, almost without realising it, Simon Peter was already assisting Jesus to proclaim the Gospel - the good news.

Sitting there, using the boat for a pulpit, Jesus taught the crowd; everyone was able to hear Him preach God's word. So, they were **HEARING**

When he finished teaching, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Push out into deep water and let your nets out for a catch." (NB not to see if you may get a catch!) He said, "Master, we've been fishing hard all night and haven't caught even a minnow. But if you say so, I'll let out the nets. **OBEDIENCE**

"It was no sooner said than done—a huge haul of fish, straining the nets beyond capacity. They waved to their partners in the other boat to come help them. They filled both boats, nearly swamping them with the catch. **RESULT**

When Simon Peter saw it, he fell to his knees before Jesus. He had just experienced God at work! It was a Messianic Moment!  
In that moment Peter knew he was in the presence of God Himself ... and he became deeply and painfully aware of his own sheer, mortal inadequacy:

"Master, leave. I'm a sinner and can't handle this holiness. Leave me to myself. "

When they pulled in that catch of fish, awe overwhelmed Simon and everyone with him. It was the same with James and John, Zebedee's sons, - coworkers with Simon. They had never before seen anything like it!

What had they got themselves into??

The fact is, they had not 'got themselves' into anything! Jesus had chosen them; and He'd chosen this miraculous moment to give Simon Peter, and his colleagues *the* call, which they simply could not ignore, or shrug off!

At that moment of Peter's maximum vulnerability – when his attention was firmly grabbed – Jesus said to him, simply, but quite firmly: "There is nothing to fear. From now on you'll be fishing for men and women." **COMMISSIONED - 'OR SENT'**

We're not told that they made any verbal response. Their response was self explanatory! It didn't require words – although I could have imagined responses like: "What? Me? – Surely you can't use me?"

All we're told is: "They pulled their boats up on the beach, left them, nets and all, and followed him." There was no hesitation, no delay, no looking back – they simply followed Jesus. You see, His call is, simply, irresistible!

He didn't say "I was wondering if you may like to come and work for me?" ... He doesn't have to! These were life changing moments – for Simon Peter and his fellow fishermen.

They weren't only life-changing for those men – they were earth shattering! Their obedience changed the course of the history of the world – for ever!

But we also need to understand, Jesus did not finish His work at the end of the New Testament – He carries on changing lives, saving souls from sin ... and He carries on calling those He has chosen. Jesus is calling us too ...

The big question is have we, have you, heard His call yet? – And, more important, have we responded???

Have you heard Jesus calling you? Have you decided to follow Him???

It is very important to answer those questions ... very important indeed ... I know that from personal experience.

You see, I heard Jesus calling when I was younger (in my teens and twenties), but I chose to ignore Him – I didn't want to leave what I was doing ... I ignored Him for more than twenty-five years ... and simply couldn't understand why I never found fulfilment in my life.

But, that was the problem; it was the life I wanted – not the life Jesus had prepared for me.

Eventually, I came to one of 'those' cataclysmic moments myself; and simply couldn't ignore His call any longer!

The remarkable thing is, since I gave up doing what I wanted to do; and started doing what Jesus wants me to do ... I've found more peace and true

I'm not saying there's never a moment of doubt; or times when I know I've blown it; when my mistakes, selfishness, or bad temper get the better of me: I'm afraid that happens all too often – if you don't believe me, ask Julia!

But, I know that basically I've left the canoe I was paddling on my own – and pulled it up on the beach – and I've made the commitment to follow Jesus.

When my eyes are firmly fixed on Him, life simply couldn't be more fulfilling.

It's only when I allow myself to be distracted, and start thinking I'm paddling on my own again, that things start to go wrong, and the sinking feeling starts all over again!

So, to come back to you – Where are you??

Are you still frantically trying to keep afloat on your own?

Or, have you accepted Jesus' call on your life - to live your life with Him?

When we welcome Jesus completely into our lives and accept His call, then He can use us and send us to do His work; which is, of course, why I'm here!

We are 'Made, Chosen, Called and Sent by Him and, until we accept the call, our lives can never be complete.

So, this is your moment - Now is your chance to say YES!! to Jesus!

Let's take a few moments of silence; let's come face to face with Jesus in prayer and, like Simon Peter, let's open our hearts to His call:

*Come now, Lord Jesus, help each one of us to know exactly where we stand with you ... and, Lord, give us the grace to respond in just the way You want ... Amen.*