

Trinity V

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Preacher: Fr. Wade Miller

[0 : 00] Our gospel text this morning contains the familiar story of Jesus providing an abundance of fish for the disciples after they had been out all night with little to no success.

You know the story well. The vocation of these fishermen is the fact that they were, that is the way they made their livelihood, catching fish.

It's the way they provided for their families. And Jesus now tells these fishermen to throw their nets back into the water once more. Simon, who later is known as Peter, very reluctantly does as our Lord commands, being very skeptical after hours upon hours without a catch.

Suddenly, after our Lord commands him to throw the net in the water, this net is filled with fish, so much so that the net began to break.

The disciples have such an abundance of fish that then the boat starts to sink. Peter then falls on his knees and he cries out to Jesus, Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.

[1 : 28] The epiphany that Simon Peter and those with him now had was that Jesus is more than a great prophet.

He's more than a good moral philosopher or teacher. Jesus is none other than the God who created the heavens and the earth.

He is the one to whom all creation obeys. We know that these disciples are still not able to piece all of who Jesus is together at this point in history, but they knew enough that they were willing to drop everything and to follow him.

There is much lament today about the state of Christianity, especially in the West. Parishes are closing.

Church buildings are being converted into antique shops and nightclubs. And it seems as though the fish are no longer biting. And this has made many churches so desperate that they seek to mimic the culture or parrot the beliefs of the culture in order to be relevant to get people to join their ranks, to get people in the pews.

[2 : 56] The average American identifies as being spiritual, but has deep suspicion about any ties to tradition or even organized religion.

Gallup polls and Pew research statistics constantly remind us that we are now living in a post-Christian world, especially, obviously, here in the West.

The thought is God is gone. And self-realization or self-actualization is the new religion of the West. Self is to be worshipped. And personal empowerment has replaced the need for personal repentance. As people desire a religion that works for them, rather than bowing to a God who is Lord over all and holds everyone accountable.

But the God who orders all things, the God who is the creator of heaven and earth, is the same God who said to Simon Peter, do not be afraid.

[4 : 17] From now on, you will catch men. The West might be done with God, but there are many people in various cultures who are bowing to the God of the fish and the seas.

The creator. People that do not necessarily have the nicest cars or houses often think about questions of life and death because they are not distracted by the latest gadgets or toys.

People living under dictatorships or oppression often look to the one who controls the fish of the seas and the birds of the air for time, for help in their time of need.

And people who have been used up by the world, kicked to the curb, are those who long to hear the good news that they are loved, not merely because of their usefulness, but because of the worth they have in being made in the image of God.

These are people ready to hear of the one who is merciful, compassionate, the one who conquered death by dying in their place.

[5 : 42] Peter dropped to his knees because he recognized the one who was before him. This man, Jesus, was the one who had created the world and everything in it.

This man, Jesus, had come to seek and to save that which was lost. Peter recognized that he was standing before the king of all creation.

And that made him fall as dead. In the presence of Jesus. Peter acted in great reverence and worship that is due only to a king.

And that same God is the one to whom we worship. The creator of all things has come to this earth. He's not some distant cosmic deity.

He has come to this earth so that in him we might have life. And people who are truly gripped by the magnitude of such a visit from their God are those who drop everything and follow the Savior.

[6 : 58] proclaiming joyfully his arrival and his mercy to a world that has abandoned its first love.

Such people are the ones who prioritize their lives by dropping all that the world covets and following their Savior. our mission here at St. Philip's is pretty simple.

It's to be like Simon Peter. It's to worship Christ with great reverence and with great humility. Not seeking to buddy up with the world by focusing on self.

Not making self the center of the universe but making God first priority of our lives. We are to be like the disciples making the kingdom of heaven our top priority.

Loving God more than family money, stability or even security. And when other broken and hurting people see Christ in us they will long to come into the ark of salvation the church so that they too may worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness with great reverence and awe.

[8 : 30] Amen. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.