

Title: THREE STAGES OF CALLING, LUKE 5:1-11.
(Chatham, NJ; 02/07/10, AM) [Pc – Narrative Analysis]

Theme: In the story of the miraculous catch of fish we see three stages that the disciples progressed through in order to become committed disciples of Christ.

Purpose: To demonstrate that these stages were important in the development of the disciples and to illustrate that the calling to be fishers of men elevated the vision of their lives to see God's purpose.

Introduction:

1. What Jesus describes as “catching men” Peter will later describe as the goal of our faith: the salvation of our souls, 1 Peter 1:9.
2. This provides the church with a distinct vision and purpose.
3. Making disciples by baptizing and teaching always comes under the umbrella of saving souls from eternal damnation.
4. In the episode of the miraculous catch of fish, Luke 5:1-11, we see the stages of development that the disciples underwent.
5. They see and accept an entirely new way of envisioning their lives.
6. The miracle pointed to a higher destiny.
7. We note their stages of faith.

I. Stage One: Attentive Listening.

A. Jesus teaches them.

1. The crowd was pressing on him (getting too close?) to hear the word of God.
2. Already we see that Jesus attracts large audiences, 4:42.
3. Hunger for the Word of God attracted them to him.
4. Jesus got into Simon's boat, and he taught.
5. I would dare to suggest that teaching was more essential to his work than performing miracles.
6. Jesus taught wherever he went, often in the synagogues.

B. Listening can change people.

1. Paul says, “Faith comes from hearing,” Romans 10:17.
2. Hearing is, however, just a beginning point.
3. In the Parable of the Sower, Jesus points out that all four types of individuals hear the Word of God, but they all respond to it differently.
4. See Luke 8:12, 13, 14, & 15.
5. How important must it be, then, that we listen attentively and heed accordingly.
6. Listening is the first step.
7. Pay attention!

II. Stage Two: Astonished Revelation.

A. What Simon recognizes about himself.

1. After teaching, Jesus tells Simon to go fishing again.
2. He thinks this is a pointless endeavor; remember they were washing their nets when Jesus comes to the shore to teach the crowd (2).

3. Simon agrees anyway and the catch nearly sinks several boats (6-7). Was this the biggest catch of their lives? Among all the stories of the “one that got away,” this was witnessed by all the disciples as well as a crowd.
4. Simon realizes he is in the presence of a man of God; he cannot but help feel his inadequacy.
5. Isaiah had the same reaction when confronted by the presence of God, Is. 6:5.
6. Everyone was astonished at what they saw.

B. A personal discovery, awakening, or realization.

1. Can you remember where you were or what you were doing when the truth of the Gospel made you believe it?
2. Were you moved by the realization that your sin denied you the presence of God?
3. Were you overwhelmed when you learned that God forgave you and called you into fellowship with him?
4. This may not have come from a miraculous event in your life, but it most certainly came from what Christ teaches.
5. Once the Word of God penetrates your heart, you can't help but change.
6. What Brit Hume said to Tiger Woods several weeks ago was 100% correct: there is something unique about what only Christianity can do to change a life.
7. It is as simple as realizing that God loved us and sent his Son to die for us.

III. Stage Three: Commitment to a New Vision.

A. From now on, catching men.

1. What in the world did Jesus mean by that?
2. This might have been their question; we know, but mainly because we have the whole story before us.
3. Yet even we don't always know all implications the calling at first.
4. Jesus warns potential disciples to count the cost, but I doubt anyone can account for every change he'll have to make, every experience he'll have, and every sin he'll have to repent of.
5. This represents a new vision of life.

B. The new vision will be a way of life.

1. A more complete expression of “catching men” is expressed in Mt. 28.
2. This is a shift of seismic proportions: from a mundane, ordinary life of fishing to a life that lives for the Kingdom of God.
3. The goal of our lives now becomes salvation.

Conclusion:

1. This vision is not limited to full-time catchers of men.
2. The vision becomes ours when we obey the Gospel.
3. It is big enough to demand the fully weight of our heart, soul, mind, and strength.
4. This is a unique vision!
5. Where are you in these stages? Where are your friends?
6. We add another stage: faithfulness. In light of this it is imperative that you keep the vision before you and let it be the witness of your existence.