

20:20 Vision Ministries – Devotions by Roger Browning Week 18 (April 30-May 6, 2017)

The apostle Peter became the leader of the new church following the death and resurrection of Jesus. Let's follow his spiritual journey for the next few weeks.

Sunday, April 30 (read John 1:35-42)

The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, "We have found the Messiah" (that is, the Christ). (John 1:41)

In today's passage, John the Baptist willingly turns two of his own disciples over to Jesus (v. 35-37). He is not building an empire for himself but is paving the way for the Lord. This should be the goal of every preacher and teacher; our focus must be on bringing people to Jesus and not to ourselves.

Just like John,

Andrew cannot keep the good news to himself when he meets the Lord. Everyone needs an Andrew in his/her life. This disciple is not nearly as famous as his earthly brother Peter, but he is very important in the eyes of God. In fact, Andrew is known for only one quality: He brings everyone he meets to Jesus

(v. 42; 6:8-9; 12:20-22). Did you have an Andrew in your life? Are you willing to **be** an Andrew to someone who has not met Jesus? Simon will later get a new name as he matures in Christ (v. 42), but he owes his original relationship with the Lord to his caring brother.

Monday, May 1 (read Luke 5:1-11)

*When He had finished speaking, He said to Simon, "Put out into **deep water**, and let down the nets for a catch." (Luke 5:4, emphasis mine)*

Apparently, Simon doesn't follow Jesus immediately after the introduction we saw in yesterday's text. In today's passage, he and his partners are washing their nets following a fruitless night of fishing (v. 2). The crowd that gathers to hear Jesus teach the Word of God has become too large to be able to hear, so the Lord requests the use of Simon's boat. The waves on the lake provide a natural amplification for the listeners on the shore (v. 3). I'm sure Simon listens to the words of our Lord, but he is probably distracted because his livelihood depends on catching fish. That's when the Lord enters Simon's world and commands him to put the net into the **deep water** (v. 4). Jesus is about to teach this proud fisherman that He knows more about his area of expertise than Simon does. Have you allowed Jesus to teach you how to accomplish your tasks more efficiently?

Tuesday, May 2 (reread Luke 5:1-11)

Simon answered, "Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. But because You say so, I will let down the nets." (Luke 5:6)

Maybe you relate to Simon's response in the printed verse. Perhaps you think that your job is the **one** area where you don't need His advice. In this text, Jesus wants Simon to fish in the **deep water**, for that is where the catch will be (v. 4). Likewise, He is telling those of us who witness to others that the fishing is better in the **deep water**. If we emphasize only the **love of God**, we may attract a crowd, but the listeners will never grow up to be "keepers." Many pastors stay out of the deep water, because they are afraid they will upset their politically correct listeners. That is why the world is turning upside down (see Isaiah 5:20-21). We will continue with this passage in tomorrow's devotion.

Wednesday, May 3 (reread Luke 5:1-11)

When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus' knees and said, "Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!" (Luke 5:8)

Although Simon is skeptical, he obeys the Lord and casts his nets into the deep water. He calls his partners (James and John) to help, because his nets are breaking and his boat is sinking from the huge catch (v. 6-7). Aware that he has just witnessed a miracle, Simon falls at the knees of Jesus and confesses his sins (v. 8). That is still the first thing we should do when we realize that Jesus is in our presence. As usual, Jesus says, "Don't be afraid" (v. 10). Also, as usual, the Lord wants Simon and **us** to use our testimony to reach others for His kingdom. Any blessing He gives us is only for the purpose of winning the world to Him. By faith, Simon leaves it all behind to begin a journey with Jesus that will take him to places and people that are beyond his wildest dreams (v. 11).

Thursday, May 4 (read Matthew 14:22-26)

When evening came, He was there alone, but the boat was already a considerable distance from land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it. (Matthew 14:23b-24)

Don't miss the fact that Jesus **makes** His disciples get into the boat and go out onto the lake without Him (v. 22). If you miss this detail, you may emphasize that you should never go out without Jesus. While they are out on the water, the Lord goes into the mountains to pray to His Father. After a day of teaching and performing miracles, He needs to plug into the Power source to renew His earthly energy. The disciples soon encounter a storm that threatens their very lives (v. 23-24). Someone has said, "If Jesus brings you to it, He will bring you through it!" Right in the nick of time, the Lord arrives walking on the lake (v. 25-26). He has placed His men in this difficult situation to arrive at the event we will see in the next two devotions

Friday, May 5 (read Matthew 14:27-30)

But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, "Lord, save me!" (Matthew 14:30)

You are probably familiar with this marvelous story, but perhaps you will see something here that you have never seen before. Jesus uses another of the 365 expressions of "Don't be afraid" found in the Bible to calm His terrified disciples (v. 27). That's when Simon Peter comes back into our study. Always impulsive, he says in effect, "If you are real, then I should be able to do what you are doing (v. 28). Jesus, a man of few words says, "Come" (v. 29). Peter has the courage to trust the Master and promptly climbs over the edge of the boat into the water (v. 29). He is doing great until he takes his eyes off Jesus and places them on the obstacles (v. 30). We will conclude our story in tomorrow's devotion.

Saturday, May 6 (read Matthew 14:31-33)

Then those who were in the boat worshiped Him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God." (Matthew 14:33)

Many have criticized Peter's failure, not taking into account that he is the only one of the twelve who has enough faith to get out of the safety of the boat (v. 29-30). Jesus will save **anyone** who calls out to Him and says, "Lord, save me!" After Jesus mildly rebukes Peter (v. 31), the two men climb into the boat (v. 32). How do you think they got **back** to the boat? They walked together on the water, hand in hand! The printed verse tells us that the disciples all **worshiped** Him. That is what He desires from all of His children! That is why He **made** them get in the boat in the first place (v. 22)! They acknowledge that He is the Son of God (v. 33). Only God can be worshipped; therefore, He proves that He is God in the flesh by receiving their worship. We will follow the adventures of Simon Peter in next week's devotions.