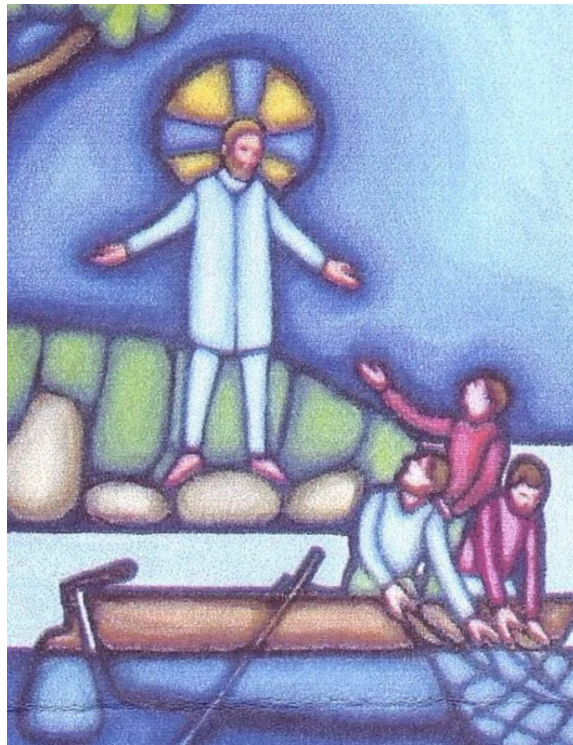


# THE CALL



They went down to the Jordan to check out John the Baptist.

There they also met Jesus of Nazareth.

***"Jesus turned and saw them following and said to them, "What are you seeking?" And they said to him, "Rabbi" (which means Teacher), "where are you staying?" He said to them, "Come and you will see." So they came and saw where he was staying, and they stayed with him that day, for it was about the tenth hour. One of the two who heard John speak and followed Jesus was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. (John 1:38-40)***

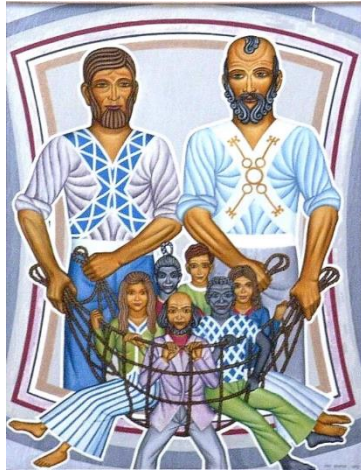
Andrew and Peter returned to Galilee, convinced that they had met the Messiah. The short time they had spent with Jesus told them all they needed to know.

But life went on as it always had, until one day it was interrupted.

***And when he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch." And Simon answered, "Master, we toiled all night and took nothing! But at your word I will let down the nets." And when they had done this, they enclosed a large number of fish, and their nets were breaking. They signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink.***

***But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish that they had taken, and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching men." And when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed him.***

*(Luke 5:4-11)*



***Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching men.***

This was their “Follow me” moment. Without a second thought they left everything and followed him for the rest of their lives.

We can go to church and Bible studies, serve on committees, and still be stuck “down by the Jordan” --- listening to Jesus, but not engaged. Life goes on as it always has.

Then comes the call. “Follow me,” says the Master.

We “bring our boats to land”, leave our past behind, and follow him for the rest of our lives.

**No longer spectators, we are engaged. We are under a call.**

***Our call is the point.***

Once our heart hears the Master’s words, “Follow me”, a radically new life has begun.

This “Follow me” could be an awakening while staring out the window at the rain.

It could be a few words spoken by a stranger.

It could come while helping a neighbor in need.

***“Follow me.”***

Once we answer that call, our life is no longer our own. It belongs to the Master.

From now on the Lord will guide us on a path known only to him.

**A path that will glorify God.**

***Our call brings with it the authority of heaven.***

***“All authority in heaven and earth has been given to me.  
Go therefore and make disciples of all nations...”***

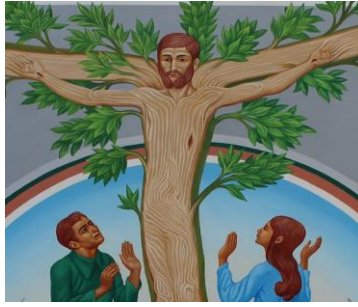
Once we are under the yoke of the Master, learning from him to be meek and lowly in heart....

**....We are wrapped in the authority of heaven.**

As we abide in him, draw our strength from him, we bring living souls from darkness to light, from the power of

Satan to God.

**Our call is sustained by the power of the cross.**



Our hearts are nailed to that cross. We acknowledge no other power, but the power of Jesus' death and resurrection.

By that power we bring good news to the poor, deliverance to the captives, sight to the blind, freedom to the oppressed.

Daily we deny ourselves, take up our cross and follow the Master.

***"I am crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.***

*Galatians 2*

Until our dying day our focus is on two words which the Lord speaks to us day and night:

***"Follow me."***



*Prayer: Jesus, thank you, thank you for your kindness to us. Truly you have loaded our nets with so much. We like Peter, fall before you knowing we are unworthy of such an honor. Lord help us to believe your assurance that we don't need to be afraid. Help us to stop being spectators, help us to follow your command to "put out into the deep". And like Peter, may we let down the nets, not in our own prowess ...but just because you ask us to. It doesn't matter if we have caught nothing up until now, the catch is by your command. We acknowledge that we cannot do this alone, the power is yours, not ours. The job is too much, it's impossible for us to catch men without your lead, without your intervention and power. Keep us clinging to the power of your cross, to keep following you, so in this we will have the authority of heaven to bring others to your throne of mercy for the deliverance and healing they so desperately need. Amen.*

Message: Richard E. Bieber February 2021 book 70 the call  
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