

Luke 5:1-11

Communion Second Baptist, Lincoln
Feb. 7, 2010 Pastor Steve Wisthoff

Come

- ¹ One day as Jesus was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret, with the people crowding around him and listening to the word of God,
² he saw at the water's edge two boats, left there by the fishermen, who were washing their nets.
³ He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little from shore. Then he sat down and taught the people from the boat.
⁴ When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch."
⁵ 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."
⁶ When they had done so, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break.
⁷ So they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them, and they came and filled both boats so full that they began to sink.
⁸ When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus' knees and said, "Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!"
⁹ For he and all his companions were astonished at the catch of fish they had taken,
¹⁰ and so were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, Simon's partners. Then Jesus said to Simon, "Don't be afraid; from now on you will catch men."
¹¹ So they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed him.

Wednesday was Signing Day in Lincoln. As a new-comer to the community, I didn't realize that like St. Patrick's Day in Boston or Marti Gras in New Orleans, Signing Day in Lincoln is a celebrated holiday. Like Punxsutawney Phil, Bo Pelini came out of hiding and accepted signed letters of intent from players from across the country. Maybe if Bo saw his shadow, there would be six more weeks of spring training. Lincoln will have a Freshman quarterback who would have otherwise signed with Western Kentucky and they lost one potential player whose name I can't begin to pronounce. It took me until November to pronounce Ndamukong (IN-Dom-I-Con).

While all this was going on, I had to ask myself, "What goes on behind closed doors when the Pelini Bros. and the other members of the coaching staff decide who they would pursue to play for the Cornhuskers." Who should they try to recruit for offense? For Defense? What are the current weaknesses that Nebraska needs to round out? Who will we need not only this year, but two and

three years from now as we lose seniors from key positions? They might ask, What potential players will match up the best against other players from the opposing teams on the season's schedule? Which potential recruits have the best speed? The best agility? The best field sense? Which players have leadership qualities? Which players should be eliminated because they tend to lose their edge under stress? Maybe they tend to be a little lazy. I always wonder why it is that some coaches can build winning teams, while other coaches just can't create a cohesive, successful team?

2000 years ago, Jesus began his ministry in Galilee as a lone intenerate preacher and prophet, healing the lame, blind and demon possessed. It was on this day in Luke chapter 5 along the shore of Gennesaret, with the crowds gathered around that he looked over and saw the fishermen along the shore. He approached the fishermen as they were cleaning up their nets after a long night fishing. They were discouraged because they caught no fish. Remember, this wasn't a couple guys out sports fishing and they got skunked – this meant a dent in their livelihood. It meant going home empty-handed with nothing to sell in the marketplace.

Jesus approached them and told them to push their boats back out into the deep and let down their nets. Simon replied, **“We've been out all night fishing, but if you say to do it, we will do it.”** Don't you wonder what these experienced fishermen thought when this preacher came by and told them how to do their job? Yet they obediently did what he said. So when they caste their nets, they pulled them in and they were full to overflowing. And it was on the tail end of that miracle, while the disciples stood astonished at what they had just seen, that Jesus CALLED HIS FIRST DISCIPLES. His words to them were, **“Don't be afraid; from now on you will catch men.”** He called them to come and follow him.

I wonder what might have been going through his mind as he chose those who would be his team? Like the NU coaching staff, were there certain qualities he was looking for? Was he looking for COMMITMENT? If that were the case, Peter later denied that he even knew Jesus three different times. Was it FAITH that he was looking for? Thomas doubted Jesus on at least two occasions. Was he looking for LOYALTY? Judas sold him out for 30 pieces of silver. Was he looking for TEAMWORK? They had come from all walks of life and on at least a couple of occasions they were arguing about who was the greatest disciples.

Was Jesus just randomly calling people, or was their a method to his plan? I'm not so sure it is the personalities or people he called as much as it was the unity

and power of his message. While they came from different walks of life, the message and vision was the same. When it came time for them to become the body of believers who would evangelize the world, they had been empowered by the Holy Spirit who is the author of unity and teamwork.

Come to the TABLE

At the end of his ministry when he gathered with his disciples in the upper room, he once again called them – this time to the table. He had that final time with them, and in the course of the conversation he taught them when the team needed to know to really thrive. He demonstrated *HUMILITY* by washing his disciples feet. He tells them in John 13:7, **“Jesus replied, “You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand.”** Don’t you think that in the future, these disciples would always remembered back to that moment when Jesus showed them humility? Don’t you think that’s what he meant when he said, “Later you will understand.”

In the upper room, Jesus also taught them about *LIFE*. In John 14:19, Jesus told them in the course of their conversation at the Last Supper, **“Because I live, you also will live.”** He taught them *OBEDIENCE*. V. 23 says, **“If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching.”** He taught them *PEACE*, **“Peace I leave with you, my peace I give you.”** (v. 27). He taught them to *LOVE* each other. John 15:12-13 says, **“My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. (13) Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for a friend.”** He also taught them that the road would *not be easy*. He said that they would suffer and die just as he did. V. 15 he said, **“If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first.”**

These five chapters of John (13-17) are greater than any locker room pep talk you have heard. Never has there been a more powerful team strategy than Jesus talking face to face with his disciples. It was an ominous setting. Like a team that is getting trounced 40 to nothing in the first half, the mood in that room was dismal and heavy. Jesus was speaking of his own death. He knew it was coming immediately, so he called his friends together to join in this feast and talk with them about matters of great important. There is much we can learn from these pages.

We too can learn how to live and to love and to serve one another. Today as we gather at the table, let’s remember his words. **“As often as you do this, do it in remembrance of me.”** Amen.