# Commentary on Luke 5-1:11 - Let Down Your Nets - Fr. Thomas Homily September 27, 2026

Glory to Jesus Christ >>Glory forever

In this morning's Gospel reading that we just heard from Luke 5-1:11, we heard that as Jesus was standing on the shore by the lake of Gennesaret, he saw two boats that were not pulled all the way up, but almost all the way to the shore. One of them belonged to Simon Peter, who was busy with several other fishermen, apparently Andrew, James, and John. They were busy washing their nets. Jesus asked Simon Peter to come with him into his boat and move off the shore just a little ways so that he could teach the people without the crowd pressing upon him and crushing them as I guess sometimes they did because they got very close. There he sat in the boat and talked for for some time. Then he asked Simon Peter to do one thing more. He said, "Go further off the shore and let down your nets for a catch of fish." Peter, probably tired from fishing all throughout the night, protested somewhat. He said, "You know, we worked all night and caught nothing." But even so, putting aside his fatigue and probably his doubts, he gave in and said, "But at your word, I will let down the nets."

We heard what happened next. When Peter let down the nets, they were so full of fish that the nets were about to break and they had to call their partners James and John to come with the other boat to help bring in the great sh of fish that they had caught. Reflecting on this kind of brief Gospel passage, we could probably summarize that Peter was less than optimistic about the Lord's request. While they had been fishing all night, they caught nothing.  And he himself was very familiar with the waters and with the fish and years of experience fishing had probably taught him that casting out the nets once again and holding them in would probably be futile. But now going out and casting out the nets once again as he did was no longer a matter of fishing expertise. Now it was a matter of obedience. Perhaps at that point it wasn't even a matter of faith. Was he really anticipating that the Lord would work some kind of miracle? **Whatever it was, he obeyed**. When the Lord said, "Go out further and cast your net again over the side." Perhaps in spite of his own misgivings, he said, "Okay." And did it. We see the result of his obedience and of his willingness to obey. Many times people turn to God for help. when they don't see things happening after they've made their petition to the Lord, perhaps even for the second or third or even the fourth time, they begin to question themselves. They wonder, "Perhaps I lack faith? Perhaps I'm just too sinful? Perhaps God is angry with me?" Perhaps what they need more than anything else at that point is obedience. to be keeping the commandments, to be presenting themselves in worship at the Divine services, to be praying, to be reading the scriptures, really just to be trying to abide in a real relationship

with God and then allowing God to take care of the particular circumstances or concerns as He best knows how.

But the focus, our focus, needs to be on being turned towards God and allowing him to act. **Our part is to be orienting ourselves, our lives, our hearts, our minds towards God**. And many times you've heard me talk about this and say this is repentance. This is metanoia. The result then of our obedience is sometimes something even greater or sometimes something completely different from anything that we might there have asked for or even imagined.

In the Gospel reading that we just heard, Simon Peter's obedience resulted in an extremely large catch of fish even after they had been fishing all night and caught nothing. Often times our obedience, our struggle to keep the commandments, our willingness to enter into a living relationship with the Lord to strive to abide in his presence results in blessings that we never anticipated. And if we look at our own lives, I think all of us, we see God's providence at work. Perhaps there's been a situation where we fretted or worried over something. Maybe it was something big or maybe it was something small. But in the end, God works things out and we're left wondering, "How did that even happen?" or "Why was I ever so worried?" And we find ourselves saying, "Glory to God," or like Simon Peter, "Depart from me for I'm a sinful man." God doesn't ask us to be obedient because he's some kind of cruel taskmaster or because he's trying to impose his will. His desire is that we should follow a particular path and become what we were created to be as we heard the Apostle Paul state in this morning's reading from Corinthians. And he draws se from several passages from various books in the Old Testament, Leviticus, Deuteronomy, and Isaiah. He says to the Corinthians, you are the temple of the living God. You are the temple of the living God. As God said, I will live in them and move among them. I will be their God and they shall be my people. Therefore, come out from them.

Come out from those who are ungodly and be separate from them, says the Lord. Touch nothing unclean. Then I will welcome you. I will be a father to you, and you shall be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty. The Apostle Paul encourages the Corinthians and us to cleanse ourselves from everything, every defilement of body and spirit and holiness perfect in the fear of God. He encourages them to become full to become a people complete in holiness.  That is to become saints to put aside the old man and be made new made alive in Christ.

And this really is the point of our obedience to cease seeing only with the eyes of flesh and to be illumined with the light of the spirit to come to the fullness of the knowledge of the truth. To live as one whose hope not in the things of this world, not in the things that are seen, but in the things that are unseen. To live with the knowledge that such

obedience brings a promise of great reward, knowing that no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor heart imagined what God has prepared for those who love him.

St. Isaac the Syrian in his 71st homily writes this and I I really paraphrase this a lot but he writes that such hope awakens a natural longing in the soul. We no longer feel the wear and toil of obedience of the struggle for God's kingdom but we become insensitive to afflictions and throughout the whole course of our spiritual journey we think that we walk on air not treading the path of human footsteps. We see neither the harshness of the way, nor even mountains or rivers that might stand in our path because our attention, our news is fixed on the bosom of the Father. Things that lie a far off, we see clearly and we examine them with the hidden eye of faith as if they were present before us. But brothers and sisters, as we as we continue with the Liturgy, as we leave here this week, let us remember obedience not as a burden but as a path; a path that God calls us upon that we might become the persons that He's created us to be.

Glory to Jesus Christ >> Glory forever

Link to Sermon - https://youtu.be/cThfeGdyyZc?t=4886