

A BOATLOAD OF BLESSINGS

And it came to pass, that, as the people pressed upon him to hear the word of God, he stood by the lake of Gennesaret, and saw two ships standing by the lake; but the fishermen were gone out of them, and were washing their nets. And he entered into one of the ships, which was Simon's, and prayed him that he would thrust out a little from the land. And he sat down, and taught the people out of the ship. Now when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught. And Simon answering said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing; nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net. - Luke 5:1-5

I want you to picture this story through your mind's eye. Jesus, standing tall at the edge of a great body of water. People gathered all around him, hanging on his every word. Two empty boats bobbing up and down on the water's surface.

Now, look off to the side. A group of fishermen sit huddled together, scrubbing their nets (not that they needed cleaning - after all, they had remained empty all night). Take a close look at these men. Their eyes bespeak weariness. Their expressions portray disappointment. Their posture indicates defeat. They

had labored all night and had absolutely nothing to show for it. There was no fruit for their labor. There was no evidence that they had been hard at work. There were no fish, which meant there was no money. After all, fishing was their livelihood.

If you listen carefully, you can even hear their conversation. "What do you think went wrong?" asks one fisherman. "I don't know," answers another. "Maybe this isn't what the Lord called us to do after all." "What's the use?" cries a third fisherman. "It's just too hard, and it's not fair. We work just as hard as the other fishermen. Why do they get all the profits while we sit here with empty nets and heavy hearts?"

Have you ever found yourself in a similar situation? Whether it be your job, your family, your church, or something else entirely. You put your effort into it day after day only to be rewarded with pain and disappointment. You work hard, doing the tasks that you believe God has called you to do, and NOTHING! No fruit! No reward! No compensation! Nothing but the bitter taste of defeat. You feel like giving up. You feel like changing directions. You question if maybe you heard God wrong, and this is not His will after all. But most of all, you doubt. You doubt if God even

cares about you or what you're going through. Sound familiar? If so, read on.

And when they had this done, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes; and their net brake. And they beckoned unto their partners, which were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came, and filled both the ships, so that they began to sink. 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 was astonished, and all that were with him at the draught of the fishes which they had taken. - Luke 5:6-9

Did you catch what just happened? The fishermen had toiled all night (the best time for fishing, mind you) and hadn't caught a thing. But now, in God's time, they caught so many fish that their nets broke and two boats started to sink under the weight. (Imagine the smell!)

God still works miracles today, but He does so in His own time, just as He has always done. His ways are not our ways. They may not make sense to us. They may not seem the best to us. But if we will allow Him to lead us and if we will be faithful to follow that leadership, we will see miracles. Our disappointment will be replaced with great joy. We will be able to trade our defeat for victory. But we must wait on God.

It's difficult, I know, but miracles don't happen without Him.

If you're weighed down with questions today about God's purpose for you and your ministry, talk to God about it. Follow His leadership, and then wait for His miracle. It will come, but only in His time! And when it does come, it will take more than two boats to hold the blessings!