

1/25/09

**THE CALL TO WORSHIP**

**Psalm 100**

Lay Minister: 1 Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth.

**People: 2 Worship the LORD with gladness; come before him with joyful songs.**

Lay Minister: 3 Know that the LORD is God.

**People: It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.**

Lay Minister: 4 Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise;

**People: give thanks to him and praise his name.**

Lay Minister: 5 For the LORD is good and his love endures forever;

**People: his faithfulness continues through all generations.**

Lay Minister: We begin in the name of the Lord who made us.

**People: In the name of the Father, and in the name of the Son, and in the name of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

**THE PRAYER OF THE DAY** Lord God Almighty, to those who follow the Lord Jesus, Your Spirit gives gifts to use in Your service. May our use of these many gifts always serve to glorify Your name, witness to Your compassion, and bring good to others We pray through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

**THE OLD TESTAMENT LESSON**

Jonah 3:1-10

*(The Ninevites respond to God's call for repentance.)*

1 Then the word of the LORD came to Jonah a second time: 2 "Go to the great city of Nineveh and proclaim to it the message I give you."

3 Jonah obeyed the word of the LORD and went to Nineveh. Now Nineveh was a very important city-- a visit required three days. 4 On the first day, Jonah started into the city. He proclaimed: "Forty more days and Nineveh will be overturned." 5 The Ninevites believed God. They declared a fast, and all of them, from the greatest to the least, put on sackcloth. 6 When the news reached the king of Nineveh, he rose from his throne, took off his royal robes, covered himself with sackcloth and sat down in the dust. 7 Then he issued a proclamation in Nineveh: "By the decree of the king and his nobles: Do not let any man or beast, herd or flock, taste anything; do not let them eat or drink. 8 But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth. Let everyone call urgently on God. Let them give up their evil ways and their violence. 9 Who knows? God may yet relent and with compassion turn from his fierce anger so that we will not perish."

10 When God saw what they did and how they turned from their evil ways, he had compassion and did not bring upon them the destruction he had threatened.

**THE EPISTLE LESSON** 1 Corinthians 7:29-31

*(In a continuation of readings from 1st Corinthians, St. Paul speaks of this world's passing away.)*

29 What I mean, brothers, is that the time is short. From now on those who have wives should live as if they had none; 30 those who mourn, as if they did not; those who

are happy, as if they were not; those who buy something, as if it were not theirs to keep; 31 those who use the things of the world, as if not engrossed in them. For this world in its present form is passing away.

## THE GOSPEL LESSON

Mark 1:14-20 (*Jesus announces the kingdom's coming.*)

14 After John was put in prison, **Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. 15 "The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!"**

**16 As Jesus walked beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. 17 "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men."** 18 At once they left their nets and followed him.

19 When he had gone a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John in a boat, preparing their nets. 20 Without delay he called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men and followed him.

INTRO - Monday was a holiday and a day off school so I took some children fishing. Actually I took Quillan and Tommy, Jenna and Gracie. It was raining in Palmer so we went north along the Glenn Highway to ice fish where the sun was shining. And, even though the fishing wasn't great, we did catch 3 trout and the kids had a good time.

I. Many people look at this lesson and go immediately to the job that Jesus gives.

A. **17 "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men."**

1. That was the job Jesus had for Peter and Andrew, James and John, and the rest of His disciples.
2. That is also the job Jesus has for us. He wants us to be fishers of men, instead of fishers of fish.
3. He wants us to share His love, His life, His forgiveness and salvation, His Word with others so they believe and have eternal life through the grace of God.

B. There are many ways to share this love.

1. Often, our example of faith and love to those we know makes an impression. A simple invitation or comment can lead to a visit to church, or a conversation about the hope we have in us because of Jesus.
2. Sometimes we might go out of our way and make a special effort to reach someone who doesn't know the Lord.
3. Some of our people have gone on mission trips to reach those who don't know Jesus.
4. Jesus does want us to be fishers of men, just like his disciples.

II. Now, we had our share of adventures on Monday, but before I left Gary Foster offered me his ice auger. "No," I said, "I've got a brand new one for Christmas." And off we went. After catching a couple of fish at the first lake, we decided to go to a second one. We slid and trudged down a steep hill, across a slippery lake. We got to the fishing hole and I pulled the cord and got the auger running. However, as I pulled the cord, the handle remained in my hand,

and the rope retreated all the way into the housing. That was my last chance to drill holes, and we got one drilled. So four people fished from one hole.

Even though I didn't know it, my equipment wasn't ready to go fishing. If your equipment isn't ready, even if you want to fish you can't. If we aren't ready to reach out, we will have trouble doing so.

A. Did you see that most of this lesson wasn't about the job Jesus had for the disciples? It was first about Jesus preparing people of His time for His ministry.

1. **Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. 15 "The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!"**

A. First, Jesus was calling the people of His day to be ready for His ministry for the coming of God's kingdom.

B. This readiness came through turning from sin in repentance, and from believing in God.

2. Then, this account is about Jesus reaching out to these men.

**A. 16 As Jesus walked beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. "Come, follow me, "Jesus said," and I will make you fishers of men."**

B. Jesus had a job for them, but He also had a call to them. Come with me. Follow me.

C. Jesus was calling the disciples to a relationship with God through repentance and faith, through following Him, that was preparation for the job of fishing for men.

B. The point is this, if we don't have a relationship with the Lord first, we aren't ready for the job Jesus gives and we aren't going to be very successful, if at all, in reaching out for others.

1. Before sharing the Savior, we need to know our need to be saved, our sin and our need for repentance.

2. Before calling others to faith, we need to trust God for our forgiveness, His help in this life, and eternal life in heaven.

3. We need to personally hear and respond to the call of Jesus before we can call others to do the same.

C. I wonder how many times our outreach efforts happen when, even though we have the right intent, and we want to do the right thing, nevertheless we have not responded in repentance and faith.

1. How can we call someone to a Savior, when we are denying our sin, and, maybe even without knowing it, our need to be forgiven or saved?

2. How can we call someone to believe when we are trusting ourselves, and our efforts instead of Jesus?

3. Just like a person needs the right equipment to go fishing, we need repentance and faith to effectively share Jesus with others.

III. Last week I talked about the lady who brought others to faith and said, "Church should be like an AA meeting." Do you know that in AA, those who help others are ones who have experienced and dealt with their own issues?

A. Today Jesus is calling you to be a fisher of men.

B. But, first Jesus is calling you to Himself.

1. **Repent and believe.** Is there some temptation or behavior that you are struggling with? Believe that Jesus does forgive, and He can and will provide His help.
2. **Come after me.** Jesus calls us to leave the lives that serve only self, to turn from our sin and to come to His love and forgiveness.
3. **Follow me.** Jesus lived a life of obedience and love, of service and suffering. Realize that following the Lord is a call to the same kind of life, and it is a struggle.

C. But, Jesus calls you to His church, His people.

1. Here He feeds you with his word so you can repent and believe.
2. Here He heals you with His forgiveness so you learn to love Him.
3. Here He nurtures and cares for you with His family.
4. Jesus is creating a relationship ship with you, so that you can share the Jesus you know with others.

CONCLUSION - I'm taking someone fishing again tomorrow, another pastor. But, I got the ice auger fixed, and they put glue on the knot. I am getting prepared so we can fish. Jesus is calling you today to His love, so you can fish for others. Amen.