

The Siren Call of Christ
By Paul J. Brooks

Text: Luke 5:1-11

SSS: *The Siren Call of Christ must be answered; it cannot be ignored.*

Please, remain standing and grab your bibles. If you don't have a Bible there is one in the seatback pocket in front of you, that is our gift to you. We want the Word of God in your hand and home because we believe it has the power to transform lives. If you're in those Bibles we will be on page 502, we'll be in Luke 5:1-11, let's prepare our hearts for the reading of God's Word.

MAIN TEXT:

Jesus Calls the First Disciples

1On one occasion, while the crowd was pressing in on him to hear the word of God, he was standing by the lake of Gennesaret, **2**and he saw two boats by the lake, but the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. **3**Getting into one of the boats, which was Simon's, he asked him to put out a little from the land. And he sat down and taught the people from the boat.**4**And when he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch." **5**And Simon answered, "Master, we toiled all night and took nothing! But at your word I will let down the nets." **6**And when they had done this, they enclosed a large number of fish, and their nets were breaking. **7**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. **8**But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." **9**For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish that they had taken, **10**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." **11**And when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed him.

Introduction:

Our time together this morning may be a little bit different than what we've been doing lately, Pastor Marc has been teaching through a series on the Ten Commandments and how those aspects of the Law are still very relevant to the Christian life today. For those of you who don't know me, my name is Paul Brooks, and I've been heavily involved in a Pastoral Internship here at North Ridge Life for a little over a year now. Intern has been code for many different things, gofer, janitor, plumber, landscaper, and a wide assortment of other titles and hats. But primarily, it means that I am a student, studying diligently the ways of loving, stewarding and shepherding hearts in order to one day become ordained as a Pastor. During my training Pastor Marc has noticed my preaching has a sort of evangelistic leaning. That simply means that in almost every sermon I have delivered before him, there has been an overwhelming focus on seeking and seeing saved those who are lost to Jesus. Therefore, today we will plunge deeply into the gospel and the Siren Call of Christ for each of our lives. I want to begin by placing before you a scenario to illustrate the sense of urgency with which a decision must be made. Today.

I want you to imagine that there's a storm, you're in the middle of the Bering Sea, the waves are swelling up to 30 feet tall, the boat has been smashed by wave upon wave for so long now that hull is starting to give way to the onslaught of water that has continuously pounded it. The Coast Guard Rescue Helicopter has been called and is on station, the Captain has given the order to abandon ship. You've gotten into your cold-water survival suit, the ship hull has now cracked wide open and water is being taken on board at an alarming rate, the ship is sinking. The siren call comes over the radio and loud speaker from the Rescue Helicopter on station outside. You have a choice to make, stay on the ship and inevitably drown as it sinks to the bottom of the frigid Bering Sea, or take your chances in the icy waters trusting the Coast Guard and their crew to fish you out of the water in time before hypothermia sets in and you freeze to death. The ship is going down either way, there is no other option on the table, you absolutely must make a decision. The only way for you to be saved, to receive salvation from the icy cold eternal separation of the deep, is to trust completely the ability of those in the Rescue Helicopter to save your life.

The Siren Call of Christ must be answered; it cannot be ignored. This call cannot be sent to voicemail or declined. We must answer, either in affirming acceptance and repentance in faithful obedience leading to life abundantly everlasting thereafter, or in self-condemning rejection that leads to eternal separation from our Creator casting ourselves into the relentless

fiery lake of Hell. Hell is a very real place, folks. I know this is an unpopular thing to say and that many of you this morning are thinking, “really, Paul, do you have to be such a Debbie-downer so early, I’ve barely had my coffee?”, BUT it’s true and I would be derelict in my duties as Christ-follower not to inform you of how grave the circumstances surrounding this Siren Call really are. Whether you’re here this morning as a life-long faithful follower of Jesus, or you’re listening through bloodshot eyes hearing the Gospel for the first time, the Lord in His Sovereign mercy orchestrated and ordained your being here, and I assure you there is good news for you today regardless of your religious background or lack thereof. Therefore, I encourage you as we begin, to listen with fresh ears and hearts tuned anew to the Word of the Lord this morning.

BODY:

When the Siren Call of Christ comes it doesn’t always come as a trumpet blast, at least not at first. Look at verses 1-3 with me, “**1**On one occasion, while the crowd was pressing in on him to hear the word of God, he was standing by the lake of Gennesaret, **2**and he saw two boats by the lake, but the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. **3**Getting into one of the boats, which was Simon’s, he asked him to put out a little from the land. And he sat down and taught the people from the boat.” Jesus comes to lake Gennesaret, which is also known as the Sea of Galilee. Jesus had been teaching in the Synagogues and become quite popular, and people wanted to hear what He had to say. Mark tells us that Jesus was teaching the crowd the parable of the Four Soils. This the story where Jesus says there are four types of people that hear the Word. The first hear the Word and immediately Satan comes and take it away. The second type are instantly filled with joy but since they have no root, only last until trouble comes there way and then fall away. The third hear the Word but become so entangled in the worries and desires of this life the Word is choked out of them. Then the fourth, the seed grown in good soil, the people who hear the Word, receive it, and become doers of it and produce a crop up to 100 times what was sown in them.

Jesus has just given that Word from the boat that was pushed a little from the shore. Now, Peter isn’t closely related to Jesus is at this point, he hasn’t spent any time with Him yet. Little did he know that he was about to receive a crash course on who Jesus really is and that it will change his life and indeed the world as he knew it, forever.

Why did Jesus choose Peter? The text tells us he had a boat, but that's not why he chose his boat or him. There was another boat right next to it that Jesus could have easily commandeered. We know that Jesus is fully Man and Fully God, and that He doesn't do anything at random. Despite how cute of a song lyric it may be, God's love is anything but reckless. In the Garden at Gethsemane, we see Jesus sweating literal blood agonizing over what was about to happen to him. He knew every strike of the lash that was to come, every inch of His flesh that was to be ripped from his bone, and how excruciating His death would be. He saw it, considered it looked at you and me, and said, "They're worth it." That's not reckless behavior, that calculated and methodical behavior that's the Father heart of God.

So, again, why Peter? Did he possess something in himself that was special, something Jesus needed to complete His ministry here on earth? We all know from looking back at Peter's history that his track record for fidelity and getting things right are anything but spotless. Peter's the guy who Jesus knows will deny him three times (Matthew 26:69-75), the guy who cuts the ear off the guard that comes to arrest Jesus. Peter gets it really wrong, a lot. But he's also the first to recognize Jesus as the Messiah (Matthew 16:17), and the guy that will lead the early Church through some of the most difficult and dangerous times in the Church's life. You see, there was nothing innately good about Peter, and to help blow away any pre-conceived notions you might have about the type of person you have to be for Jesus to choose you, look at Peter. He was a fisherman, and not the cool kind of sunglasses, habit shirt, cargo shorts, Teva sandals with the strap around the big-toe wearing kind of fisherman. I mean the crab boat kind, the kind of blue collar, doesn't exactly speak in the Queen's English, calloused hands kind of fisherman. Jesus loves roughnecks. Those who are dirty, who are stained by the world, and have experienced hurt, loss, triumph and rejection. Jesus took the equivalent of a longshoreman, roughneck, and deckhand, and turned him into one of greatest leaders the Church has ever known. The text says that Jesus asked him to put out a little from shore, and the Jesus sat down taught the crowd around him. So, Jesus started small with Peter, But look at what happens next in our passage: "**4And when he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch."**" See? Jesus then tells Peter to put out into the deep water, and to let down his nets. There's a declaration of trust being asked for here. Peter is being asked to trust that Jesus knows something he doesn't, that Jesus' plan is better than his own. Peter, his brother Andrew, and their partners have been fishing all night, and they have been "skunked".

Skunked, that's a fishing term that means, we ain't caught nothing. Look at how Peter reacts to Jesus. He says "Master", recognizing that Jesus is higher than himself, he submits to Christ's lordship. Though he doesn't understand what's going on right now, he trusts Jesus, and says, "we toiled all night and took nothing! BUT, at your word I will let down the nets." I want you to see what Peter is experiencing here, don't gloss over it. He has some very real doubts, based in legitimate factual evidence. Some of you have doubts about the trustworthiness and goodness of God. Understandably so, you've had real hurts, losses, and pains. God isn't interested in sweeping any of those things under a rug, as if they didn't happen. God sees those hurts and He isn't ignoring them. Jesus isn't telling Peter to forget about the awful night, Jesus is asking Peter to trust Him in spite of those things, because Jesus has something miraculous waiting for him on the other side of trust. And look at how Peter responds to those real doubts, he says "I will submit to you Jesus, and be obedient to your word, even if I get skunked again, I trust the work, the effort, the heartache will be worth it." Notice where Peter is putting his trust. He's putting his trust not in the outcome, but in the one who controls the outcome, Jesus. Jesus is teaching us a lesson here through Peter that we should all remember, and that is the *Giver* always precedes the *Gift*.

Do you want the secret to a fulfilled and contented life, do you want to know the meaning of life? It's JESUS, everything from beginning to end find their yes and amen in HIM! Jesus is telling Peter and us this morning to put our trust in Him because He is eternal, a life apart from Jesus, no matter how amazing will only end with you in a grave. But Jesus is eternal, life with Him doesn't end in the grave, it goes on forever, and that is why you should put your trust in Him.

The scripture tells us that Peter is rewarded for his Trust in Jesus; "**6And when they had done this, they enclosed a large number of fish, and their nets were breaking. 7They 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.**", the haul of fish is HUGE! Jesus asked Peter for trust in Him and then gives him the reason why he should trust Jesus. See, Jesus takes Peter's very real doubts based in experiential factual evidences and replaces those *doubts* with *confidences* that are also based in very real experiential evidences. It's hard to argue with results like that. My life before Jesus was a train wreck. I was lost in pills, booze, sex, and porn. I made a plan to kill myself.

Jesus stopped me by asking me to put my trust in Him for a simple conversation that began a little over 6 years ago and hasn't stopped since. My life is a complete 180 now, from what it was then. I have a beautiful wife, two gorgeous and amazing kids, and a life that anyone would love to have. I didn't clean myself up, I didn't quit drinking or porn on my own, and then find Jesus waiting for me. Jesus found me first, don't mistake the order of operations here. You don't have to clean yourself up for Jesus. That's like saying I have to wash my hands before I take a shower, it doesn't make any sense. Listen, Jesus loves you just the way you are. And He loves you too much to let you stay that way. He made me new, all because, like Peter, I saw the absolute emptiness of my life without Jesus, I accepted His invitation and put my trust in Him.

Let's talk about the deep waters that Jesus called Peter into. God is calling all of you here this morning into those very same deep waters today. Deep waters sound scary, and they are. The deep waters can look like a million different things, but they are all rooted in trusting Jesus. Trust is not in our nature, in fact sin's bedrock foundation is deeply rooted in lack of trust in God's ultimate goodness (Genesis 3). You don't have to walk through cancer, war, or death of a loved one, to experience a lack of trust in God's goodness, no indeed even when things are seemingly great, we still struggle with a lack of trust in God's ultimate goodness. For many of us, deep waters of trust aren't going to be in places of catastrophic failure or crisis. They are in the everyday mundane realities of life, our daily provision of sustenance, our health, and our relationships. The pressing matters that daily demand our attention, that demand we answer them, Jesus commands us to trust in Him for these things. When Christ tells us to take up our cross and follow him, that means placing complete and total trust in Him and Him alone for salvation, comfort, redemption, for hope of a better life to come, indeed for all our needs (Matthew 16:24). He asks us to trust Him for all of life's worries.

When Narci was pregnant with Mahalia, she had really bad "morning sickness", (side-note: is it morning sickness if it lasts all day and night?!) she had it so bad that the doctors were thinking that she may have some gall stones. She was finally so sick that I had mentioned something about it to Marc and Ginger. They came over and anointed her with oil and prayed for and sure enough she began to feel better shortly thereafter. During that time, Marc and I were talking outside about some of the trepidations I was having about being the Father of two beautiful children and Husband to super Amazing and Gorgeous wife. I was concerned with

how I was going to provide for them, my job at AT&T wasn't what I felt called to do, and to be honest I was quite miserable working there. I wanted out, but was scared to try something new, and the job requirements were constantly getting more and more unrealistic and unattainable for me. Marc, in his usual way of Big-Brothering me, told me something that has been a bedrock reminder of the trust I place in Christ every day. He said, "Don't ever forget that God loves your Children just as much as He loves you and more than you love them. The Child that grows within your wife's belly, is God's promise of your next meal." You see, God loves your kids more than you do, He clothes the birds of the air, birds don't have a 401K, investitures, or a diverse portfolio. Jesus says that God provides for them from the day they hatch to the die, and that not one of them dies without the Father knowing what has happened to it (Matthew 6:25-34). If God cares that much for a sparrow, how do you think He feels about you? His Word tells us that you and I are infinitesimally more important to Him than any bird, rose, or even angel (Psalm 139:1-14)? God is calling us into deeper waters, are you scared of the deep waters? You don't have to be afraid of them.

Miracles happen in the deep water, and only in the deep water. Let me ask you something, when Peter was called out upon the water to walk on the water to Jesus (Matthew 14:22-32), would it have been a huge leap of faith if Peter had stepped out on to just 2 inches of water? (pregger pause). Of course not, right!? That much water wouldn't pose a potential threat to anything, not even an ant. They had to be deep, they had to pose a risk of some sort, and I'm not saying that deep waters of trust have to be life threatening waters for you. But what I am saying is that they are going to be deep, they are going to require you to make a decision, they are going to require you to make a leap of faith. And we've learned in our text that faith is rewarded, look at verses 6 and 7, when Peter had done what Jesus commanded, the haul of fish was miraculous! In the deep-water Jesus shows us who He really is. When Christ calls you into those deep waters, and you trust Him in faith, something miraculous always happens. You receive very real, experiential and factual, evidence that He is exactly who He says He is.

I believe in the gifts, that is the spiritual gifts that Paul talks about in 1 Corinthians 12. I believe those gifts are for today, miracles happen every day, most of us just don't eyes to see them for what they really are. The greatest miracle God performs on a daily basis is the miracle of a transformed life. He takes longshoreman, Fishermen, rough-necks, lawyers, doctors, people

all walks of professions, and even prostitutes, porn-watchers, gamblers, thieves, liars, adulterers, drug-addicts, drunks, gossips, road-ragers, hypocrites, democrats, republicans, libertarians, and dare I say EVEN CONGRESSMEN/WOMEN, and turns them into loving and compassionate Daughters and Sons of the most High-God. You may be here this morning having grown up in the church, knowing all the right things to say, to do, to feel, but you're cold dead and empty inside. You may be feeling like that white washed to tomb, Jesus was telling the Pharisees about. But Jesus can and will bring you back from the dead, THAT's the miracle he has for you in the deep water. You may be here from a life of constant promiscuity, searching for the love, affection, and value in broken relationship, after broken relationship. You may be sitting in your seat there feeling used up, tossed out, numb and dead inside, but Jesus is waiting to make you brand new and give you value and worth, because to Him you are the most precious thing on earth. THAT's a deep-water miracle. You may have spent your whole life strung out on drugs or booze trying to numb the pain, so afraid of feeling even an Iota of pain that you can't stand to be sober for more than 5 minutes. Sitting here feeling numb, cold, and isolated locked inside a prison cell of grief, guilt, and shame, like a dead man unable to so much as tie his own shoe, but Jesus is calling to you out of that tomb this morning into the deep water of trust in Him. That's the miracle waiting for you in the deep water.

The *Siren Call* has been made for Peter, he heard it, followed it to the deep water, and received his miracle. Peter knows now that Jesus is much more than just some crazy Rabbi who jacked his boat for an afternoon Sunday School lesson. This is how we know, look at verse 8 with me, “. **8But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, “Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.”** Can I have some real talk with you for a minute? Some of our reactions to sin are not in line with the cost of sin. Do you know what sin costs? Sin demands blood for payment. When Adam and Eve were expelled from the garden, God killed an animal to make their clothes. The blood of that animal would be the foreshadowing of what Jesus would pay for our reconciliation with God the Father (Genesis 3:21). His blood was the payment for MY burden, my fault, OUR folly. We cannot look upon the cross of Christ, and then look upon our sin with mild apathy. There's some talk on the internet about something called “hyper-grace”. This notion that somehow, because I'm completely forgiven of all my sins in Christ, that it doesn't matter what I do now. The notion that through some weird, unorthodox, sea-lawyering, self-justification, if I get a hold of “radical grace”, that I will then go party like

it's 1999, that too much of God's grace will lead me to just eat, drink, and be merry, fornicate, and just do whatever wicked thing my evil heart desires. That simply is not the way the radical grace of God works in the heart of a true believer. See, **Radical grace only leads to radical obedience.** A true understanding of the radical grace of God that has been poured out on us through Jesus' blood on the cross, can only lead to radical obedience to His Word (John 14:15). When Peter experienced the shadow of things to come in the abundant haul of fish, his reaction wasn't to run to the local bar and grab a celebratory pint with the boys. His very appropriate response was to fall on the knees of Jesus and cry out what a sinful and wretched man that I am. Like Peter, we must be broken over our sin. All throughout Scripture, any time a human being finds themselves in the presence of God, they immediately do what Peter did. Look at Isaiah 6:5, **"Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips, for my eyes have seen the Lord of Hosts!"** Woe is me, that's a woe is me I despair for life itself, because I am in the presence THE Holy God, and I know that true justice demands that I be obliterated for sinfulness. John, in Revelation 1:17 knew that he wasn't holy enough to be in the presence of God he said, **"When I saw Him, I fell at His feet as though dead..."** As though DEAD, fearful and trembling. He was self-aware enough to know that while Jesus may be his friend, Jesus was certainly not his peer (Revelation 1:12-17). That is the only appropriate response from us when we encounter the Holy God. When the reality of the magnitude of who Jesus is and what He has done for us truly comes to roost in our heart, our reaction, our answer to hearing the siren call of Christ can only be radical, unashamed, unencumbered obedience.

How does Jesus respond to Peter's reaction to the revelation of who He real is? Let's look at verse 10, **"...And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching men.""** Jesus tells us Simon-Peter not to be afraid. The word Jesus used in Greek is, **"phobeo"**, it may sound familiar, because it's where we get the word phobia which means fear. One of the translative definitions of the word phobeo is to "put to flight" or "make to runaway". See Jesus is telling Peter to ignore his instincts that are screaming at him to run. Jesus knows our natural impulses when we perceive a threat of any kind is to do one of two things, fight or flight. Our pride my makes us stand and fight hardening our hearts even further toward God as though we have the moral authority to stand in judgement over Him. While our fear tends to make us run

because we are terrified of what Jesus might ask of us and what it might cost.¹ (*Cue instrumentalist*).

Application:

Lastly, in verse 11, “**And when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed him.**” The *Siren Call* of Christ demands that we leave everything behind us and follow Him.² Leaving everything behind doesn’t necessarily mean the material things of this life. Some of you have been holding on to past hurts, regrets, sinful habits, guilts, and shames(plural) for so long that if you were to let them go now, you wouldn’t even know who you are anymore. You’re scared, even terrified, of the *Siren Call* Christ is putting before you today. Allow me to further my point, do me a favor, everyone close your eyes (lower lights). Remember the scenario I mentioned at the beginning of our time together? Where the boat is sinking, the waves of 40 feet high are crashing into the already weakened hull, the icy cold water is rising in the boat, it’s up to your knees now? Whether you want to admit it or not, that is your life right now, in this very moment. The *Siren Call* of Christ has been given to you this morning, and time has run out. The call must be answered, you cannot decline the call. There is no more

1 Notice He doesn’t say to Peter, “I won’t hurt you.”, or “This won’t sting a bit.”. Jesus doesn’t say anything like that. How many of you have ever scraped your knee as a child? Man, I know I did, and there was one particular “scraping” that took place in my childhood when I was riding a friend’s go-cart. My friend’s dad was all about that more power and had the cart souped up to go really fast, like Mario Andretti fast. I fell off at a high rate of speed that caused multiple pieces of gravel to be lodged and embedded deep in my knee making it look like it had been through a cheese grater. My mother was a Corpsman or Doc in the Navy, so, she knew how to debris a wound. I remember this vividly because, if I may be so bold, it hurt like Hell. She removed several pieces of gravel from my knee, each hurting far more than the last as she dug deep into my knee to dislodge them. Fun fact for you, had she not done that, the wound could have become infected, possibly even gangrenes. If indeed, we had left the wound untreated for too long it could have led to my leg being amputated, and possibly my death. That’s a pretty big stretch over a scraped knee, I realize, but my point is that we rarely realize how dangerous a situation is when we are in the midst of it, until it’s too late. Like my Mother debris’ the gravel from my knee, so Jesus debris deadly sin from the wounds of our hearts, indeed our very souls. Sometimes, it has to hurt for it to heal

2. Dietrich Bonhoeffer said, “**When Christ calls a man, He bids Him come and die.**” What does that mean to leave everything behind to follow Jesus? Does that mean that I have to quit my job, sell my house, my car, and move to some third-world country to pour my life out for people I don’t look like, think like, or even feel like loving? He certainly has the right to ask you to. Jesus beat Death and Sin; His death and resurrection are our guaranteed eternal life. When the reality of what He has done for you and I truly grips, our hearts cry becomes what Paul says, “**I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ**” (Philippians 3:8)! Do you really think that stuff can fulfill you, that life is a game where we attempt to get as much as we can? “He who dies with the most toys, wins!” News flash, all the toys you’ve been killing yourself working the hours of three jobs to buy, the house that both of you just HAVE to have, that stuff!?(pregger pause) You cannot take it with you to Hell.(pregger pause) There are no nice cars, homes, guitars, or toys in Hell. Only unquenchable fire, weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth. Despite the picture the world has tried to paint of it, Hell is not a place you want to be. Don’t let the lie of *stuff-fulfillment* (pause for effect), the idea of stuff being able to fill the empty void in you, to keep you from Jesus.

delaying the inevitable, you must make a decision and make it now. Will you ride the shipwreck that is your life to bottom depths of the sea into Hell itself? (pregger pause) Or will step out onto the deep waters of Trusting in Jesus? Will you give your life to Him, will you leave behind your hurt, your guilt, your shame, your pride, and your plans for your life? Will you jump into His plans to redeem you, His plans to save you? Listen carefully folks, I'm not trying to emotionally manipulate you into making some sort of rash decision. Following Jesus isn't something to be entered into lightly, and I'm not going to sugar coat it for you either. The Bible tells us that if you Follow Jesus, you WILL have troubles, trials, and tribulations. Things WILL be difficult; they will be hard. Jesus isn't holding out a promise of a Crisis-free life of ease with rivers of chocolate and gumdrop water-falls. You may not see that relationship you want fixed become reconciled in this life; you may not receive that healing you've been longing for this side of Heaven. But the Bible says that if you Trust in Jesus, you will have joy and life everlasting, and peace that surpasses all understanding and grace that is more than sufficient. Don't wait, the water is rising, today is the day of salvation. Choose to follow Jesus, you can trust Him because He is trustworthy. I'm going to ask that in response to the Word of God this morning, we close in worship through song. This song has been popular for a while now, but the lyrics to it, I believe captivate the cry of our heart today. (sing song and then close in prayer)

Closing Prayer:

- 1.) Tom Hall June 23rd
- 2.) Missions offering JULY 7th, 6K still need 5,100.
- 3.) Offering Box at the back of room. (we appreciate your generosity)