

NEWS AND VIEWS
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*“Southern Baptists with the Full
Gospel for the Whole World”*

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May always brings those soft breezes and I remember smelling the fish. When I was a boy my daddy used to take me fishing on the Santee Lakes in South Carolina. Daylight would find us moving out into the great big water in his very small boat. He would expertly guide us into various places and tell me that he could *smell* the fish. Whenever he said that, I learned to breathe deep and bait up! All these years later I remember those precious times fishing with my father. It was never a wasted endeavor. So let's go fishing today as we consider the following passage from Luke 5:1-11.

Simon answered and said, “Master, we worked hard all night and caught nothing, but I will do as You say and let down the nets.” (Luke 5:5)

If I am going to waste my time doing something, I want it to be *my* idea. I don't like to spend time doing something that's a waste of time at the request of someone else. Part of that may be because I want to be able to control when and where *I* do things. I suspect that I may not be alone in feeling this way. Sometimes we feel that way toward God. We really want to be in control.

Peter and the disciples were men like you and me. And Peter seemed especially stubborn in the way he did things and probably didn't like for others to waste his time. I can sense that more than one of Peter's painful trials came because he didn't want to listen to others tell him what to do or how to do it. Pride can be a source of selective deafness when it comes to taking advice. A professional fisherman should know the art of casting the fishnets intimately. If it were just another fisherman giving Peter advice he may have been a little more receptive. But Jesus was not known to fisherman as a fisherman. So he began to protest that their all night fishing efforts had produced nothing. They had *fished hard*, as my daddy would have said. But thankfully he did not refuse the command of Jesus and let down the nets. Peter learned a valuable lesson about immediate obedience to God. He also painfully learned about being a sinful and mistrusting human being, doubting the wisdom of Jesus in a fisherman's world. This kind of lesson can teach us about our prideful limitations. Jesus often places us in a teachable position. The large catch they hauled in that day taught Peter that when he was fishing with Jesus, he was fishing with Wisdom!

I have heard it said that a bad day of fishing is better than a good day at work. That's a premise I can live with because when you fish with the Master, none of it seems like work. What a blessing to know that the Lord Jesus Christ knows where the fish are. Here are some thoughts about fishing.

I. SOMETIMES WE WILL FISH ALL NIGHT AND CATCH NOTHING. *“...we worked hard all night and caught nothing...”* We often base our present fishing expedition on how it happened in the past. Whether we are fishing for fish or fishing for men, we need to be open to some things that cannot be explained, and new ways of fishing. Timing is crucial. Often our experience and wisdom is lacking, no matter what we think. But God's wisdom is constant.

II. WHEN WE FISH FOR THE MASTER, WE MUST BE OBEDIENT.

“...I will do as You say...” We must be obedient to do all that He tells us to do. There is a reason that He tells us what to do. He knows where the fish are. He knows how ready they are for the net. Our part is to play our part...doing His word.

III. THE FISH ARE WHERE THE MASTER SAYS THEY ARE. We should know that the Lord of all is Lord of the fish. He orders them to be where they are. He orchestrates their environment. He arranges their circumstances. He moves them into the net out of the pain in their lives. Our passion to fish for men is fueled by our desire to serve the Master. He tells us where the souls of men are waiting for the nets of the gospel.

IV. WE WILL FIND FISH WHERE WE FIND THE MASTER. The Master is into the life of the fish and the mission of the fisherman. He fishes hard! When we connect with the Master, we will encounter the fish. Don't feel as though your time fishing with Jesus is ever wasted. Besides, He has the authority to use our time because our time is truly His time.

So let's go fishing...take a deep breath...bait up with the Gospel...and go fishing for men.

The Lord is with us!

Blessings to you,
Pastor Sam