
DEEPER WATERS

Last year we talked about setting sail, and we still have our sail hoisted for the wind of His Spirit to fill our sails and take us to the other side. This year as we continue that journey and still look outside the four walls of this building, we are feeling led that God is wanting to take us deeper into our relationship with Him and what that means as we continue to declare and demonstrate His love to those around us.

Father God is inviting us into deeper waters as we follow Jesus. Every single one of us is on a unique journey with God, made so beautifully different and that will mean we all experience deeper waters differently.

Luke 5:1-11

Tending Nets

In the everyday of our lives, it is important that as we listen to Jesus, we are tending our nets, the things we have as the instruments at hand that grow us as followers of Jesus and ready us for the catch.

Just as the nets are prepared for the catch, so we should be ready preparing for the harvest.

Because You Say So

Simon's respect and faith in Jesus is clear - "Master" and "Because you say so." What had happened to Simon that he was willing to take the advice of a carpenter on how to fish?

Luke 4:38-39

“Because you say so”, is not just a great statement of faith, it is also such a great way to follow Jesus. Simon simply recalls what Jesus has done and says “okay, because you say so.”

Deeper Waters

Faith filled obedience opens the opportunity for us to experience the miraculous. Only when we are obedient can we experience Jesus’ power and His miracles.

This is a miracle of abundance like the manna in the wilderness (Exodus 16), the widow’s meal and oil (1 Kings 17:8-16), the unending supply of oil (2 Kings 4:1-7), and Elisha’s feeding a hundred men with twenty loaves of bread (2 Kings 4:42-44). Later in Luke we see Jesus feed five thousand with five loaves and two fish (Luke 9:12-17). John’s Gospel reports the miracle of wine at Cana (John 2:1-11). These abundance miracles have two common themes:

1. They meet human needs and
2. They show God’s power.

Jesus is in effect demonstrating, you think this is amazing, wait until you experience what I can do with you when we go fishing for people.

Fishing for People

This moment of sudden insight and revelation, especially for Simon Peter, totally undid him. Faced with a miracle, he finds himself in the presence of the Holy and overwhelmed by his own unholiness.

Simon who becomes Peter on whom Jesus builds His church, didn’t have at his roots, great wisdom, or talent, or spirituality, but he responded to God’s call. God calls whom God calls—and God often gets the best mileage out of the least likely candidates (Luke 9:48).

He would take those living in dark places and expose them to the light. When Jesus began His ministry, He sought out people who would follow Him and help Him in His mission to set the captives free from the depths.

Jesus is still calling us to follow Him. He's still calling us to fish for people. He's still inviting us out into deeper waters so that He might do the miraculous. This year God is calling us as we go to the seek and save the lost to go a little deeper.

When I think about some overarching vision for what that looks like as a whole church with all our various expressions as we move deeper in following Jesus it looks a bit like:

Going Deeper as a Family

- + Where unity is celebrated in the diversity of those gathered behind the One vision.
- + Where barriers are pulled down and every effort is made for people to belong to the Riverlife family.
- + Where we experience God's grace through the family of believers.
- + Imagine seeing a greater diversity of people from all walks of life and every nation feeling at home here at Riverlife.

A Deeper Experience of His Presence

Imagine for a moment if we were to go deeper in our relationship with God, knowing Him and embracing the reality of His empowering presence:

- + Where it's commonplace as followers of Jesus to read the Bible and pray daily.
- + And our family is constantly desiring and surprised by God's movement amongst us.
- + Where we encounter Him in all aspects of life.
- + And our faith is at a level that supernatural signs and wonders are normal occurrences.

Deeper in our Expression of God's Love to the World

Picture what it would look like when:

- + Transformational encounters release/propel people into their everyday frontline opportunities.
- + People are so in love with Jesus they can't help but talk about Him everywhere they go.
- + Declaring and demonstrating God's supernatural love is as commonplace and passionately displayed in the community as it is in our worship on a Sunday
- + People following their individual call to be fishers of people but celebrating together as a family.
- + Meet the needs of our community, pastor the city of Brisbane and release revivalists to the nations.

Would we as a church, as individuals that make up this body, respond to the invitation to go into deeper waters – whatever that looks like for you? Would we go just a little in deeper in obedience and faith, filled with the hope that a miracle is on the way because we were obedient to follow Jesus and become fishers of people this year at Riverlife?

Discussion Questions

1. Take a moment to think about what it would look like for you to move a little deeper as you follow Jesus. Share what you feel comfortable sharing with the group.
2. Simon's response to do as Jesus asked was based on who Jesus was and what he had seen Jesus do. Recall the times and ways you have seen God at work. Encourage one another and build your faith as you remember the things God has done for you or in the lives of others.
3. What does it look like to tend your nets as you listen to Jesus and wait before letting down your net for a catch?
4. Fishing for people is still a hallmark of following Jesus. Where is He calling you to let down your net?
5. Read through and pray about the areas of what it might look like for the Riverlife family to go into deeper waters.