

The Fifth Sunday after Trinity Sunday  
St. Luke 5:1-11  
July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2025  
Sts. Peter and Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, UAC  
Simpsonville, SC  
Pastor Jerald Dulas

## They Left All, and Followed Him

*In Nomine Iesu!*

In the Name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

### **Sermon Text:**

“And Jesus said unto Simon, ‘Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men.’ And when they had brought their boats to land, they left all, and followed Him.”

### **Prayer in Pulpit before Sermon:**

Almighty God, Heavenly Father, without Whose aid and blessing all our labors are in vain, regard, we beseech Thee, Thy goodness and our need, and bless us, that in Thy Name and with firm trust in Thee we may patiently and cheerfully labor in our calling, honor Thy Word, and evermore praise Thee; through + Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever One God, world without end. Amen.

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior + Jesus Christ. Amen.

My dear friends, as we have seen over the last two Sundays, the first five Sundays after Trinity Sunday all have to do with faith and mercy. Last Sunday we heard, “Be ye merciful, even as your Father is merciful.” Which meant that we are merciful to our fellowman in not condemning them for their sins, because we cling in faith to our heavenly Father. This faith in our Father produces the work of mercy. We are merciful because He is merciful, and since we are His children, we do the same thing as our Father does.

The Sunday before that we heard to parables from our Lord + Jesus. In the first, He told us about a shepherd seeking the one lost sheep while leaving the ninety-nine other sheep. In the second, He told us about a woman who swept the whole house to find one silver coin, even though she had nine other silver coins. These two parables were directed at the Pharisees and scribes who murmured against our Lord + Jesus because He received sinners and ate with them. Our Lord was admonishing them to have mercy upon those sinners who had repented of their sin and turned in faith to the Lord + Jesus. They clung to Him in faith because He had the Words of eternal life. The Pharisees and scribes condemned the sinners and tax collectors, because they had no faith. It was their unbelief that caused their hypocrisy; their judging and condemning others for the sin which they were committing.

We did not hear the Gospel for the Second Sunday after Trinity because we celebrated our Feast of Title, but that text of the parable of the certain man who gave a great feast and invited many, was also about faith and mercy. That parable was prompted by the unbelief of the lawyers and Pharisees who planted a man with dropsy in front of the Lord to test Him and to see what He might do for that poor man, so that they might have something in which to accuse Him. For this was on the Sabbath. We will hear that Gospel later in the Trinity season. The lawyers and the Pharisees, because they lacked faith, had no mercy for the man with dropsy. He was just a prop to accuse the Lord + Jesus and confirm in their minds the reason for their denial of Him as the One and True Messiah. The Lord

would have us have mercy on others. The greatest mercy one can have—the greatest show of faith—is to heed the invitation to the Great Supper; to come when we are invited to receive such great gifts from the Lord. We show mercy when we also invite to this Great Supper, the poor and maimed and blind and lame. All those who account of their sins are trapped in the pain and misery of this life by the devil.

The First Sunday in Trinity also was about faith and mercy. The rich man had no mercy, because He had no faith. He did not hear Moses and Prophets. And Lazarus, who was shown no mercy, despite being shown no mercy by the rich man, had great faith in the Lord. He was carried by the angels to the bosom of Father Abraham, where he enjoyed his eternal heavenly rest after enduring this hard life and vale of tears. The rich man, however, because of his unbelief, was left with no mercy from the Lord and was made to suffer the eternal torments of Hades. He was in eternal anguish in the flame.

Therefore, we see how the first four Sundays after Trinity Sunday, all teach us about faith and mercy. So, how does this Gospel that we have today from the fifth chapter of the Evangelist St. Luke teach us about faith and mercy? The faith comes from St. Peter, and the other Apostles, Sts. James and John, who are called by our Lord on this day to be fishers of men. They show this faith by leaving all, and following the Lord + Jesus.

Their faith is confirmed with the large draught of fish. By St. Peter's own admission, they had toiled all night and caught nothing. This was when fishing was to be done. In the cool of night, when the sun was not beating down on the water causing it to be warm so that the fish would not want to come to where they would be fishing. This is where our Lord + Jesus found them. They were cleaning their nets after a long night of fruitless fishing. I can certainly relate; my fishing produces similar results.

But St. Peter, and his partners, Sts. James and John, had put out from the shore at the Lord's bidding and had been listening all morning to His preaching. They heard the Word of the Lord + Jesus, and were quickened in their heart to believe on Him. So, when the Lord asks them to put out into the Sea of Gennesaret, in the heat of the day, in the time when one did go fishing, even after toiling all night and catching nothing, they set out into the deep sea to let down their nets for a draught of fish. They took it upon faith in the Lord + Jesus, that despite all evidence to the contrary, they would catch fish. And they did! They caught so many fish that their nets were breaking, and they had to call the other boat over, so that when both were filled, the boats were sinking. The miracle confirmed the faith of the Apostles. Their faith in the Lord + Jesus was strengthened by the miraculous draught of fishes.

St. Peter's faith is further on display when he fell down at Jesus' feet and humbled himself and said, "Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord." This is what faith in the Lord + Jesus produces: it produces a humble heart; it produces a heart that readily confesses one's sins to the Lord + Jesus and seeks from Him nothing else but His mercy. And this is where the "mercy" part of this Gospel pericope comes in. Our Lord shows mercy to St. Peter. He knows he is a sinful man, but St. Peter is also a humble and contrite man, who looks in faith to the One Who can forgive him his sins in mercy. Our Lord in His mercy, forgives the sins of St. Peter, and tells Him that from now on, he and the other Apostles would catch men. They would no longer be fishers of fish, but fishers of men.

They would take the pure preaching on the Lord + Jesus into all the world. So that all those who heard the Gospel, just as they did from the lips of the Lord + Jesus, would also hear and believe. Their preaching would also be accompanied by miracles. They would heal the sick, give sight to the blind, give hearing to the deaf, and even raise the dead. These signs would confirm the preaching of the Apostles, even as this miraculous draught of fish in today's Gospel reading confirmed the preaching of the Lord + Jesus.

The Lord + Jesus in His mercy not only preached to the crowds, and to these Apostles attending

to their empty nets, but also confirmed the faith of these fishers of men with the catch of a “great multitude of fishes.” The faith of St. Peter was even strengthened by the mercy of the Lord + Jesus. For our Lord does not condemn the sinful man, Simon Peter. The Lord does not reject him upon hearing his confession, but forgives him his sin, and even more calls him to be one of His Apostles who would go into all the world, and be fishers of men.

Sts. Peter, James, and John, who in faith clung to the Lord + Jesus as the One, True Messiah of the heavenly Father, and had tasted of His mercy, would also show that mercy to all those to whom they preached. They would preach that salvation was only found in the Lord + Jesus, the Christ. They would preach that the forgiveness of sins was only found in the Lord + Jesus, for it was Him only Who perfectly fulfilled the Law of God, and offered up His life as a ransom for the sins of the whole world. So that all those who believe on Him might be shown mercy and receive the forgiveness of their sins.

Through the preaching of the pure Gospel, we have also been shown the mercy of the Lord + Jesus. We, like St. Peter, are sinful men. We are unworthy of our Lord’s grace and mercy. We deserve the punishment that all sinners deserve. But our Lord + Jesus does not look upon our sins, nor consider them, for in our humility and contrition, He shows us His mercy. He does not treat us the way that we deserve to be treated, but He instead forgives us all our sins. He intercedes on our behalf to the heavenly Father to show us mercy. We cling in faith to this promise of our Lord, for us sinful men, know that there is no salvation or forgiveness in any other than the Lord + Jesus.

Therefore, my dear friends, let us in faith cling to the Lord + Jesus and His promise of forgiveness of sins, eternal life, and salvation. Let us humbly confess our sins, and receive the mercy that our Lord + Jesus would want us to have. For He cleanses our unclean lips with bread and wine, which are His Body and Blood from this holy altar. He gives us Himself for the remission of all our sins. Let us therefore, cling to Him in faith, for He has sent men to catch us by the pure preaching of the Gospel and the right administration of the Blessed Sacraments, so that we might be hauled into the ark of the Church of God. In this Church, we are shown mercy, and have our faith strengthened by the preaching about the great things our Lord + Jesus done for; how He has shown us mercy, and forgiven us all our sins. In this Church, we are sustained in the faith, until with all the saints clad in heavenly splendor, we will enjoy that eternal feast of our Lord in His Kingdom which has no end. In the Name of our Lord + Jesus, the Christ. Amen.

#### **Prayer in Pulpit after Sermon:**

Almighty God, be pleased to accompany Thy Word with Thy Holy Spirit and grant that Thy Word would increase faith in us; bring into the Way of Truth all such as have erred; turn the hearts of the unrepentant; and for sake of Thy Name grant succor to all heavy hearts and those who are heavy-laden, that they may through the mercy of the Lord + Jesus Christ be relieved and preserved so that they succumb not to the temptation of despair but rather that they gain the victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil; through the same + Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with the Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever One God, world without end. Amen.

#### **The Votum:**

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds through Christ + Jesus. Amen.

*Soli Deo Gloria!*