



## **Sermon Outline for 'National Sports Sunday', with visitors in mind.**

'Losing, Winning and Life': Luke chapter 5 verses 1-11

### **Introduction:**

Read: Luke 5 vs. 1 – 11

The context: Here is Luke's account of the call of Jesus' early disciples – The incident appears not linked to sport – But it contains very sporting themes: losing and disappointment; winning and success. So we will look at the text.

#### **1. The Frustration of Failure:**

The fishermen were repairing and cleaning their nets (v2) after having endured a frustrating night's work (v 5a) – They had ... WORKED HARD ... ALL NIGHT ... and CAUGHT NOTHING. – Sport can be like that. You train hard, sacrifice, dedicate yourself, prepare thoroughly but lose – You play better than your opponents, create better chances, but they win – Life can be like that too: You do your best but don't get what you deserve / You work hard for that ideal promotion, and someone else is appointed / You think you have found the ideal partner, but they don't agree / You place money into a sound investment opportunity, but it turns out to be far from sound / Your offer is accepted on that 'forever home', but you are gazumped, and lose it.

The truth is that life is frustrating at times.

In the second half of the incident, from verse 4, we read of apparent success.

#### **2. The Superficiality of Success:**

Strangely, (v. 4) the fishermen accept Jesus unexpected advice about fishing – Fishing the deep was usually a night time strategy – Yet this morning, the result was as remarkable as unexpected – They land a huge catch – Nets begin to break – a second boat is needed to help – both boats are full of fish and near to sinking – this is the catch of a lifetime! – Simon will become a fishing legend round the lake! Then two more remarkable things happen, see verses 8 to 11. a) Peter started talking spiritually: 'I'm sinful' and, b) once the astonishing (v. 9) catch is ashore, Simon left it! He abandoned the catch of a lifetime. Instead he followed Jesus.

In sport also, success suddenly can seem superficial – whether a supporter or a player, life focussed on hoping for, or training to achieve, success, can experience the happiness of achievement – But victory is needed in the next game, next final, next season – the happiness of success only comes when success comes – it's happiness that doesn't last, it is conditional on success – it is happiness, not joy – joy is deeper, joy lasts, joy is not lost in the storms of life

In life generally, we might gain all we had hoped for, achieve all goals, but not find lasting joy, nor inner peace, nor personal purpose. Neither the ideal home, job, car, nor partner; nor status; nor wealth, *of themselves*, are answers to life's big questions: why are we here? / where do we go to? / how can I find lasting meaning and personal contentment? / how do I deal with guilt? / what is life about? Lasting joy, inner peace and personal purpose do not come from the things of this world.

At the moment of his greatest success, Simon the fisherman left what he had achieved to follow Jesus.



### 3. The Call of Christ:

Simon in verse 11, did what many others have done since: he chose to follow Jesus. – This decision was part of a process which we glimpse through the text – look again at Luke Chapter 5 verses 1-11

v.1 – *Proclamation*: the word of God drifts around him;

v.3 – *Participation*: Jesus simply asks to use one of his boats;

v.4 – *Direction*: Jesus advises Simon, the fishermen, when and where to fish!

v.5 – *Recognition*: Simon does what Jesus asks, ‘because *you* say so’

1. 6-7 – *Consternation*: The result is amazement, excitement, confusion and fish

v.8-9 – *Confession*: Simon confesses his unworthiness in Christ’s presence

v.10 – *Commission*: Jesus points to a different focus in life for Simon

v.11 – *Submission*: Simon submits to Jesus’ call, and follows Him.

Some people come to find God’s love in Christ via a sudden ‘Damascus Road’ type of experience, but for most it is a process. Looking at Luke 5 verses 1 to 11, and thinking of Simon, perhaps you need to ask where are you in the process, where are you on the journey to Christian faith and committed discipleship? Do you want to move nearer to following Him? What stops you?

#### **So we summarise:**

- Sport and life can sometimes be very frustrating
- Apparent success in both can be quite superficial
- But God in Jesus Christ offers us something beyond our hopes and expectations, something deep, real, lasting
- Christ came to earth to live, to die, to rise again, to make a way for people like us to know the power of God’s love and salvation
- Our need becomes clear when we glimpse God’s holiness and purity, *and* our selfishness and sin.
- The call of Christ to Simon was the call to all who feel unworthy in Jesus’ presence. It is a call to find help, hope, mercy, forgiveness and life eternal.
- It is a call to follow Jesus. How do we respond today?
- We acknowledge our sin and turn in sorry from it / We believe that Christ came to die to deal with our sin / With contrition we ask God to forgive us through Jesus Christ, to make us new by His Holy Spirit / We seek daily to be a disciple of Jesus, to the glory of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit / We ask God to help us know Him and His ways better, so we may live how He wants us to live / We leave whatever is ‘our miraculous catch of fish’ behind us, and we seek to ‘follow Him’. Others will help you in this.



**You may follow a sport, or you may follow a team or club, but it is only in following Jesus that God's amazing grace and everlasting life can transform you and bring you peace with God, purpose in life, and joy within. If you hear Christ's call to you, do step out in faith and follow Him.**

**You think about that!**

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