

"Things Accomplished Among Us" (Luke 1:1)

Selected Reflections From Luke

Peter and Distance

Luke 5:1-11

The time came, while Jesus was preaching in Galilee, to call disciples to follow Him. These men were professional fishermen, who had not enjoyed a good catch. They were washing their nets.

Jesus boarded Simon Peter's boat, put out a little from the land, and "he sat down and taught the people from the boat." After the sermon, he said to Simon Peter: "Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch." Peter seemed skeptical, but followed those instructions. The result was a huge catch of fish that almost sank the boat; others had to quickly come and help. After this miracle, here's how Luke reports Simon Peter's reaction (Luke 6:8) – "But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, 'Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord'."

I want us to think about that. If this man was able to enhance your business to this miraculous degree, why would you send him away? Doesn't it seem more likely you would run to Jesus, give him a big hug and ask him to go fishing with you everyday {maybe anticipating early retirement!!).

Why in the world would Peter tell Jesus to go away. The answer is contained in the statement. Peter asked for distance because he was forcefully aware of his sin, knowing who brought in all these fish: "I am a sinful man."

It should cause us to reflect on the distance created by sin. Sin takes us away from God. Peter knew he was a sinner, and at this moment – painfully acknowledged that he was not fit to with Deity.

It is similar to the scene in Isaiah chapter six. When the prophet realized he stood in the presence of Deity, his reaction was to pronounce a woe on himself because of his sin (see Isa. 6).

It is one thing to know you haven't done right, and it is easy to ignore that when around many others who haven't done right. But when you are struck by divine perfection, if your heart is right, you know you are not worthy and admit you are a sinner.

Studying Matthew, Mark, Luke and John ought to have similar impact on us – as we learn about the perfect Master, who knew no sin; who was morally pure, in the highest sense. As John the Baptist said, "we are not worthy."

Yet, because of God's grace, we can have our sins forgiven, when we respond obediently to the gospel of Christ.

-Warren E. Berkley