**Launching Out Into The Deep**

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"... as the people pressed upon Him to hear the
Word of God, He stood by the lake of Gennesaret,
and saw two ships standing by the lake: but the
fishermen were gone out of them, and were washing
their nets and He entered into one of the ships,
which was Simon's, and prayed him that he would
thrust out a little from the land.

"And he sat down, and taught the people out of the
ship. Now when he had left speaking, he said unto
Simon, Launch out into the deep, and let down your
nets for a draught" Luke 5:1-4

When we "press upon Him," He will take the initiative and say, "Let me enter your ship and thrust it out from the shore." Because we are not yet ready for the "deep," He will push us out from the shore and teach us, setting before us the initial understandings of the "Laws of the Spirit." This is our first adjustment to spiritual life.

This "ship" that Jesus entered is our personal spiritual experience. Notice that He said, "Thrust out a little" rather than "Launch out into the deep." This is the initial step in our detachment from the "land" which represents all that pertains to our earth-bound life. His intention is to move us out upon the great "sea" of revelation that is boundless and eternal.

When we enter this "ship" with Jesus and leave the shoreline behind, it is only the beginning. But potentially, it holds all that will move out into the depths. The decisions we make here will govern all that is out there.

When converted, we become a child of God. But, in His sight we are more than a child, we are fully grown, spiritually mature, and seated with Christ in heavenly places. This is a judicial, or potential truth that is to become a reality within us through the power of the Holy Spirit.

I may hold in my hand a seed from an apple. Potentially, this seed is a beautiful apple tree, full of blossoms and fruit. We add nothing to this seed; we merely release that which is already hidden within it.

In time, the blossoms will fall off and little green apples appear. It may be said, "This tree which was full of beautiful blossoms, now has only green knobs on it; this tree must be backslidden." No, this tree is going through a process. In due season, it will bear beautiful fruit, and a hundred more apple trees as well.

Our spiritual life is much more than what now appears. Our life does not end here. We are partakers now of eternal life. Lying before us are the ages to come in which this "seed" will burst into its full development. But we cannot instantly move into our "potential" and say, "I am an apple tree." Presently, we are only a seed with the all the necessary ingredients to become an apple tree. This little seed that we are needs to break through the husks of temporal unreality into the realms of spiritual life where it may come into its full development and growth.

As we begin to move into the depths with Him, we have only a conception of a deeper spiritual experience. Our initial decision to step out from the shoreline covered vast unknown reaches. We will face fearful storms and terrible billows, but always remember, He is on board.

The third step occurs when He says, "Launch out into the deep." How deep may we go in the things of the Spirit? There are three ways in which the depths are measured.

The first concerns our distance from the shore line. The land does not end at the beginning of the shore line. It projects out under the water and can be walked on. Our depth in spiritual things is determined by how far we have become detached from the natural world and the things that pertain to it. We become detached when these no longer control our life.

The second is determined by our consciousness of spiritual need. We cannot enter the depths until we are convinced of the necessity to do so. This consciousness of need must attain its fullness before we will venture out into the depths.

A third is our spiritual sensitivity. Our depths are governed by our powers of perception, or our ability to lay hold of the realities of life in the spiritual realm. Regardless of our training in the Spirit to apprehend and understand spiritual things, there is yet a deeper place. The Lord desires us to know His objectives toward which He is moving. All this brings us out into the depths of the Spirit.

The Lord had said, "Thrust out." Now He is ready to invite us to "Launch out." We may have some experiences that are floating on the surface, but He desires to lead us out into the deep, knowing there is a greater abundance of fish.

The Lord said, "I have come to give you life and that more abundantly." He cannot give us this abundant life until we have first embraced a life of abandonment. This detachment can be overwhelming because He separates us from everything that pertains to our old life.

Paul said, "I count all things but loss." Later, he said, "I suffered the loss." The Lord may say, "I accepted your willingness to lose all things, now I will let you lose them." First there is a consent, then the actual experience of moving into the outworking of it.

Once He has led us into the deep He will say to us, "Let down your nets." This "net" represents all that we are, and is to be let down into His hand with out understanding what is taking place. What are you throwing over? All the consent you have of "entity" (What I am and all I have). The Lord is saying, "I want that surrendered and thrown into the depths where it will be for ever gone. It is to be absolutely out of your life experience."

There is an exchange that takes place in the letting down of our nets,

"Throw it overboard."

"But it is so dark."

"I want it to be dark."

"The water is cold."

"I want it to be cold."

" It will all be gone."

"I want it gone."

We react as we are being plunged into the deeper depths. We must throw the entire possibilities of our life into the darkness of that water. All that we are becomes submerged. But there is a reward, it is here that we catch the fish.

Some are unable to let go. There is a spiritual law that applies to this.

"Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual,
but that which is natural; and afterward that
which is spiritual" I Cor 15:46.

It would have been perfect if Peter, when asked of the Lord to "Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught (Luke 5:4), had said, "Yes Lord. But, he was unable to do this. His natural reasoning processes had to first have their expression. "Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net" Luke 5:5.

In effect, Peter is saying "Nevertheless (I do not believe it) I will let the nets down, but Lord, if there are no fish, it is your fault because you told me to do it." Nevertheless - this word is the pivot that brought about a change. In spite of his feelings, he obeyed.

The nets were let down and became full of fish. The wonder of it, the power of it. Our boat will get full, and we will have enough for us, our family, our Church, and even enough for the mission fields.

How did we get this abundance? By being obedient and stepping into a little boat where Jesus was seated. When He said, "Thrust out," we did it. Then He taught us. There had to be the operation of the power of the Word of God in truth before He could say, "Launch out into the deep and let down our nets."
He is saying to each one of us, "Would you like to let down your net into this abundance? But the fish are not at the shore. We must move with Him out where all that is on the shore has faded from sight. Then our net must be perfectly released and dropped into the depths.

There is an abundant deposit of truth in the ocean floor of His presence. Our life will become multiplied, and all shall have their share.