

Gone in 60 Minutes

Luke 5:1-11

In 2000 there was a movie starring Nicolas Cage entitled *Gone in 60 Seconds*. The story revolves around car thieves stealing 48 cars short period of time, average 60 seconds for each car snatch. I suggest that an even greater feat would be a car thief experiencing life transformation in the span of sixty minutes. *We read in this text how Jesus called His first disciples.* Jesus has been publicly ministering in the Galilee region for several weeks, teaching in the synagogues, healing the sick, and feeding the hungry. One day near the northern shore of the Lake Gennesaret, the crowds were so large, Jesus borrowed a boat from which He would teach the people who sat on the shore. What happened to Peter that day is amazing. Peter says clearly, *“Go away from me Lord, for I am a sinful man”* but less than an hour later *“Peter left everything and followed Jesus.”* How does that kind of personal transformation happen within an hour?

I. Jesus removes my fear - “Fear not.”

Peter’s fear began when so much fish were caught. He responds *“Go away from me Lord, I am sinful.”*

(A). Our fears are often irrational, but always real.

One would think that the greater fear would be during the night when no fish were caught. But Peter is afraid after a blessing. Sometimes our greatest fears are when things are going well, and our greatest faith comes when things are going poorly. Remember that next time you are afraid.

(B). Our fears drive us away from God, never toward God.

This is true across the board. It makes no difference what your fear is. *“God does not give us a spirit of fear, but of power, love and a sound mind”* (I Timothy 1:7). Whenever you think you are being moved toward God because of fear, in reality you are being driven away from God by fear.

(C). Jesus must remove our fears before we can follow Him.

“Fear not” - There’s only two ways to get rid of fear: (1). A comprehension of truth; (2). Captured by a trustworthy One. There’s no ‘truth’ that follows ‘Fear not,’ but there is a Person of trust.

II. Jesus ignores my failings - “From now on.”

When Peter responded ‘Go away...I am sinful’ Jesus didn’t say: (1). “Oh really? Tell me about it.” Nor did Jesus say (2). “Okay, I’ll go away.” Rather, Jesus moved *toward* Peter and said, “From now on...” *“Life is not measured by the number of breaths you take, but by every moment that takes your breath away.”* Nothing will ever take your breath away like the unconditional, personal, sacrificial love of God. He is not interested in the mistakes of your past. Our sins and mistakes have consequences in this life, but to the Person who counts, we are to move forward with the confidence that He’s in our boat. Paul had persecuted believers and said: *Forgetting that which is behind, I press forward* (Phil. 3:13).

III. Jesus gives me a future - “You will be catching men.”

Christ gives purpose where there was none, He gives meaning to emptiness, life to the hopeless. “Grace enables a man to hold his head high, to claim the future for himself and not to abandon it to his enemy of guilt and condemnation” (Dietrich Bonhoeffer). *You will be... Jesus says. You will be...* “For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future” (Jeremiah 29:11). What is a prosperous future look like for you? Catching men. What does that mean? Transforming people. “It’s not about you.” This is my purpose.

(1). People are in need of being caught.

They are trapped in self. They are in trouble. You are able to offer them transformative hope.

(2). People are caught by your love for them.

You’ll never be able to love people into the Kingdom (John 13:35) until you feel the King’s love.