

Launch into the deep and let down your net

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[0 : 00] I venture to ask your attention to the Gospel by Luke in chapter 5 that was read to us. And I will announce by way of text the verse 4.

Verse 4 in Luke chapter 5. Now, when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a draught.

Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a draught. I'm going to just ask your attention initially to the spirit of the multitude that were gathered together around the Lord and his disciples at this particular point in our Lord's journey in the wilderness.

And it came to pass that as the people pressed upon him to hear the word of God, I wonder how many, in all honesty before God, can say that prior to this service this morning, you've pressed upon him to hear the word of God.

that you haven't come to the chapel just because it's a custom on the Lord's day to leave your home and to come and gather with the people of God in the house of God.

[1 : 50] But there's something within you that causes you to come. They pressed upon him to hear the word of God.

Now, my friends, he's now in heaven. His work here upon the earth as Emmanuel God with us has been perfected, is completed and he's returned to the right hand of the Father.

But there is in the exercise of the soul a pressing upon him to hear the word of God. And the word of God to be profitable to us must be clothed with his power and his authority.

We're not here together for me to speak to you on the relationship of creature to creature, man to man, man to woman, man to children and young people.

We're here in the context of God's sovereign goodness and mercy to send forth ministers to minister in his name.

[3 : 11] And those that have speak in his name, clothed with the Spirit of God as anointed from on high, they speak to you in the name and for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ.

When you come, leave your homes and come to the sanctuary and you have that desire to hear the word of God, remember that God must help poor, weak, foolish men to proclaim his truth.

And it's all under his sovereign prerogative to bless the word and make that word a blessing to immortal souls. Paul may plant Apollos' water, but only God can give the increase.

And my friends, it is indeed a wonderful blessing to come to a people who are pressing upon him to hear the word of God, that as it were, have their exercises mingled with the exercises and prayers of the Lord's servants, that the Lord will speak with power from on high to the needs of the congregation, whatsoever need the Lord knows to exist.

Now, it's a wonderful opening, as it were, for this first day in the new year to be together. I bring this principle to you.

[4 : 47] Oh, do press upon the Lord to speak to you through the ministry of his servants.

One refers to it in the scripture and there's no qualification needful to explain. The foolishness of preaching, and we don't wonder that the world sometimes considers the preaching of the word to be a waste of time.

My friends, it carries with it the potential of great and eternal blessing, as God, in his sovereign appointments, may use the simple testimony of his servants to edify the people and glorify his holy name.

May the Lord, through whomsoever he shall send his word, here at Jireh Attleboro, accompany that word with such power and give you an exercise in preparation that, as it were, a farmer sows his seed in prepared ground, that you come with a prepared heart to receive whatsoever message the Lord shall see fit to send through his servants.

Well, now that is just, as it were, an introduction to that wonderful exercise that was present among many of the people who came down to Gennesaret to hear what the Lord had to say.

[6 : 36] And the Lord had not only something to say to the multitude, but he had a work to perform that is beneficial, not just at the time, but has been beneficial ever since, and will continue to be beneficial till time is no more.

That was the experience that the Lord gave to his servant Peter as Peter, a fisherman, was qualified not just to fish in the sea, but also to preach the everlasting gospel and to be a fisher of men.

It seemed to me, in my concern, to know the will of God and to come to you with it, that this is an appropriate word for the opening service of the new year.

Launch out into the deep and let down your net for a draft. And my friends, this is the life of faith.

This is the experience of those whom the Lord is to teach, not necessarily to make teachers of them as he did of Peter, but also to give us knowledge and instruction in the things and ways of God.

[8 : 17] Because life is a launching out into the deep. Now, I want to put it in context.

Peter was a fisherman. And Peter had been busy at this calling, doubtless for a long period of time. And doubtless, it had been an exercise in a material way to bring Peter a reasonable living under the good hand of God in his providence.

But the Lord was here to overrule a situation that was common to Peter for Peter's edification and profit as a servant of the Lord.

And Peter had to learn to be any use for the glory of God that he could not do what he purposed to do if the Lord was not with him in it.

Now, the Lord gave him a command, Lord, shout into the deep. But Peter replies with a reasonable reply.

[9 : 37] Why? The Lord had spoken and Simon Peter answering said unto him, Master, we've toiled all the night and taken nothing.

Now, can't you see that that very expression brings everything into captivity to Peter's inability? His nothingness, if I may use that word carefully, that Peter had to learn what he couldn't do when the Lord's will was he shouldn't do.

He couldn't catch fish when the Lord ordained that no fish shall be caught. And my friends, there's a sovereign God that determines our successes and our losses.

And it's good when we realize this, that we're so dependent upon the Lord's blessing. We're so subject to the unfoldings of his sovereign will.

He says, and it's true, without me, ye can do nothing. really, to know anything of fruitfulness and prosperity in our own hearts and through our own instrumentality, we have to come face to face with this, that we're helpless, we're totally dependent, we are unworthy, but nevertheless, the Lord is good and gracious, and he enables his people to do what he enabled Peter to do.

[11 : 28] Subsequently, Peter comes from the argument of reason into the exercise of faith and faith believes.

Listen, Simon Peter answering said unto him, Master, we've toiled all the night and we've taken nothing. nevertheless, at thy word I will let down the net.

We've proved our insufficiency, we've proved our inability, we've proved that we need thy blessing, but when Peter considered the situation in which he had received the command of the Lord, launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a draft, then he says, nevertheless, at thy word I will let down the net.

It completely altered Peter's approach. We've taken nothing, we've been out there all night and we've done, we've got no result, no result, we've wasted our time out on the sea.

But the Lord has spoken and when the Lord has spoken there is a prospect, there is something to be accomplished and Peter relying completely on the authority of the Lord's word, he ventures, he ventures.

[13 : 12] And when they had this done, they enclosed a great multitude of fishes and their net break. Oh, my friends, the blessings of prosperity that are couched under our obedience to the word of the Lord.

Now, launch out into the deep, and I'll concentrate largely on this in the light of the opening hours of a new year's Sabbath day.

Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a draft. Now, we don't know what this future year holds for us. We don't know what our experiences will bring forth during this year.

Nobody really knows on earth today what's going to happen. The most unexpected situation suddenly occurs and life knows a complete change if it survives.

And obviously many people that are alive this morning will not be alive at the end of the year because a continual harvest is being taken from time into eternity by the sovereign hand of him in whom we live and move and have our being.

[14 : 53] But the Lord has with his people a plan, a purpose.

and the lot is cast into the lap and the whole disposing there is of the Lord. Now the Lord knows exactly what this year holds for you.

The Lord knows exactly what this year holds for me. And we can look upon the whole multitudes of the universe and realize that this great God whom we serve is a God that knows everything about everything.

He knows everything about everyone. There is a plan and that plan will be perfectly accomplished in absolute line with the decree and purpose of the God in heaven.

the Lord now launch out into the deep. Launch out into the deep. The deep here was essentially the fish that exists in the sea.

[16 : 24] But if we look into this terminology a little more closely we see that here is a principle that life is made up of change.

Life is made up of a succession of deeps. Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a draught.

And my friends the sanctification of experience whatever that experience may be can be very fruitful and profitable under the blessings of the Lord.

Nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net. I'll venture forward in the exercise of faith believing in the Lord not speaking an idle word not bringing to pass an unprofitable development but causing all things to work together for good to them that love God and are called according to his purpose.

God is in control of everything for everybody but God is especially in control of the lot and life of those who are chosen of him to salvation whose lives are sanctified by the overruling power of God that bring all things to work together for good.

[18:12] I hope I can be clear that there is a distinction in this sense. Peter is a man of God he's a servant of God and the Lord is giving him a word telling him what to do and Peter's response to that word is very constructive is an essential part of the whole picture that Peter is blessed with faith to believe in the word of the Lord and venturing according to that word he finds a wonderful wonderful change from what he found when he went in his own strength and by his own purpose now he is in the purposes of God looking to the Lord for the promised strength as thy day so shall thy strength be and he finds that he's included in his net such a wonderful catch that there's not only enough for his own little vessel but there's enough for his partner's vessel too and both the ships were in peril of sinking because of the quantity of benefit they had derived from their obedience or Peter's obedience to the word of the

Lord and my friends I bring this principle to you the rebellious that's the disobedient they dwell in the dry land oh the essential to real spiritual prosperity is subjecting ourselves in faith to the revealed mind and will of God for us launch out into the deep and let down your nets for his draft if I may use this expression and perhaps it will suit our young people to understand what I'm trying to say life is a school the Lord has things to teach us that will he will have us to know by personal experience

Peter never forgot this signal appearing of the Lord to him and you know we learn a lot at school and we may sometimes wonder why we're taught this that and the other but my friends in the school of our Lord Jesus Christ there's always profit in the lesson you'll need the teaching that the Lord gives to you in the outworking of the life of faith if the Lord blesses you initially with his leading guiding and teaching in your particular and personal experiences well now launch out into the deep there are many deeps as many deeps as there are experiences among the human race in that sense but we do need grace to launch out into the deep and to let down our nets for a draft not necessarily looking for immediate deliverance from the deep but looking for the sanctification of the experience that it may be to our furtherance in the knowledge of God his truth his ways it's a wonderful thing to be hungry for knowledge in spiritual things and to realize there is none that teacheth like the

Lord there was none that teacheth like the Lord he is the perfect teacher of his people and let me put this to you ultimately he never has a scholar in his school that fails ultimately oh no the Lord teaches his people those things that are necessary for them to know that he shall be glorified and that they shall be spiritually enlightened and made profitable and fruitful subjects and witnesses to the truth of his precious word launch out into the deep well now deeps vary in individual personal experiences don't they your lot is not my lot your wife's lot is not your lot if you're a husband it's husbands apart and their wives apart you may be involved in the same set of circumstances to a great degree but there's a difference because the Lord's salvation is a personal work it's a personal work

I've repeated and I do it just to get the lot is cast into the lap and your lap is your lap your wife's lap is her lap and my friends the same circumstance may have a different effect altogether in the teaching of the Lord through the particular set of circumstances that are affecting you in the family or whatever else may be overruled and appointed by your God launch out into the deep the future is a deep it's a great deep surely our desire is not to be harmonizing with those that are only concerned about temporal peace and prosperity what a mercy if we want the Lord to teach us we want that growth in grace and in the knowledge of the

[25 : 09] Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and the Lord takes his people into circumstances that are pregnant with every aspect necessary to the instruction of the soul Peter says ultimately depart from me from a sinful manner Lord in the school of Christ Christ is glorified and the subject of the teaching is essentially humbled now just launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a draft you may think the circumstances of your life are pretty fixed they're pretty general year by year makes little difference but my friends the

Lord can make a great difference the Lord can take you out of a situation that seems exactly consistent with your purposes and prospects and he can cause as with Elijah the stream to dry up he can bring your situation that seems so pregnant with prosperity in the promise of it into a scattered situation wherein you're under pressure to receive and accept as in the will of God I remember in my own experience with goodly measure of prosperity and providential things falling out to my surprise and the many the surprise of many concerning me elevated to the to the management of a firm of jewellers in Birmingham with two departments under my control

I thought oh this is it this is it I was wanting to be married I was wanting to see everything falling out in a material prosperity and everything seemed to be going one way and then glandular fever glandular fever devastating incapacitated me for the responsibilities that lay on my shoulders absolutely I remember my dear mother or our dear mother if David's here blessed in the same family she looked me in the face one day and after 12 months struggling she looked me in the face she said Harold she said you're getting thinner and thinner she said you're wasting away and I fear you you won't continue to live and I felt sick

I felt weak I felt insufficient for the responsibilities that faced me and I went to see our family doctor Dr. Lewis at Coventry and he said to me he said look he said if you don't get out in the open air and earn a living he said I won't be responsible for your health any longer crisis crisis oh my friends all my study all my zeal all my energies just seem to wither and die launch out into the deep I believe it's one of the best lessons I ever learned what makes you dependent does you good you don't like me for saying that do you naturally speaking but it's true my friends anything that brings you to

Lord help me is constructive it's constructive spiritually and she worshipped him saying Lord help me she got a dreadful deep at home and she she got a daughter who was sick she needed help she comes crying to the Lord Lord help him and the scripture pigeonholes it amongst the spiritual blessings and she worshipped him saying how many times are you brought down to this Lord help me I'm insufficient I've toiled all the night and I've taken nothing nevertheless at thy word I'm not going to turn back nevertheless at thy word

[30 : 56] I will let down the net the future my future lay in preaching the gospel I didn't know that at the time in the same way that I learned it subsequently the Lord has ways of directing us into his will and causing us to submit to the contrary removal of things that seem to be promising beyond our ambitions the Lord closes doors as well as opens them my my friends we must come back to this launch out into the deep sickness invading our mortal frame can be a deep but if it's in the will of God if it's easily recognized as the intervention of the divine in the circumstances of our life there'll be a fruit there'll be a profit it's not sacrifice for naught it's sacrifice for gain launch out into the deep sometimes yes trouble in business

I knew a dear man of God years ago from Hartford I can't just recall his name oh Mr Parker he was a good minister in the Hertfordshire Bedfordshire area in my early ministry I rubbed shoulders with him he was a butcher in Hertford he had quite a nice butcher's business and he was really comfortable doing what he was doing one of these multiple butchers came along in close proximity to his own business and opened up a big shop Mr. Parker said they could sell meat cheaper than I could buy it his business butchers business just folded by the competition of this great multiple butchery that was in reasonable proximity to his own shop launch out into the deep oh don't take things for granted don't see as it were everything depending on you see the will of

God unfolding Mr. Stanley Dell said to me once I was in a measure of trouble over the cherith home in those days and the door closed we saw a building it was exactly what we needed and it was in the locality that was very suitable for us all and I set my heart on it and it came up for sale and I went and did all the necessary inquiries and so forth it looked so rosy and then suddenly a situation arose that took it away from us legally we weren't allowed to open such a business at that spot and I met Mr.

Dowles and I was talking to him about my disappointment this keen disappointment and he said to me Harold he said the Lord never takes away something but he put something better in its place you know my heart responded to that all my gloom my fears seemed to melt like snow in the sun and I began to look to the Lord that that better thing would unfold and it did and it did a better location a better property everything was as it were advantageous in the new as opposed to the old and I could see the Lord's hand was so signally fulfilling that good word and comforting exhortation of my old friend the Lord will never take anything away but he'll put something better in its place and launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a draught nevertheless at thy word

I will let down the net prayerfully committing thy way to the Lord trusting also in him and leaving him to bring it to pass leaving him to bring it to pass oh Peter let down his net yes he got the command so to do but what the end result was stands out as absolutely heavenly appointed and brought to pass launch out into the deep of old age I'm learning that lesson now that we're not what we were those at this end of life will appreciate that there is a deep in age and consequent infirmities arise in the old tabernacle and we need grace to leave it in the

[36 : 49] Lord's hand and seek that the Lord will overrule it to advantage that he will keep us closer to himself that he will make us realize that we need a helping hand from on high we need an overruling providence to make a provision against the change circumstances and so forth but my times my times are in my hands launch out into the deep let down your net depend on the Lord that depend on the Lord for the word of God is pregnant with promise for those that depend upon the Lord those that walk by faith those that exercise prayer and plead the promises of God's word before him all these things glorify his holy name and what do they do they establish us in the truth they establish us in the truth but we need the truth again when we come to another thing where we're helpless we've toiled all the night and we've taken nothing we need a fresh supply of grace to walk in the ways of

God and commit our way to the Lord yet to fresh and wait for his appearance watch for his deliverance launch out into the deep and let down your net through a drought now I'm going to close in the good providence of God we have a representation of need in this congregation each heart knowth its own bitterness you know just where you are you know what's a burden you know what you can't continue with you feel you're you're the end of everything and you can't go on my friend launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a drought ask the Lord to sanctify his wealth ask the Lord to give you profit in your trading and you'll be amazed how the Lord can so sanctify and overrule that you'll look back over the circumstances as I look back over the failure of my health and

I can look back and I can bless the Lord that it ever happened although when it did happen I thought I was at the end of everything but really I was at the beginning of a new chapter in life appointed pilgrimage and so the Lord overrules leads teaches guides and keeps his people keeping them in the knowledge that there is a God a sovereign God who has a perfect right to do as he will in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth none can stay his hand or say unto him what doest thou I hope the word may be helpful under the blessing of God Amen