

Transformed By the Gospel

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[0 : 0 0] All right. Thank you, Lisa. Appreciate it. Good morning, as she said. My name is Jesse, one of the pastors here. Privileged to be here with all of you. Love seeing your masked faces. All the onliners listen to this later in the week. Glad you guys are listening.

Miss you, though. Before we jump into it, just need to have a little moment with One Harbor Church. And so, you know, part of being a pastor is, yeah, we do sermons and we care for people and we do counseling. We do a lot of good stuff. I would say one of the more difficult jobs as pastors is discerning the times and hearing from God, like, okay, in this moment, what is the thing we should be doing? And so you guys should have gotten a video with Donnie speaking on that. What we feel is not the, what is the best thing for us to do in this term? Instead of just running into, like, what we typically do with community groups, we feel like, man, there's this unique opportunity, this unique season. And we just feel like it's a good time to come together united as a church and pray together. And here's a little update on that. Just for us in Havelock is the information was Wednesdays from 6 to 7. Here's what's cool. Cherry Point Baptist has a prayer meeting for themselves Wednesdays from 6 to 7. So we're going to do Thursdays from 6 to 7 right here weekly for the time being. And that's really just us coming together and laying hold of God. What I love about prayer is that it is surrendering and recognizing that God is sovereign and we're not. We don't have all the answers. And so in a time where everything is a little chaotic and there's a lot of confusion and there's a lot of stirring up of fear and, hey, what about this voice saying this? And what about that voice saying that? It's, you know, we're laying all that down and saying, you know what, God, we're going to come to you. We're going to seek your face. We're going to hear what you have to say. We're going to let you, God, our thoughts and our actions. And we get to do that together, which is amazing. And this is what I'm hoping, guys. This is what I'm hoping. When we come together, we're not only going to be praying to him, we're going to be listening. And man, some amazing things happen when we posture ourselves that way. God can speak. He can speak to any one of you, right? And I'm hoping that happens, that God gives you a specific word for the church or a verse for the church that you can share with us that it talks about that in 1 Corinthians for the edification and the strengthening and the building up of the body of Christ. And so let's come ready to pray. Let's come expecting God to do some amazing things and actually work through each one of you. Come ready.

Come believing that that's going to happen. And I think some exciting things are going to come out of that. Exciting things are going to happen over the next few weeks as we lean into prayer. And so I just wanted to say that before I jumped into the sermon. One more thing, community group leaders, if we could just have a quick huddle after the service, just so we could talk about that a little bit more. I'm sure a lot of you have questions, what that looks like, what that means for community groups, and any other questions you may have, just so that if any of your guys in your group have questions that you can kind of answer those questions. All right, cool. Make sense?

Sorry for the little deviation there, but all right. Let's get to it. All right. So if you have your Bibles, we're going to be teaching from a selection in Luke chapter 5.

And don't worry if you don't have a Bible. We always show the verses up on the screen so you can read along with me. All right, we're going to go for it. Luke chapter 5, verse 1. Here's what it says. On one occasion, while the crowd was pressing in on him, talking about Jesus, so the crowd was pressing in on Jesus to hear the word of God. He was standing by the lake of Gennesaret, and he saw two boats by the lake. But the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets.

[4 : 04] Getting into one of the boats, which was Simon's, he asked him to put out a little from the land, and he sat down and taught the people from the boat. When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, I love this, put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch. And Simon answered, Master, we toiled all night and took nothing, but at your word, I will let down the nets.

And when they had done this, they enclosed a large number of fish and their nets were breaking. They signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them, and they came and filled both the boats so that they began to sink. But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus's knees saying, Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord. For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish that they had taken. And so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, Do not be afraid.

From now on, you will be catching men. And when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed him. This is God's word. So we're in this series called, Who Are We Really? Today's sermon, we're looking at how we are transformed by the gospel. And this is what the gospel does. It is good news that transforms us, right? It's not good news that just informs us.

It's good news that transforms us. And you know what? We could all use some good news these days, right? And here's the interesting thing. News itself, man, to talk about it is like a topical minefield in our current moment. And all of us, we're searching for news that we can trust.

That's something maybe that's more reliable than Fox or CNN or MSNBC or NPR or, God forbid, Facebook and Twitter if that's your news source. But that's the gospel, right? The gospel is good news that you can trust. But it's a different kind of news than you and I are used to. See, when we think about news, we think facts and information. Of course, these days, it comes with a lot of opinion.

[6 : 10] So the gospel is facts. It is truth. It is information. But it goes a lot further. It's good news about a person, Jesus. It's good news that brings you into a relationship with him. It is good news that exposes who you really are and how things really are. Basically, it is more reliable and more true than every other news source you and I consume. And you know what's unfortunate? It's too often it's the news we least consume. And I'm not here to tell you what news channels as Christians you should be watching. Actually, I am. You should be looking at the gospel. That's the news channel you and I should be consuming more and more and more of. And here's why. Everything you engage in, everything you listen to, everything you take in with your ears and your eyes, it does something to you. It shapes you. If you want me to prove it, let's just look at the state of affairs today.

We are consuming information at unprecedented levels. That's where we're at as a society. We have more new sources than ever before, better for worse. And what has this overconsumption produced? To say it another way, what's the fruit of it? What is the fruit coming out of our lives by this overconsumption? Well, I would argue that what I see more of is anger, anxiety, hostility, fractured relationships, more isolation, demonizing, polarizing. This is steadily becoming our new normal.

We've become heavy consumers of a news that not only informs us, it is shaping us too. But here's the good news. In the same way, the gospel is the good news that transforms us. It also shapes us. And this is what gives me hope for us, for Jesus's church, for the nation, and for the nations. It should give you hope too, guys. See, the gospel transforms us to be more like Jesus. And think about who Jesus was.

Think about what he did. He didn't demonize or polarize his enemies. He loved them. He moved toward them. He sat with them. He talked with them. He listened to them. He engaged them. He wasn't hostile or heavy-handed. Actually, what John read today, he invites us to come to him and take on his yoke because he's gentle and lowly. That's how he describes himself. Doesn't sound like a very heavy-handed guy, does it? Jesus wasn't vengeful or convulsive. He was long-suffering. Long-suffering, I like that word. That's a good word that we should think about and dwell on today. It's one that's good for our hearts to take in and grow in. And it just basically means Jesus patiently endured suffering without punching back. And we can all benefit from a lot less punching back, can't we? We see in Jesus's life many occasions of people confronting and challenging and mistreating him. And of course, when we look at the crucifixion, that's kind of the apex moment of that, right? But Jesus's response in those moments shows us he had a very different impulse. He always seemed to take in everything that was going on, even towards him, but he responded differently. He took it in, but he didn't respond in kind.

And that is the way of the cross, which is the way of the good news of the gospel. As we become like Jesus, we live very differently in response to the brokenness in us and the brokenness all around us.

[9 : 57] But here's the thing, guys. If we are not centered in the gospel, if we are not rooted in the gospel, which another way of saying it is being rooted and centered in the person of Jesus, then we can't do that. We won't do that. We can't become more like Jesus. What you and I need is gospel distraction.

We live in an era of a lot of distraction. And what I'm saying is, man, we need to turn the idea of distraction on its head. We're usually distracted from the gospel by the screens in our pockets or the 60-incher on our wall, or by the errands and the hobbies and the careers and the demands on our time.

Instead, what if we lived a life where the gospel distracts us back into the most important thing that we can do, which is beholding Jesus, which is pushing into him and journeying further into the heart of the Father and discovering how amazing he is. A life of gospel distraction is necessary to become more like Jesus. And here's the thing about the gospel, guys. It is invasive. It is good news, but it's good news that has a purpose and a power to it. It's the kind of news that is subversive and revolutionary to the way things are. The gospel invades and disrupts our lives in unexpected ways.

We started out by reading the first encounter Simon Peter had with Jesus. Now, it would be helpful to just give some background to Simon as it makes this story just a little more relatable and a lot more powerful. So Peter, Simon Peter, right, he's this fisherman. Not just for some of his life, all of his life. See, in those days, you didn't bounce around between careers. You didn't have community college and University of Phoenix. They weren't a thing back then, right? You didn't get to say like, hey, I'm a carpenter. You know what? I'm not liking this. I'm going to shift and just like try this thing over here.

Basically, you were apprenticed into the same vocation as your father. So who you were born to, you could kind of determine by the age of three if you were smart enough being like, well, I guess that's what I'm doing for the rest of my life. So Simon was always going to be a fisherman, and most likely he has been fishing his whole life. In fact, he has probably been fishing that Lake Gesennaret most of his whole life, which means that he is in a master class of how to fish and how to fish that Lake particularly. He knows where the fish are, where they're moving, when they're biting, when they're not. And if you think about it, as a fisherman, that was his one source of income, right?

[12 : 41] There was no uber side hustles as an option back in those days. He was a fisherman, and that was it. So fisherman was more than just a description of Simon. It was more than just his job title. This was an identity for him. Let's look again at Luke 5 and what it says. On one occasion while the crowd was pressing in on him, Jesus said they wanted to hear Jesus give the word of God. He was standing by the lake of Gennesaret, and he, Jesus, saw two boats by the lake, but the fishermen had gone out, so there's empty boats, right? What does Jesus do? He gets into one of the boats, and he gets into Simon's boat, and he asked him to put out a little from the land, and he sat down and taught people from the boat.

That's what the gospel does. It invades. Jesus didn't ask Simon if he could get into his boat. He got into his boat. He invited himself, right? Now, I don't know about you. I'm not a big fan of people inviting themselves over to my house. We lived in a neighborhood a few years back where there was a bunch of kids that would play with our kids around our house and stuff, and there was this one little guy, cool little kid. He was six years old, loved him, but you know what? He never knocked when he showed up. He kind of just walked right in our house like he owned the place, right? Not cool little bro.

I had to sit him down and say, hey, bud, you got to knock. I don't know if I'm going to be walking around in my underwear at some point. I had to lay down some rules, but that's the thing with the gospel, guys. Man, it's good news that invades, right? And it doesn't invade with facts and figures.

It invades with Jesus stepping into your boat, stepping into your space. That's disruptive. Let's be honest. We often don't like it when that happens because Jesus doesn't come to be a passive presence. He's not like, you keep doing your thing. I'm going to sit over here on the lazy boy watching some Gilligan reruns. That's not what Jesus is doing when he invades our space.

What does he do when he gets in the boat? He starts making demand. Peter, come here. Let's go over there. Take me where I want to go. Now, we know Simon just pulled an all-nighter, right? And that kind of fishing wasn't like throw a thing in, reel it in, throw a thing. This is like throwing nets. It's like hard work all night. And came up, bubkis. I mean, it is like demoralizing. You fish all night and you got no fish at the end of the day. That's a tough one. I bet you he's wrestling with frustration and weariness, right? Now, you have this guy jumping into your boat telling you what to do, asking for some like morning pleasure cruise. I'm sure Simon was feeling more than just a little inconvenience. But the gospel invades us that way. It doesn't wait for a convenient time. Often what it does, it disrupts our lives when we least expect it and in ways we don't want it to. Look what happens next. Peter takes him out and then Jesus has the audacity to sit down and start teaching.

[15 : 51] We don't know how long he taught for, but you know what? If you and I worked 24 hours straight, hard labor, at that point, probably 15 minutes would feel like four hours. Way too long.

Finally, Jesus wraps up his teaching. Peter must be thinking about finally, oh, I can get a bath and get to bed. This is so nice. But Jesus has other plans. Verse 4, when he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, put out into deeper water. You know, let's go out a little bit further.

Guess who had to row? Yeah. Let's put out into deeper water, he said to Simon, and let down your nets for a catch. So, guys, Simon, master class fisherman, knows this lake inside and out, has like fished that sucker all night, nothing happens. What's happening in his mind and heart right now, right? This moment probably went from inconvenient to infuriating. This guy's going to tell me how to fish my lake? This isn't Jesus being aloof and totally unaware of the circumstances.

He is after something. He's after Simon's heart, which is what the gospel does. The gospel confronts our idols. I've come to know a few fishermen living here over the past 12 years, and I'd bet some money that Simon's inner dialogue at this point is somewhere towards the rated R scale, right? I mean, he's probably, he would probably give a drill instructor, a drill instructor reason to blush.

But we don't get to read that, right? We get the filtered version of Simon's response here. Verse 5, it says, master, Simon replied, we've worked hard all night long and caught nothing, exclamation point, which is like writing it in all caps, right? He's not being nice here. He's not like, well, Jesus, you know that I've been fishing all night and didn't come. No, he's like, he's being a little naughty. He's being a little cheeky, as my wife would say, towards Jesus. But at your word, I'll let down my nets. Everyone, and I mean everyone, has an idol that they worship. These idols are what we build a false identity around. Henry knew and nailed it when he said, we build false identities around three lies that we believe. I am what I do, I am what I have, and I am what others think or say about me.

[18 : 19] Can anyone relate to that? Jesus is confronting Simon's idol. My boat, my career, my lake, my territory, I'm the expert. Jesus, what do you really have to say about fishing? Jesus, what do you really have to say about parenting? Jesus, what do you really have to say about ethics at work? Jesus, what do you really have to say about my career? Jesus, what do you really have to say about being a husband or a wife?

Jesus, what do you really have to say about who I sleep with? Jesus, what do you really have to say about politics? There's a lot of questions that we have in our minds, and really what we're meaning when we think these things is, Jesus, you stay in your lane. I got my lane, you stay in yours.

Don't come into my lane and start telling me what to do. I'll go to church on Sundays, that's your lane. I'll listen. I'll give some head nods. Uh-huh, uh-huh, uh-huh. You can tell me what to do then, but the rest of it, yeah, you just stay in your lane.

And when Jesus is telling Simon to throw out his nets again, he is confronting Simon's identity, where he had the most ability and the most authority. And that's what happens when the gospel invades our lives. The gospel reveals how hopeless we really are. So Simon, nice guy that he is, he takes the bait, no pun intended, and throws his nets overboard. If Simon was anything like me, he would have been praying not to catch any fish, just so he could be right and show this guy in the boat like, hey, don't tell me how to do my job. But the exact opposite happens. He not only catches fish, guys, it's the biggest catch of his life. Probably the biggest catch that lake has ever seen.

And we have to appreciate this moment by comparing the two fishing trips that just happened, right? Peter without Jesus toils all night, catches nothing. Now Jesus gets into his boat. First time over, boom, throws out the nets. The result, greatest catch of all time. This not only wows Simon, it cuts to the very heart of his idol, his false identity. All his efforts, all his ability proved worthless in comparison to what Jesus could do. That's the gospel. Without Jesus, you and I are hopeless.

[20 : 52] You can work to become the best version of yourself, study, volunteer, become an activist, perfect parent, perfect spouse, perfect employee, perfect whatever. We can do those things and actually become rather impressed with our personal resume, thinking when we are such a catch, God would be so lucky to have me on his team until the gospel invades and disrupts.

Because it brings Jesus into our boats. It brings Jesus into our lives. And we see how worthless our knowledge and wisdom and works and righteousness are in comparison to him. The gospel reveals we are sinners, which leads us to respond just like Simon, go away from me because I am a sinful man, Lord.

That was a good response Simon gave. He wasn't being down on himself. I think he understood himself for the first time in that moment. In light of Jesus being in his boat and spending some time with him.

When Jesus invades and disrupts our lives, we are humbled. We will be humbled. When the gospel becomes our main diet, you know what's going to happen? You and I are going to grow in humility.

That's what's going to happen. I think there is a soul pandemic today called the supremacy of the individual. The gospel antidote to this is the supremacy of Christ. We got to look into that gospel, guys. We need more of Jesus. And unfortunately, that isn't intuitive to us. I wish it was. I wish, man, every single day we woke up and we thought, man, you know what I need more of? Jesus. Jesus, how can I get more of you? At lunchtime, it wasn't like, man, do I want Taco Bell or Burger King today?

[22 : 40] It would be like, Jesus, what do I want? I need more of you. What is intuitive to us is Simon's response. Jesus, go away. The premise there is, Jesus, next to you, I see how much I suck. I don't like how that feels. Can you please leave so I can feel better? But Jesus knows we need more of him and not less of him. So you know what he does? He ignores Simon, maybe even rejects Simon's request and makes him an offer he can't refuse, Godfather style, right? The second half of verse 10, it says, Jesus said to Simon, do not be afraid. From now on, you will be catching men. And when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed him. Jesus is always inviting us to follow him. John said that at the beginning of the service. We didn't even sync up notes. He just said it.

So maybe God's trying to get our attention here. Jesus always invites us to follow him. You know what? You don't get to set those terms. You and I don't get to say, okay, Jesus, well, you know what?

Following you, let me see. Here's some of my demands. You know, I would like to, you know, make sure I have peanut M&Ms; twice a week. You know, not the red ones, just, you know, the blue and the green and the brown. That would be great. We don't get to set those kind of terms. We don't get to say, Jesus, I will follow you with these exceptions or with these additions.

Following Jesus isn't like friending him on Facebook. That's not what he's doing. It's the summons of an authoritative king. The gospel, the call of Jesus is an invitation to surrender and follow Jesus daily. Again, me and John did not sync up notes. All right. Every day, you and I have an opportunity. Every day, we have an opportunity. What are we consuming? And what are those things asking us to surrender? And the things that we're consuming, how are they shaping us? What are you and I becoming? The gospel, what it does, it invites us to follow Jesus. Following Jesus is an act of surrender. Simon had to leave everything he worked for his whole life. He left his nets. He left his boat. He left his hometown. And we can kind of read that and think, yeah, okay, big deal. Imagine working for something your whole life. You build a business. Say it's a restaurant or something, and it's rocking, and it's going well. I mean, you have so much sweat equity in there. And then this guy steps into your restaurant one day, looks you in the eye, and says, follow me. Okay, well, sure. Can I just, can I follow you and work? No, no, follow me. You got to leave this all behind. That's in essence what Jesus is how he called Peter. He had to leave everything. He had to leave the biggest catch of all time. He could have been the fishing goat of his hometown, right? But he walked away from it all to follow

Jesus. He had to surrender comfort and convenience and prestige, calling his own shots. But here's the thing. When the gospel invades our life, when we encounter the real Jesus, we actually see that he is better than everything. He is so much better than all the things that we could have or want or desire.

[26 : 23] He surpasses all those desires. As the band comes up, let's think of how we can respond. And I just want to say to you, if you're here and you're not a Christian today, so glad you're here.

So glad that you got to hear kind of a laying out of the gospel and how things work. And I hope right now Jesus is invading your life. I hope this is him. This is the moment where he is stepping into your boat. He is calling out those false identities that you've built your life around.

He is showing you this resume you've been so impressed with, actually how worthless it is. But you know what he's inviting? He's inviting you to follow him. And here's why it's worth it.

You and I are sinners, but you know what Jesus did? He died on a cross. He gave himself fully for you so your sins could be taken away. You could be washed clean of them. He made a way for you to be, to have a new identity, to be a son of God, to be a disciple. And I want to invite you today, what that takes is just faith, believing in him, saying, you know what Jesus, you are Lord and Savior.

I surrender and I'm going to follow you. And if you do that today, man, that's something you don't keep to yourself. We want to know. Come and talk to me or Alan or he's the other pastor here. He's right over there waving his hand, I think. I can't see him because the speaker's in front of him.

[27 : 57] But we love to know that because discipleship is a team sport. You don't go it alone. We do it together. For those of you in the room, you've crossed that line of faith, you're a disciple of Jesus Christ already. I want to ask us this. What are you becoming? What are you and I becoming?

Is it more like Jesus? What are you and I consuming the most of? Consume the gospel, guys. Let's consume it. This year, let's consume it. Let's consume it. Let's consume it. Let's shut off all the other stuff and turn to it, return to it, return to it.

And it's going to produce some beautiful fruit in us. We're going to become more humble. We're going to become more loving. We're going to become more joyful. We're going to become more peaceful because we're becoming more like our Savior.

What do you and I need to walk away from? What are the nets that we've been holding on to that we need to give up? Surrender. Let's follow Jesus. Pray with me. Lord, we thank you for the fact that you gave us your word, that you showed us what you're like, that the gospel is this beautiful, wonderful thing full of grace. But we thank you that it's invasive, that it gets into the deepest parts of our soul. It addresses the most significant parts of who we are, and it exposes our weakness.

It keeps us from being proud. And it points to the fact that actually you are the better thing. You're always the better thing. And so we run to you. Help us, Lord, from today and tomorrow, to a reminder for the rest of this year, for the rest of our lives, that we need to be beholding you, Jesus Christ. We need to be consuming the gospel more than anything.

[30 : 01] And I pray that you would begin this today. Holy Spirit, come and fill us. Fill us with a passion, a passion to seek you above all things, a passion to see you as beautiful above all things.

I pray that in your name. Amen.