

## “True Faith” Luke 5:1-11 Trinity 5 2021

Grace and peace in our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Today, many people believe in a misconception: that there is power in faith itself. Not the object of faith, but faith in itself, in my faith. My faith is something meritorious. If I shout "I believe, I believe, I believe," I can make my vision, my imagination reality. When many people say, "I believe in God," they think in this way, not in God, but in their own faith. If I pray and pray and pray enough, God should give me anything I want. If this person does not get the thing he asked of God, he thinks it's his fault for not believing enough. That's not the truth. The power of God is not in our faith, but in the power of God. Faith is a gift from God, that God works in us.

We have in our reading for today true examples of faith. First, the prophet Elijah. On the Mount of Transfiguration, when Peter, John and James saw Jesus transformed and shining like the sun, there appeared beside Jesus Moses the lawgiver, and Elijah, the greatest of Old Testament prophets. We talk about the Old Testament as the testimony of the prophets. A prophet was one who received and proclaimed the Word of God to the people of Israel.

So Elijah was one of the greatest prophets of the Old Testament. However, in our reading of the Old Testament (1 Kings 11: 19-21), Elijah was very depressed.

"And there came a voice unto him, who said to him: What are you doing here, Elijah? And he said, I have been very jealous for the Lord, the God of hosts. For the people of Israel have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with

## “True Faith” Luke 5:1-11 Trinity 5 2021

the sword, and I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life, to take it away."

Elijah thought that most of the people did not remain in the faith and work of his life was in vain. What example of faith do we have in Elijah then? He had many doubts, was tired of life. But the Lord showed him a few things. How did the Word of God come to Elijah?

" And behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind tore the mountains and broke in pieces the rocks before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind. And after the wind an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake. <sup>12</sup> And after the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire the sound of a low whisper."

That means, often the Spirit of God does not speak in great manifestations of the power to crush the human will, but in a soft, pleasant voice.

And the LORD said to him, "Go, return on your way to the wilderness of Damascus. And when you arrive, you shall anoint Hazael to be king over Syria. <sup>16</sup> And Jehu the son of Nimshi you shall anoint to be king over Israel, and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah you shall anoint to be prophet in your place. <sup>17</sup> And the one who escapes from the sword of Hazael shall Jehu put to death, and the one who escapes from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha put to death. <sup>18</sup> Yet I will leave seven thousand in Israel, all

## “True Faith” Luke 5:1-11 Trinity 5 2021

the knees that have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him.”

There are always people who listen to the Word of God, there is always a remnant. Well, we talk about the New Testament as the testimony of the apostles, the men sent by Jesus Christ to proclaim the Gospel. Our gospel today speaks of Simon Peter. This story in chapter 5 was not the first encounter between Jesus and Peter, because Chapter 4 says that Jesus previously healed Peter's mother-in-law of a fever.

Jesus met Peter again on the shores of Lake Gennesaret, another name for the Sea of Galilee. " On one occasion, while the crowd was pressing in on him to hear the word of God, he was standing by the lake of Gennesaret, <sup>2</sup> and he saw two boats by the lake, but the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. <sup>3</sup> 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."

Peter and his companions were professional fishermen. They knew the Sea of Galilee and all the places to fish. After a night without a catch, this Jesus said to them: " 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.”

What kind of faith did Peter have? He did not call Jesus Lord, but Master. He showed some respect for Jesus, but not total confidence. But, no matter his doubts, Peter commanded them to cast their nets.

## “True Faith” Luke 5:1-11 Trinity 5 2021

"And when they had done this, they enclosed a large number of fish, and their nets were breaking. <sup>7</sup> 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."

Jesus' power was not dependent on the weak faith of Peter. You children remember the song, "If you have faith as a mustard seed," If we do not block the power of God by rejection of His Word, He can do wonders in our lives.

When do we receive the gift of faith? In baptism when God gave us the faith and the promise of eternal life. Baptism is the seal of the gift of faith and salvation and nothing can change that fact. The Holy Spirit begins the work of perfecting our faith and great things are the fruits of the Spirit.

What happened in our reading of the Old Testament when Elijah found Elisha? " <sup>19</sup> So he departed from there and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen in front of him, and he was with the twelfth. Elijah passed by him and cast his cloak upon him. <sup>20</sup> And he left the oxen and ran after Elijah and said, "Let me kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow you." And he said to him, "Go back again, for what have I done to you?" <sup>21</sup> And he returned from following him and took the yoke of oxen and sacrificed them and boiled their flesh with the yokes of the oxen and gave it to the people, and they ate. Then he arose and went after Elijah and assisted him."

What did Peter and his companions when they saw the power of Jesus? " But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." <sup>9</sup> For he and all

## “True Faith” Luke 5:1-11 Trinity 5 2021

who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish that they had taken, <sup>10</sup> 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.”<sup>[a]</sup> <sup>11</sup> And when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed him." Not by the power of his own faith, but by the power of the Holy Spirit.

God does not call all believers to leave their families, their businesses or their work, but to show the love of God in our vocations as parents, children, workers and citizens of our country. As Peter says in our epistle (1 Peter 3.8-15), " but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect" because here we have the peace that passes all understanding. Amen.