

Bilingual Sermon

Kitahama Church

Sunday, January 28th, 2024

Pastor Teiichiro Kuroda

Theme: "But I Will Try"

-The Man who Meets the Lord-

Text: Gospel of Luke 5:1-5

Introduction

Good morning.

- In our lives, there are various kinds of encounters. New relationships are born through encounters. I met my wife, and our relationship led us to marriage. Fifty years have already passed since then. Time runs fast.
- I am sure that in your life as well, you will meet someone, somewhere, and that meeting will have an impact on you to the extent that it will affect your life.

- Simon, a fisherman on the shores of Lake Galilee, met Jesus. That encounter changed his life. He was a fisherman who caught fish in the Lake of Galilee.
- But because of his encounter with Jesus, he left his job as a fisherman, and became a disciple of Jesus, an apostle, and then a great evangelist who preached the gospel of God far and wide. **Encounters change people's lives.**
- Today, we want to remember God's leading through Simon's encounter with Jesus.

Important Points

1. The Words of Jesus

5:2 He saw at the water's edge two boats, left there by the fishermen, who were washing their nets.

5:3 He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little from shore. Then he sat down and taught the people from the boat.

- Simon met Jesus on the shore of Lake Galilee. The fishermen had finished their work and were washing their nets. He asked to get into Simon's boat and row out a little bit from the land. Then he sat down and began to teach the crowd from the boat.

- Think about this for a moment.

- Jesus, the Son of God who created the world, asked a fisherman on the shore of Lake Galilee to lend him his boat. He asked him to row out to sea.
What a surprise!
- The word "asked" is translated in the German Lutheran translation of the Bible as "**bitten**" (meaning "to beg"). This word is used by beggars when they beg. It is an expression of a strong desire.
- God can approach us and stoop down and ask us if he can enter our lives as well.
What an amazing thing!
- In Simon's case, Simon knew nothing. How did he respond to Jesus?

2. Simon's Response

(1) Words of Jesus

5:4 When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch."

- Jesus now said to Simon in imperative form. "Put out into deep water and let down the nets for a catch."
- If Simon had not obeyed Jesus' words, the story would not have unfolded.
"There are times in our lives when God approaches us to ask us to do something for him. How do we respond?"
- Here we see an important principle. **Simon was "obedient" to the words of Jesus.** Therefore, Jesus told him, "You will be blessed with a great quantity of fish. "

5:6 When they had done so, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break.

5:7 So they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them, and they came and filled both boats so full that they began to sink.

But before Simon took the step of obedience, he had one word more.

(2) Simon's excuse

5:5 Simon answered, "Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets."

- This is Simon's character. Simon, who was a fisherman, brought his own experience as a fisherman. Was it wrong for him to speak of his own experience?
- No. If I had been there, no doubt, I would have said the same thing.
We should not set standards based on our own experiences, our own abilities, or our own talents, because we have no idea.
- **What was the problem then?**

- ⇒ The problem was that Simon did not need to bring up his own experience when Jesus was there (His presence). The Lord's presence is where the Kingdom of God will be realized.
- Please don't misunderstand me. I am not saying that human experience is unnecessary. God uses our abilities and talents. But more importantly, God is glorified through the vessels of obedience to the words of Jesus.
 - Here is an important lesson for us to remember.
Human experience, abilities, and talents are certainly important, but what is even more important is that if the Lord is there, He will be glorified through the vessels of obedience to His Word.
 - {Example.}
 - I think Kitahama Church is lovely church. I love Kitahama church because we have brothers and sisters from different backgrounds, a flock that is "open" and "respectful" of the individual.
 - We have people with a variety of gifts, talents, and abilities.
Kitahama Church began in 1990 with my "Business Lecture Series."
 - The church has served as a "center church" in the heart of Osaka. Recently, we have shifted to become a "local church" and then to an "international church."
 - On the other hand, my overseas mission work began in 1981. I have already been ministering for more than 43 years through "The Voice of Mission ". I have received prayers and supports from many people inside and outside the church.
 - I have been sending out monthly messages domestically and internationally. I am truly grateful.
 - Looking back on it now, I can see three ministries:
 - 1) Businessman evangelism
 - 2) Overseas missions, and
 - 3) Church planting!
 ⇒ It is very clear that this is not because of human power or ability.
 - It is not a human thing, who did this in the church, or who did that in the church. Kitahama Church was started and built by God. There is no doubt that the Lord was certainly present here. Therefore, we do not boast of our human abilities or strength.
 - We are a church that praises, thanks, and worships the Lord alone.
What we are taught there are the words of Simon.
Simon made excuses, but he still obeyed the words of Jesus.

(3) "Faith that says, 'But'"

5:5 Simon answered, "Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets."

Simon said, "But". This word of "but" is one which can connect two sentences with a little doubt in mind. In other words, Simon's faith was "but" at this time.

He said then said, "Because you say so."

⇒ In the original text, it's written "on your word" (in English).

Simon cast his net of trust on the Word of Jesus.

⇒ That is "faith."

- He said "but" in this way. Then he cast his net of trust over the Word of Jesus and acted in obedience. And the blessing followed. Here we see the principle of God's blessing.

- And here we see the principle of God's blessing. The Lord blesses us when we obediently follow Him in faith, saying, "Because you say so." which means "on your word."

- We at Kitahama Church hope to continue to trust in the Lord. Simon obeyed Jesus' words and cast down his net and received the blessing of a great catch of fish.

5:8 When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus' knees and said, "Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!"

(1) He understood what Jesus was like. And,

(2) He realized what a small and foolish person he was.

⇒ This is the image of a person who has met the living Lord (he saw his own image).

Conclusions

Theme: "But I Will Try"

-Man who meets the Lord-

- We are probably no different from Simon, but God chose Simon and blessed him. Here we can see the principle of blessing.

⇒ That is Obedience to the words of Jesus.

5:5 Simon answered, "Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets."

God bless you!