



From the Director

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It is easy to feel disillusioned when you consider the frequency our media presents criticism of our churches, the dysfunction of our government, economic hardship, crime, youth suicide or the breakdown of respect and our established social norms.

The instability of many democracies around the world adds to the perception that all is not so well. Somehow in the midst of all this mess I see an invitation for each one of us. Rather than walking away from our faith, our churches and long held beliefs, maybe there is an invitation to embrace these challenges in order for new life to be revealed.

I am reminded of the time where Jesus approached Simon at the waters edge. They had been toiling all night with little success. I imagine they were tired and ready for some food and rest. The last thing they would have been seeking was to go out to do some more fishing, but this is what Jesus invited them to do.

“Jesus got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little from the shore. When he finished speaking to the crowd he said to Simon, “put out into the deep water and lower your nets for a catch.” “Simon replied. Master, we worked hard all night and caught nothing. But if you say so I will lower the nets.”

Something motivated Simon to respond to Jesus’ invitation to go out to the deeper water. I guess he could easily have said no and journeyed home to a place of comfort. He instead responded and as we see in the story;

“This they did and caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break.” (Luke 5:1-11)

Water is often used in Scripture as a place where transformation and change occurs. Jesus invites his followers to leave the place of security, close to the shore, to go out and embrace his message. Simon responded to this invitation. He looked past his tiredness and disillusionment to embrace the call. The response was so overwhelming that he needed other boats to help them gather the catch. We are told then that they left everything and followed Jesus. The disciples were forever changed, embracing the message Jesus offered. Had Simon given in to his tiredness or disillusionment he and the others would have travelled a very different path. I love the fact that there was an invitation not a coercion to go out to the deeper water. The choice is ours. We can give in or we can accept the invitation to go out to deeper water, to renew our commitment to the message Jesus is offering us.

Flor McCarthy tells us; *“Transformation comes about when we are willing to admit God’s word into our lives, to hear God’s voice and to act upon it. Mind, senses, heart must all be open to receive. This means we must pay attention without being passive – listening, hearing, reflecting.”*

The invitation for each of us may be similar to Simon’s. Rather than being overwhelmed by the negativity offered by the media our challenge is to venture out to the deeper water. There we will encounter the Lord and our perspective on life will be forever changed.

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