

## Together with God

### REFLECT

If you heard Pastor David's sermon this weekend, reflect on what you learned (there is a note section in your journal to write down what you are learning from the sermon series). *If you would like to view this weeks message you can do so at [www.fmcm.org/media](http://www.fmcm.org/media).*

- What were your biggest takeaways from the sermon?
- Were there specific points that God was speaking to you about that you would like to share with the group?
- Were there any specific actions that the Spirit prompted you to take as you listened to the sermon?

### READ GOD'S WORD TOGETHER

#### Luke 5:11-1

Read the account of the call of Peter, James, and John in Luke 5:1-11. After reading the passage together, consider the following points and questions:

- Make note of (or circle in your Bible) the amount of times in Luke 5:1-11 that the author uses a word (i.e. boat, nets, fish, etc.) related in some way to Peter's job of fishing. How many instances did you find? Why was this so important for Luke to emphasize in his retelling of this story?
- Jesus first uses Peter's boat (another critical tool, alongside his rope nets, of his vocation) as a pulpit and proclaims a message to the crowds (Luke 5:3). Peter seems to have no problem with this arrangement. Most fishing on the Lake of Gennesaret was done in the evenings anyway, when the fish were more active. It is when Jesus, the carpenter, turns from the pulpit to ask Peter, the fisherman, to go fishing that raises some tension. What is Peter's response and why do you think he responded in this way?
- Here is a way of thinking about Jesus' and Peter's exchange. Do you think Jesus has something to say to you about how you do your vocation? If not, then why? If yes, what does he have to say that should shape how you do your job?
- Read Colossians 3:17, and 3:22-4:1. Perhaps another way of asking about Jesus and our jobs is to ask how should your identity as a follower of Christ shape who you are and what you do in your workplace? Or, for those who are retired, how

should your identity as a follower of Christ shape who you are and what you do in your retirement? Based on this reading in Colossians what would be Paul's response be to this question?

- Peter's understanding of his vocation was, in a sense, interrupted by Jesus. Henri Nouwen was a busy professor, writer, speaker, and spiritual director who found himself often complaining about interruptions to his work. In the long run this is what Nouwen found out: "You know,...my whole life I have been complaining that my work was constantly interrupted, until I discovered that my interruptions were my work....what if our interruptions are in fact our opportunities?" (Nouwen, *Reaching Out*, 52-53). How have you found this to be true in your own life and vocation--that interruptions were opportunities for God to use you, bless you, and bless others?
- Peter does, in the end, allow Jesus to give him some vocational advice, and the outcome is exponential blessing--rope nets that are full and bursting and boats that are overflowing with enough "big fish" stories to feed a whole community (Luke 5:6-7). It might remind you of a later story in Luke 9:10-17, where Jesus took five loaves of bread and two fish that the disciples had on hand and blessed and multiplied them to feed a multitude. God can use rope nets, tools and the skills to use them, aptitude for numbers (see the later call of Levi the tax-collector in Luke 5:27-32), medical abilities, speaking gifts, leaders, keen business skills, a knack for hospitality and compassion, and any other possible gifts, skills, and abilities you have to bless others and expand his kingdom when we offer them up for his use. How have you seen this to be true in your life? What are some ways that you have been blessed by others' gifts, skills, and abilities? How have you seen people in your group use their gifts, tools, skills, and abilities to bless you and bless others? Are there gifts, skills, and abilities you have that are lying dormant that could be used to bless others?

### Together in Community

We have been talking about Peter's rope-net as a metaphor for the tools and skills that God has given to us to bless others and expand His kingdom. The New Testament has another way of speaking of this as well: God gives spiritual gifts to individual Christians who together comprise the body of Christ. These gifts might be the empowerment of an already existing skill,