

## Stop It!

Story of me and Jeremy fishing in Canada, Lake miles wide, waves, floating Ball jar, Incredible Walleye fishing. One side of the boat... literally because of a shelf 40 ft under the water where the Ball jar was anchored. Had the guide not told us about the jar and where to find it, we never would have found that shelf and we never would have caught anything. It wasn't easy to find even after where he told us where it was, we had to keep circling around and looking for it because it was hidden in the waves. Prayer, fasting, waiting on God, trusting, faith.

( I leave my personal example here for reference. Consider what personal story you can use to connect people to the message.)

John 21 New Living Translation (NLT)

Epilogue: Jesus Appears to Seven Disciples

21 Later, Jesus appeared again to the disciples beside the Sea of Galilee.<sup>[a]</sup> This is how it happened. 2 Several of the disciples were there—Simon Peter, Thomas (nicknamed the Twin),<sup>[b]</sup> Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two other disciples.

3 Simon Peter said, "I'm going fishing."

"We'll come, too," they all said. So they went out in the boat, but they caught nothing all night.

4 At dawn Jesus was standing on the beach, but the disciples couldn't see who he was. 5 He called out, "Fellows,<sup>[c]</sup> have you caught any fish?"

"No," they replied.

6 Then he said, "Throw out your net on the right-hand side of the boat, and you'll get some!" So they did, and they couldn't haul in the net because there were so many fish in it.

This is a very popular scripture.

- Jesus telling the fishermen to cast on the other side of the boat.

What is often not mentioned usually though is when this took place.

- We all know the story of Jesus Crucifixion.
- Peter told the Lord that he would never deny him.
- All the other disciples made similar promises I'm sure.
- But just a few short days after Jesus is Crucified, we find Peter saying in verse 3 "I'm going fishing!"

This is interesting to me because...

- This was Peter's old way of life.
- This is where Jesus first found Him,

- This is what Peter was doing when Jesus told him “Follow Me and I Will Make You Fishers Of Men”!

In a way, I look at Peter and think how feeble his faith really was.

- Weak
- Puny really.
- That after just 3 days of not seeing Jesus in the flesh after walking with Him every day for the last 3 ½ years and he goes back to being the old Peter.

I really want to hammer on this thought and give Peter a good beat down here.

- But then I think of our own humanity.
  - How many days would you have lasted?
  - Jesus is dead.
  - People are dropping away from the faith like flies.
  - No money is coming in to support the ministry.
  - Why should it... Jesus is not there anymore – apparently...

So Peter does what all of us would do at some point...

- he goes back to the same way of life he was in before Jesus found him.

What Peter doesn't know however is that Jesus had resurrected just like he said he would.

- So while Peter's grabbing the anchor and the oars and the nets,
- Jesus is kicking off the grave clothes and showing up in some other people's lives.

See just because you're going backwards in your faith doesn't mean that some other people aren't moving forwards.

- Mary's seeing Jesus in the flesh and doing what He told her to do and that was to tell everybody that He was alive.
- And Peter says, “I'm going fishing.”
- She's going forwards in her faith and he's going backwards.

Doesn't make sense does it?!

“Doesn't Make Sense.”

- That's what we say when we see someone going the wrong direction in their walk with God.
- But what about us?
- Where are we at?

- What road are we on?
- What voices are we listening to?
- Are we telling people about Jesus or are we going back to fishing?

This being the end of the year, I think now would be a good time to answer this question in our own hearts.

- Where am I at?
- Am I going forwards or am I going backwards in my walk with Jesus?
  - If you're going forwards, keep going!
  - Don't stop!
  - Don't look back!

But if this year has been a year of trial for you that has brought you to a place of doubting in your faith...

- Or going backwards
- Or doing some of the old dumb stuff that Jesus had to forgive you of in the first place...
- Can I just say to you... "Stop It"!

Look at what Jesus says to these fishermen...

- "Fellas, have you caught any fish?"
- Has doing what you are doing...
- Going where you are going...
- Acting the way you are acting...
- Living the way you have been living...
- ...Gotten you anywhere?

Jesus said it nicely....

- He said, Throw your net on the right side of the boat.
- Now I've always heard it said that he meant right like left and right...
- But I wonder if maybe He meant the right side as opposed to the wrong side.
- In either case, one side was not yielding any results and the other promised a great blessing.

So this morning, "Which side are you fishing on?"

- With only one day left in the year...
- Which side of your faith are you living on?
- The right side or the side that isn't really producing anything in your life?

I wonder why Peter was in such a hurry to go back to fishing...

- I think I know why... Money.
- That's what he did for a living before Jesus came along...
- So without Jesus there to tend to His every need, Peter goes right back to what he knew to do to earn a living.
- And there's nothing wrong with this, except Peter went about his business the wrong way.
- He did it the way he thought it should be done.
- He didn't spend any time asking God which side of the boat to cast the net.
- I understand this.
- It's easy sometimes in business or on our Jobs to trust our own common sense and judgement, but how's that worked out for us in the coming new year?

Can I say..."Stop It!"

1 Peter 5:7 New Living Translation (NLT)

7 Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you.

What if Peter would have said,

- "You know, I'm going to pray about this for a bit before we get this boat into the water....
- Anybody want to pray with me?

Everyone wants to go fishing...

- make some money...
- but who's taking a few minutes to pray about the whole thing first?

As a result, their efforts are in vain.

- They waste an entire night of labor.
- They are tired
- They are exhausted.
- And worst of all... **they are broke!**
- They are broke financially
- They are broke emotionally
- They are broke mentally
- They are broke spiritually

Then Jesus calls out... "How's that working out for you so far?"

- Peter says "Nothing man – Nothing!"
- Spent this whole year trying to make something happen in my life.
- My marriage
- My home
- My job

- My walk with God.
- And I'm sitting here with nothing!
- I'm no further along than when I started.

And I hear Jesus calling out to you this morning... "How's that working out for you so far?"

- Trusting your own intellect
- Trusting Your own talent
- Trusting Your own intuition

Watch this...

Psalm 9:10 New Living Translation (NLT)

10 Those who know your name trust in you,  
for you, O Lord, do not abandon those who search for you.

Here is where we have to "Stop It!"

- We keep letting the enemy tell us that God has abandoned us.
- That we don't matter to Him.
- That He has forgotten all about us.
- That He has left us alone to fend for ourselves.
- That we need to trust our own intellect instead of His wisdom.

But... Psalm 9:10 New Living Translation (NLT)

10 Those who know your name trust in you,  
for you, O Lord, do not abandon those who search for you.

Isaiah 55:6 New Living Translation (NLT)

6 Seek the Lord while you can find him.  
Call on him now while he is near.

Stop fishing on the wrong side of the boat!

- Stop it!
- Let this New Year be a year of alignment for your life.

### 5 things

1. Make some big decisions and make some big changes.
2. Move from the wrong side to the right side.
3. Quit trusting your own abilities and start trusting God's will for your life.
4. Move out of doubt and begin to walk in faith.
5. Stop trusting other people's voices and start listening to God!

When they ask us in the coming New Year why there is such a difference in us... let it be said that we "Stopped it!"

Prayer: Lord we ask for your help right now. Only you can help us to make real change in our lives. We need the help of your Holy Spirit to begin to speak possibility and help and hope into our life. Help us to trust you with more in the coming new year. Cause us to move into the miraculous as we walk not by site, but by faith as we Stop doing the wrong things over and over again.