



October 2007

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Ever heard the expression his/her word doesn't mean a thing? It is usually an expression that we apply in describing a person who, through our experiences with them, has led us to conclude that nothing they tell us or say means anything. In simple terms their word is empty and unreliable. Somehow we keep hoping that maybe, just maybe, one day their word will come to mean something. But alas, they keep failing us. We can not be sure as to why this is the case, however it is so and after a while we tend to avoid the person.

Luke tells us about the experience Jesus had as He sought some men to

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PASTOR'S *Perspective*

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follow Him as disciples. A short time after His ministry began He must have given some thought to who and just what kind of person He would want to be His disciples. Isn't it remarkable that Jesus concluded that those He would have as His first students and followers would be just plain, 'ole' everyday, regular men? He chose those who engaged an ordinary and common occupation. In fact one of the oldest occupations there is, fishing. These men knew about ups and downs. They had to know about coming up with plenty and coming up empty for after all they were fisherman and fishing is an inexact science if anything at all. I do not profess to be a fisherman but I do know that sometime there is great joy derived from fishing and at other times there is great disappointment.

Jesus meets these men at one of those times of great disappointment. The fish had not been biting. The nets kept coming up empty or with Lake Trash; everything but fish. Surely they were disappointed. Through His omniscience Jesus already knew the fishermen's plight. He knew that they had had no luck at their craft. So Jesus tells Simon (who would later become Peter) to launch his boat out into the deep and there let the nets down. Jesus didn't just tell him what to do, He even told Simon what he would find. "There you will find plenty of fish" Jesus says. Simon's answer was predictable. "Come on Jesus we have been fishing all night and have

caught nothing you don't know what you are talking about! But (as if to appease Jesus) "if you say so we will do it." In another way of saying it, "at your word I will let the net down!" To Simon's surprise fish were all over the place. Not just all over the place but biting! The presence of fish was so powerful and the catch was so abundant that Simon had to call his fishing buddies in another boat to come help catch them. In fact Luke says that the fish were so plentiful that when loaded into the boats the boats began to sink for the weight of the fish!

Something about the word of Jesus isn't it? It just keeps on making believers out of us. When it seems as though we are coming up empty in life maybe the word of Jesus gives us the answer. Maybe, just maybe, those all night long experiences of emptiness and dismay and disappointment can be reframed as deep water transformations just as the experiences of Simon's fishing were. Maybe those times when we just can't seem to make sense out of life and its experiences the word of Jesus makes the difference. Why not seek a word that is reliable? It is a word that can be trusted and never come up short. Unlike those persons we know whose word means nothing, all Jesus has to do is say the word and it is so! Whose word will you trust?

