

The Psalmist writes, "*Weeping may linger for the night, but joy comes with the morning.*" They had wept. There was Saturday, a dark, anxious day. The women had wept at the tomb. Peter had wept bitterly as the rooster crowed and he realized his betrayal. But, he had not been rejected from group. Most of them had run from the cross. Jesus had met them and had said nothing of betrayal or denial. What were they to do? How had their weeping turned into joy as the morning light broke?

What do you do when you don't know what to do? You do what is familiar. Peter goes fishing. The others go with him. He does what he knows how to do. It is hard sitting, waiting - better to keep busy. Maybe in the quiet of the night direction will come. Even hard work was better than doing nothing - tossing the net, bringing it in, over and over. It was doing something. As dawn nears they have caught nothing. They have nothing to show for a hard night of work. Had Peter lost his touch? Hours of empty nets. Then a voice from the shore, "*Children, you do not have any fish do you?*" (NAS). No. They had worked all night, they were tired. They had used muscles that they had not used in a while. Then comes a suggestion, "*Throw your net on the right side of the boat and you will find some*" (21:6).

Do we realize how that must have sounded? It was not a big boat. Why would the fish be just on the right side of the boat? But, at this hour, what was one more toss. As the net fills they immediately knew who was on the shore. They had a catch beyond the catch of any fisherman. "*It is the Lord!*" Peter dressed and immediately swam to shore. The others struggled to bring in the catch. Does Peter remember another day and another catch?

Look at the story a little closer. Is there a detail that we may have missed? Jesus had a fire going and he instructed them to bring some of the fish... But, there are already fish on the coals, "*When they landed, they saw a fire burning coals there with fish on it, and some bread*" (v.9). He did not need their catch of fish. Jesus had breakfast ready already. Without their fish. The invitation of Jesus was to, "*Come and have breakfast.*" Come and dine with me.

The invitation of Jesus is for us to come. Jesus doesn't need our skills; he doesn't need what we are good at. The Psalmist had been near death. He was "*restored to life*" (v.3). Why? Was there some great work for the Psalmist to do? Was there another song to write? The Lord must have had something great planned for the Psalmist to spare his life. Yet, the Psalm reads in verse 12, "*that my soul may praise you.*" That is it! The Psalmist was to simply tell the story, his story of how God moved in his life. He was asked to lift his voice in praise to God.

God/Jesus did not need the fish in the net. What Jesus needed was for Peter and the others to tell the story. He had taken Peter in a new direction, from fishing for fish to fishing for men. Peter had forgotten his first call. Jesus needs Peter to tell his story - the story of his faithful following of Jesus, his denial and the grace he found. The rest of the story has Jesus reminding Peter of his call — do you love me? Feed my sheep, feed my lambs. Not necessarily physically but spiritually. Now, the physical is important and we are not to deny our call to feed, clothe and house, but as we do that we must also tell the story as to why we are doing it. The call was for Peter to follow the original call of Jesus!

Often we forget that we have been called to tell a story. We miss what God wants from us and others. We think we know how people should do. Recall several conversations with school teachers and how hard it is for them to say no to teaching Sunday School. It is not that they don't want to teach, but they spend their week teaching kids and would like a different challenge on Sunday. Maybe to teach an adult class or use their skills in other ways. When we look at

people we need to let God decide how they should be used. God does not always call us because of our skills and talents.

Yes, we do have skills, things we like and enjoy doing - but God doesn't really need them. What God needs is us. It feels good to accomplish something that we didn't think we could do. Something outside of our comfort zone.

Every now and then I hear, "Teacher, I did it!" It usually comes after several, "Teach, I can't do it" statements which got the response, "Yes, you can." It feels good when we accomplish something we didn't think we could. Something we thought impossible.

I recall another pastor sharing their need for someone to become the leader of their youth group. They had asked just about everyone in the congregation and everyone had said "no". They had sought out those who they thought had the talent and skills to take this group of young adults and mold them. Finally, a volunteer. She was an older woman. He described her as matronly, unmarried, no children and no experience with teen-agers. The only thing she had going for her was that she had volunteered. They decided to give her a try. After all - what choice did they have? She transformed the group, she grew the group and she made it succeed. They would never have asked her, never approached her — God had other plans.

God's call to Peter and us is, "*Come and have breakfast.*" God has already prepared and supplied what we need - the coals are hot, bread and fish are cooking. What God needs is our willingness to accept the invitation and to "come".

The fire is ready, the bread and fish are ready - Just now waits for Peter, for the others and for us — What has God prepared for us?

NIV, New International Bible Society, Zondervan, 1973, 1978, 1985
NRSV, Division of Christian Education, NCC, 1989