

The Rev. Ayo Omoniyi  
January 24, 2021  
The Third Sunday after the Epiphany  
“Jesus Calls – Repent & Follow Me”

**Prayer:**

**May the words of my mouth and the meditation of our hearts be acceptable in your sight, Oh Lord our strength and our redeemer. Amen**

**Jesus preaching in Galilee, saying Repent, and believe in the gospel.**

**In our 1<sup>st</sup> reading we heard about Jonah who reluctantly responded to God’s call to go to Nineveh. I believe we all know about Jonah’s story and how he thought he could run from God’s call.**

**Jonah went and preached to the people of Nineveh to repent from their sins and warned them of God’s wrath to destroy their city. The people of Nineveh believed and repented and God showed them mercy and did not destroy the city.**

**So what is repentance?**

**It can be defined as an action turning away from self serving activities and turning to God to walk in his ways.**

**Today’s gospel reading continues the story we read from the gospel of John last Sunday narrating the beginning of Our Lord Jesus Christ ministry as he calls his disciples. We read about Jesus Christ’s call to Phillip & Nathaniel.**

**In our gospel reading for today, John the Baptist was placed in prison and Jesus Christ came to Galilee preaching about the gospel of the kingdom of God, saying the time of the kingdom of God is at hand Repent, and believe in the gospel.**

**Jesus called Simon and Andrew his brother who was casting his nets into the sea and he later saw James and John his brother and all four of them are fishermen to follow him. He told them that “I will make you fisher of men.**

**Jesus called four fishermen who were just ordinary men.**

**The story of Our Lord Jesus Christ is fully human and divine.**

**Let us look at this story this way:**

**Have any of them met Jesus before?**

**Why did Jesus choose these four fishermen?**

**How did Jesus convince them to follow him?**

**What do they see about Jesus?**

**What actions from Jesus convince these fishermen to follow him?**

**As far as we know Jesus did not conduct a background check before calling these men (Simeon Peter, Andrew, James and John).**

**Jesus Calling did not offer these fishermen an action plan or a destination, only calling.**

**All four of them left everything, their livelihood, and their families and just follow him.**

**Simeon, Andrew, James and John must have seen something different, remarkably striking and unique about Jesus to let them to believe him and follow him into an uncertain future. The surprising feature of the story is that they followed Jesus with no idea of where it would lead them.**

**Jesus call was very simple, follow me and I will make you fisher of men. Jesus is really talking about the transformation of the lives of the new disciples the four fishermen. They will no longer catch fish but will fish for people i.e. bring others to the kingdom of God.**

**Do we listen to God's call or do we ignore his call to us?**

**We all receive messages from God all the time and these messages come to us in a variety of ways.**

**We are all casting and mending nets in different ways of our lives not as a fisherman but in a different form to make a living for our families, to hold our families together and provide security for our loved ones.**

**Follow me is Jesus invitation to a new life.**

**God's call to us is not always in words that we hear; God's messages come to us as well in our heart. Sometimes they come to us, because of the action of others or even, because of their words.**

**Sometimes God's call to us is about making changes in our lives. Other calls come to us when we are facing crises in our lives.**

**God's call us not once, but again and again throughout our lives.**

**Jesus call to follow me is an invitation to participate with God's own saving work. It is the work of change and growth. God's work is about moving to a larger vision, orienting our life in a new direction, and experiencing that our little story of life is connected to and a part of a larger story of life.**

When we accept the invitation to follow Jesus, we are deciding to leave behind the nets in our life. This means letting go of nets and things that literally knit you together in all sort of ways, economically, professionally and worries of earthly things.

Our spiritual growth involves letting go of what we have accumulated and cling on to all our lives. Ultimately, it about letting go of our old life that contains the old nets so we can receive God's new life.

At the beginning of each year some of us make New Year resolution. The resolution is about what we intend to do differently to better ourselves.

Does your resolution include making a decision to follow Jesus Christ?

Jesus is calling all of us today and wants us to be His tool to bring people to his vine yard.

Jesus is calling all of us to bring others to him He is telling us to go into our communities this year and to be kind, not to be judgmental, to be compassionate, to love all people and not to be silent when we see or hear hateful, and hurtful behavior.

For us as Christians, we must repent of our sins and believe in the good news of Jesus.

Jesus did not just call Andrew, Simeon, James and John. He is calling all of us to follow Him. He is waiting on us to respond to His call.

Are you ready to follow Jesus?

Amen.