

This past week, Brady started the series of All Things New. As living things, we grow, but what exactly are we growing toward. Some grow to move up the ladder in their occupation, some grow to get married and have a family, but how exactly do we grow toward God?

Luke 5:1-11 (ESV)

“On one occasion, while the crowd was pressing in on him to hear the word of God, he was standing by the lake of Gennesaret, 2 and he saw two boats by the lake, but the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. 3 Getting into one of the boats, which was Simon's, he asked him to put out a little from the land. And he sat down and taught the people from the boat. 4 And when he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, “Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch.” 5 And Simon answered, “Master, we toiled all night and took nothing! But at your word I will let down the nets.” 6 And when they had done this, they enclosed a large number of fish, and their nets were breaking. 7 They signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. 8 But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, “Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.” 9 For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish that they had taken, 10 and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, “Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching men.” 11 And when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed him.”

The story of Peter's life relates to most of us, he fails miserably multiple times. Peter is growing. Jesus is calling Peter to something bigger than Peter could imagine. He lived, survived, depended on fishing in all aspects of his life. He knew all the ins and outs on when the best fishing times are. When Jesus tells Peter to let down his fishing nets, it didn't make sense to Peter since fishing was normally done at night time, but he followed Jesus' orders simply because Jesus said it. Peter's next step in growing wasn't a big step. Peter was a fisherman, that's what he was. Peter's next step was doing exactly what was doing, but in a different way.

Peter's step didn't come without a price. Peter had been up all night fishing, he was exhausted and ready to go home, and when Jesus told him to put down his nets, he had to be a little taken by embarrassment since every fisherman knew that you would catch nothing fishing in the daytime. When Peter let down his nets, he had complete faith Jesus knew what he was doing. How much easier would it have been for Peter to trust Jesus if Jesus would have told Peter the reward?

How much easier would it be to trust if God told us our reward for staying faithful to him?

Peter understanding for who God is changed, giving him the ability to trust him completely, no matter the cost. Jesus may be right next to you pushing you to that next step, but you may not recognize him. Your proximity to God doesn't mean surrender. Your understanding of who God is and who you are gives the ability to surrender all to God.

Peter was a fisherman in his job status, but Jesus calls him to a higher calling. The main priority in our lives is not our job, but the calling Jesus has for us.

Peter's understanding came with 4 growing stages.

1. Peter sat and listened to Jesus.
When Jesus was talking, Peter listened to what he was saying. This is the first step to growing with God. Being able to sit and listen is a great place to be, but not to stay.
2. Peter loaned Jesus his boat.
At this stage, we loan God something, but it's not full surrender to God. We give God time, money, and things that don't really cost us any big sacrifice.
3. Peter went fishing with Jesus.
When Peter went fishing with Jesus, it costed Peter something. Following Jesus will cost relationships, give you a responsibility, and make you understand priorities. You alone are responsible for how you seek Jesus. Pure seeking of Jesus will also change your priorities. What is important to you becomes what you seek.
4. Complete surrender to Jesus.
When you completely surrender to Jesus, nothing else matters. When your pursuit doesn't change, that's surrender. Jesus is about a brand new start, we don't get to keep both lives.

So, what's next? What is God calling you to?

2 Peter 3:9

“The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.”

We blow it over and over again, but the Lord wants us to repent and grow with him.