

**“One Word! One Miracle! One Call!” (Luke 5:1-11)  
5<sup>th</sup> Sunday after the Epiphany, 2025  
St. John Lutheran Church, Massillon OH**

Later tonight, there will be one Super Bowl winner and one loser. One MVP will be chosen. One coach will lead his team to victory. There was only one Mickey Mantle. One Don Mattingly. In the Lord of the Rings tale by J.R.R. Tolkien, there is a saying, “One Ring to rule them all.”

There’s one faith. One baptism. One Lord. One God. One Father in heaven. One Son. One Spirit. One way. One truth. One life.

Not many minutes ago, we heard about an event that took place in one particular spot in the lake of Gennesaret. We heard the one and only Word of God coming out of one person, Jesus Christ while he sat in one of the boats that happened to belong to Simon Peter. We also heard of one miraculous catch of fish along with one of the soon disciples, Simon, confessing his sins to the Lord. And we heard the one call to catch men from the one Jesus Christ.

I want to encompass our gospel lesson this morning with a few words:

**ONE WORD! ONE MIRACLE! ONE CALL!**

One Word!

Which Word am I talking about? It’s the one and only Word of God. The Word is the entire Bible, from Genesis to Revelation. Now, the reason why there’s one Word is not because the Word of God is one of a kind. But rather there’s one Word because the Word was God, who is by nature one. In John’s gospel, he writes that the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. This one Word became flesh in the one person, Jesus Christ. This is the one who spoke on that one day on the lake of Gennesaret.

One Word!

What was that Word? Luke writes that he taught the word of God. Or you can say that he taught the word of himself, the word of Jesus, the word of the Word. It wasn’t the word of self-help, self-esteem, self-

preservation, self-ishness, self-improvement, self-guidance, self-management, self-care, self-love, self-affirmation, or self-support, nor was it any other self-blank word. It was one Word.

Now that we know which word we're talking about, it would be well for us to know which words he taught to the crowd. We get the answer two verses before the gospel lesson for this morning. Jesus says to the crowd who tried keeping him to stay with them longer, **“I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns as well; for I was sent for this purpose.”**

Jesus taught the good news of the kingdom of God. He was sent from the Father for this purpose. We now understand that this one word Jesus spoke was namely the good news of the kingdom. Again, no words of self-anything, only the one good news that the kingdom of God has come to men.

This kingdom of God is manifested in the one Jesus Christ. The King of forgiveness, life, salvation, comfort, and hope has come. This one Word of good news was proclaimed and taught to the crowd from inside one of Simon Peter's boats on the Lake of Gennesaret.

One Word!

Not only was the one Word of good news preached and taught that day in a boat on the lake, but this one Word of good news is proclaimed and taught to you from inside this sanctuary, this naïve, which is Latin for boat. And don't forget, that while we're in the boat, the naïve, we're in the lake, the waters, of this world. Quick question, what does the world consist mostly of? That's right, water....

Dear friends, please do not miss the reality that we're participating in this morning. It's a very similar event to the one in our gospel lesson. You have the one Word, Christ himself the Word, speaking to you just like he did to the crowd. It's that one Word that the good news that the kingdom of God has come directly to you! Through the one Word, the Testimonies of Old and New, Christ teaches you about himself and the kingdom that he brings with him. Hear his Word in faith. Hear the Word of forgiveness of sins won for you on account of Christ's life, death on the cross, and resurrection proclaimed to you.

One Word!

This Word of Christ is the very means by which miracles happen. In our Gospel lesson, Jesus gives Peter the word, **“Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch.”** Peter does what he’s told and there were so many fish caught that it took two boats to haul them in. This one miracle found in Luke’s gospel points to the true miracle which Christ performs each day. Through the Word of the gospel, God flung out the net of his promise in the waters of the world and snatched you into the naïve of his life-saving boat. In his boat, you’re safe from the waters of this world that drowns you. Remember this now. Remember this tomorrow, and remember until he comes on the last day. What a miracle Jesus did and has done!

One Word! One Miracle!

Upon seeing this one miracle, Peter realized who was with him in the boat. It was God! He fell to his knees and asked for forgiveness of his sins. He knew that it was not right to be with God when he was unclean. But Jesus gave Peter absolution and comfort in the boat by saying to him, **“Do not be afraid.”** We too have received absolution and comfort when we humbly confessed our sins this morning by hearing from God’s called servant saying, “Do not be afraid; your sins are forgiven.”

Once again dear friends, what happened to Peter happens to us. What else took place other than a miracle of Christ who brought you into his boat through the Word? Just look above you. Notice the roof. If you flip it upside down, it looks like the bottom of a boat. So, we’re in a boat, Christ is here through the one Word and we confess our sins and unworthiness like Peter did as we realize who’s with us. And we received the word of absolution from Christ through his called servant. And not only does he bring you into the boat, but he washes you clean with the waters of his baptism. He also cleansed you from all unrighteousness in his Supper. His body in the bread keeps you living and his blood in the wine cleanses you of your unclean mind and heart.

One Word! One Miracle!

After this one Word and miracle catch, Jesus gives Peter one call. He calls him to a new occupation, a new vocation. This new call was similar to the one he currently had. But instead of catching live fish, he was called now to catch live men. We see this one call take shape and form in the book of Acts. Peter first threw the net of the good news to a crowd of people on the day of Pentecost. He threw the net out into the waters of the

world with the good news that Christ didn't see decay, even though he was put to death. Peter taught and proclaimed the good news of Jesus Christ, his life, death, and resurrection. Through Peter casting the net of the one good news to a pool of fish who gathered together in one particular spot in the sea of the world, God snatched the live men and brought them into the boat of the Church. And it's no coincidence that the newly caught fish were washed clean after being brought into the boat of the Church; for Luke writes that the newly caught fish were baptized.

One Word! One Miracle! One Call!

We too have one call. The theme of this sermon is not only to encompass the gospel lesson for this morning but also to guide and direct each of us. Christ has given you one Word. Christ has given you one miracle. Christ has given you one call. He calls us all, as we are guided by the Holy Spirit, rowing to certain places in the waters of this world, to cast the one Word of the good news of Christ into the waters. This one miracle is the catching of live men who are brought into the boat of Christ where they are given life, comfort, peace, and forgiveness of sins. Life, comfort, peace, and forgiveness can only be found in the naïve. In this naïve of the Church, the gifts of Christ are given. Through the gifts of his Word, Absolution, Baptism, and Christ's Body and Blood in the bread and wine, are the very means for God's fish to be cleaned and live out the one call we all share.

One Word! One Miracle! One Call!

Lord Jesus, let these three be so, now, tomorrow, and until you return to separate the one final catch on the last day. Keep and preserve us in the naïve of your Church. Equip us with your Word and Sacraments, and bring the miracle of more fish into your boat.

Pastor Jon Carpenter