

# *Straight from the "Hart"*

January 29, 2023



Sharing the journey  
to know, love, and serve

**Welcome** to Hartland UMC's "Straight from the "Hart"". We are glad you are participating in today's time of worship by reading this service script.

**Affirmation** (P – Pastor, C – Congregation)

P: Do you believe in God the Father?

**C: I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.**

P: Do you believe in Jesus Christ?

**C: I believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God... eternally begotten of the Father... by whom all things were made. For ... our salvation he came down from heaven, was [made human] by the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary. He was crucified under Pontius Pilate, suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. He will come again with glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom shall have no end.**

P: Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

**C: I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who together with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, and who spoke through the prophets.**

**I believe in one, holy, [universal] ... Church. We confess one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

**Opening Prayer** Heavenly Father, you call to us and lead our lives through Jesus, who demonstrated true service and unconditional love by his actions and words. May these offerings act as a declaration of our love for you and answering your call to love others in the name of Jesus. Amen.



## Call to Worship

Lay Reader: God is calling us to come away – calling us to a deeper place. He made this day to walk in his love and grace, and to experience the peace of his love. Let's rise up to worship his holiness and sing of his faithfulness.

(ad from "I Will Rise Up" by Michael Wilbur Ash)

**Music** Two weeks ago we heard several people encounter Jesus at what were or became critical junctures in their life. Jesus calls them to not doubt, to follow, to accept Jesus' next step in his plan for the world.

Accompanying these calls were confessions of Christ's Lordship over their lives. The hope of the Bible writers was that we too would encounter the living Christ and confess our allegiance. Therefore, in the busy-ness and craziness of life, let's listen for his voice and follow. Let's sing...



## Jesus Calls Us

Words: Cecil Frances Alexander, 1852 Music: William H. Jude, 1874

1. Jesus calls us o'er the tumult of our life's wild, restless sea;  
day by day his sweet voice soundeth, saying, "Christian, follow me!"

2. As of old the apostles heard it by the Galilean lake,  
turned from home and toil and kindred, leaving all for Jesus' sake.

4. In our joys and in our sorrows, days of toil and hours of ease,  
still he calls, in cares and pleasures, "Christian, love me more than these!"

5. Jesus calls us! By thy mercies, Savior, may we hear thy call,  
give our hearts to thine obedience, serve and love thee best of all.

**Theme** Jesus calls us. Later today, we are going to hear Jesus call some men to change careers from fishing to discipleship. Fishing was their livelihood. They caught fish in volume to sell at market so many could eat. Therefore, they used big dragnets.

When we go fishing, we don't use big dragnets. Our tools are usually a pole (rode and reel) for most people are a pole, hook, worm, or some other type of morsel that it tempting to fish. So, do you think if I took my rod and reel and dropped an empty hook in the water that I would get much action? [No]. What do I have to do instead? [Bait it. Add a worm, fly, spoon, or something that is tempting to fish.

Jesus told these professional fishers that if they follow him, he would teach them how to catch people. So, as Christians, do we then go around offering worms to people? [No.] No. Gummy worms, even? Maybe? 😊 No. Jesus was using the phrase as a metaphor. Today, literal fishing is a nice pastime for people who enjoy that. As a metaphor, the fishing imagery seems to have more negative connotations than good ones, and I'm not even counting the "phishing" that comes at us in the cyberworld.

(1) For example, have you ever heard the fishing metaphor phrase – "He fell for that hook, line, and sinker"? [Yes]. Do you know what that means? [Yes – swallowed it whole.] In fishing, it is when the fish is so intrigued by your bait that it swallows the worm, the hook, the line, and the weights (sinkers) on the line that keep the worm down in the water – it grabbed everything... In life, it means someone was gullible enough to take in and believe a falsehood completely.

(2) Another phrase is "bait and switch"? Do you know what that one means? Sometimes a company or person offers you something you may really want, but when you get there, they try to get you to buy something else instead. Just like fishing -- they offer the worm, but they try to put you on a hook as well – for something you don't want.

But that is not what Jesus is trying to teach us when he says he is going to make us fishers of people. He is trying to teach us that we can learn how to reach people with something that they really do want and need -- a relationship with God. And, we need to learn how to present that relationship with God in a way that they can understand (not fooled) but understand that they need and want him. Over the years, some have taught false promises (bait and switch) to lure people in (hook line and sinker), but that is not how it was ever intended to be. There is not supposed to be any deceit or switch or trick involved. Rather, we talk truthfully about Jesus' love covenant in a way that will encourage people to freely come to him with eyes wide open – in a way they can understand -- as completely aware as possible -- of what that means.

### **Intro to Responsive Reading**

It means that we go out of our way to worship and serve God and speak in ways that are as encouraging and understandable as possible, always aware of how we speak and act may impact others. The church in Corinth was doing the opposite.

Many tried to outdo each other and impress curious outsiders with their (alleged) higher level of spiritualness. The result was that people were not drawn to God but distracted by the confusion. Paul tries to correct them by reminding them that the purpose of Christian living and worship was not to show how different and “better” we are, but to clearly demonstrate the benefits of being a Christian.



### **Responsive Reading** (P – Pastor, C - Congregation)

P: Since we are eager to participate in what God is doing,

**C: we will concentrate on striving to do what helps build up everyone.**

P: We should be spiritually free and expressive as we pray,

**C: but we should also be thoughtful and mindful as we pray.**

P: We should sing with our spirits,

**C: but we should also sing with our minds.**

P: If we give a blessing using words no one else understands,

**C: how can a guest know when to say “Amen”?**

P: Your blessing might be beautiful, but you have very effectively cut that person out of being built up... So here’s what I want you to do. When you gather for worship,

**C: we should be prepared with something that will be useful for all.**

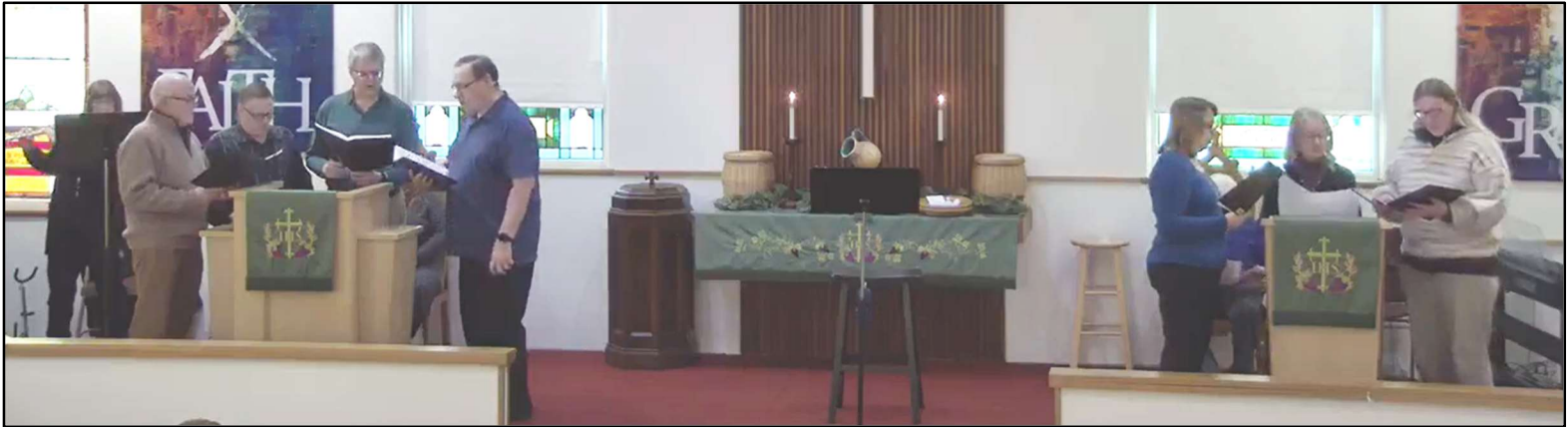
P: That is, let all things be done for building up: Sing a hymn, teach a lesson, tell a story, lead a prayer, provide an insight.... When we worship the right way, God doesn’t stir us up into divisive disorder and confusion;

**C: For he is a God of order and he brings us into harmony.**

Based on 1 Corinthians 14:15b-17,26,33 (MSG)

**Special Music** The idea we are getting at is that following Christ and his sacrifice for us may not be as self-serving as some false teachers may make it sound like with their false promises. However, what we may well discover is that self-sacrificing service to God may prove to be even more constructive and beneficial to our lives than we can imagine. The author of today’s song was a pastor who completed his first and difficult year of ministry. He attended annual conference with his wife hoping to be appointed to a better charge (That’s how you did it in those days. You showed up at conference and that is when you found out if you

were moving or not). But he was named to the same hard-scrabble circuit. That night he felt unhappy, even rebellious, but about midnight he was praying and decided he was going to be willing to let the Lord have his way with him regardless of the cost. That feeling of surrender --- to bear what seemed unbearable, and to do your best in what seemed to be a bad situation, relying on God to empower your actions and free your heart and fill your soul -- when you feel like you can't do it, he decided that God would be able to do it through him, and this is what inspired the words of this song.



### **His Way With Thee**

Words and Music: Cyrus S Nusbaum 1898

1. Would you live for Jesus, and be always pure and good?  
 Would you walk with Him within the narrow road?  
 Would you have Him bear your burden, carry all your load?  
 Let Him have His way with thee.

#### Refrain

His pow'r can make you what you ought to be;  
 His blood can cleanse your heart and make you free;  
 His love can fill your soul, and you will see  
 'Twas best for Him to have His way with thee.

2. Would you have Him make you free, and follow at His call?  
 Would you know the peace that comes by giving all?  
 Would you have Him save you, so that you need never fall?  
 Let Him have His way with thee.

#### Refrain

3. Would you in His kingdom find a place of constant rest?  
 Would you prove Him true in providential test?  
 Would you in His service labor always at your best?  
 Let Him have His way with thee.

#### Refrain

**Music** When we discover it is in our best interest to encounter Jesus, to hear him and fully follow his call on our lives, we also learn that focus needs to be faithfully given. And when it is given, the important things fall into place, and things that are not important fade from view. Let's prepare our hearts for prayer by singing....

### **Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus**

Words and Music: Helen H Lemmel, 1922

Turn your eyes upon Jesus, look full in his wonderful face,  
and the things of this world will grow strangely dim,  
in the light of his glory and grace.

(Repeat)

**Prayer** Almighty and everlasting God, we put our hope and trust in you because you rule all things in heaven and on earth. We have gathered to speak and listen to your teaching, to grow our faith in you, and to find inspiration and peace for our lives through Jesus Christ.

You are our defender, our protection. We look to you for our every need, for you enable our very lives. Look favorably on us, for it is your pleasure and approval that we crave. For you grant true honor by leading us to honorable living. Whatever our circumstances, we need never be ashamed of who we are, because we belong to you -- who loves with grace and with power. We put our hope in you, for you formed us and watch over us. You are our strength and fortress. Rescue us from those things that weigh us down and deliver us to the freedom of new beginnings.

**Praises and Petitions** Terri asks that we continue to pray for little Brantley Call, a 5 year old who is still having silent seizures and mini-strokes. She also asks for travel mercies for Mike and herself as to go and from Florida. Jan Martin asked that we continue to pray for her brother Reese Thornton, who was hospitalized again this week but has returned home and will be seeing a specialist this week, so pray for him and the doctors so they can figure out what to do to bring him to full recovery. Karen requests prayer for cousin Jenny, who has a rare disease that is shutting down her whole body and eyes, and we pray for the family and friends of Henry Hoskins who was memorialized yesterday, and Pat Schleh gives her thanks for the prayers that have worked towards a quick recovery for her, and for the family and friends of Colleen-Keen Huffman, who passed away last week. and for those who trying to recover from not feeling well or from injuries, and for those people and events we have not named out loud, but are on our hearts and minds. Lord, hear our prayers. [Pause]

Now as our life journeys toward your heart, and as our hearts express our reliance on you, and we become blessed as we find your strength in us, and we move from strength to strength until our trust finally finds us face to face with the One who taught us to pray **LORD'S PRAYER**

### **Intro to Bible Reading**

Lay Reader: Last week we heard that Jesus returned to his hometown and teach in the synagogue. The listeners were at first amazed by his eloquence, which quickly turned to doubts that this carpenter's kid could excel like this. Jesus reacted by saying no prophet is accepted in his hometown. They got angry and tried to throw Jesus off a cliff, but he walked away. He returned to Simon Peter's hometown, Capernaum He again amazed crowds with his authoritative style of teaching. He healed many, including Simon's mother-in-law. Early the next morning he went out into the desert. Crowds searched for and found him. They begged him to stay. Jesus replied that other places also needed to hear about the kingdom of God. He continued to travel, preaching in synagogues throughout Judea.

(Summary of Luke 4:16-44)

### **Bible Reading**

Lay Reader: Once when he was standing on the shore of Lake Gennesaret, the crowd was pushing in on him to better hear the Word of God. He noticed two boats tied up. The fishermen had just left them and were out scrubbing their nets. He climbed into the boat that was Simon's and asked him to put out a little from the shore. Sitting there, using the boat for a pulpit, he taught the crowd. When he finished teaching, he said to Simon, "Push out into deep water and let your nets out for a catch." Simon said, "Master, we've been fishing hard all night and haven't caught even a minnow. But if you say so, I'll let out the nets." It was no sooner said than done—a huge haul of fish, straining the nets past capacity. They waved to their partners in the other boat to come help them. They filled both boats, nearly swamping them with the catch. Simon Peter, when he saw it, fell to his knees before Jesus. "[Lord], leave. I'm a sinner and can't handle this holiness. Leave me to myself." When they pulled in that catch of fish, awe overwhelmed Simon and everyone with him. It was the same with James and John, Zebedee's sons, coworkers with Simon. Jesus said to Simon, "There is nothing to fear. From now on you'll be fishing for men and women." They pulled their boats up on the beach, left them, nets and all, and followed him.

(Luke 5:1-11 (MSG))

**Music** This story remains a solid metaphor for Jesus' call on our lives today.

### **Lord, You Have Come to the Lakeshore**

Words: Cesareo Gabarain; trans. by Gertrude C. Suppe, George Lockwood, and Raquel Gutierrez

Music: Cesareo Gabarain; harm. by Skinner Chavez-Melo, 1987

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harm. © 1987 Skinner Chavez-Melo.

1 Lord, you have come to the lakeshore looking neither  
for wealthy nor wise ones; you only asked me to follow humbly.

Chorus

O Lord, with your eyes you have searched me,  
and while smiling have spoken my name;  
now my boat's left on the shoreline behind me;  
by your side I will seek other seas.

3 You need my hands, full of caring through my labors  
to give others rest, and constant love that keeps on loving.

Chorus

4 You, who have fished other oceans, ever longed for  
by souls who are waiting, my loving friend, as thus you call me.

Chorus

### **Sermon Move Beyond Knowing**

For most of us, it is a very familiar story that we just heard and then sang. It makes it very easy to gloss over it and not understand or feel it again this time. So let's enter into the story. We had been out on the lake *all* night (then and there - the prime time for fishing). And now we head in. Results were fruitless (fishless), we'd come up empty.

Do you ever have days like that? Does the emptiness of the day ever reflect a deeper emptiness of the soul? Jesus

**Feeling empty**

understands. In fact, he enters our seashore (say that 5 x fast 😊) he enters our seashore scene having just come from his hometown where he himself had nearly empty results. But here in Capernaum Jesus was drawing admiring crowds. He asks us for something simple: the use of Simon's boat. Now we are exhausted and frustrated; our muscles are aching, and we are forcing our bodies to get the equipment ready for our next excursion. We are just waiting for someone to step on our last nerve... We are tempted to politely decline Jesus' little favor -- perhaps not so politely? But Simon is the boss, and he agrees. We provide a floating podium to create a bit of distance from the pressing crowd and to allow the lake



water to amplify his teaching so they could hear him better. And of course, we had front row seats.

Jesus' words penetrate our hearts and minds. Jesus concludes his teach and then he asks another favor. Go out deeper and fish.

**What impact does the Word have on us?**

No waving hand of volunteerism here! We are reluctant. A son of a professional builder turned

**We think we know better**

spiritual leader is going to tell us experienced fishing people how to fish? During one of the worst times of the day to fish on this lake, no less? But Simon, though giving his wise professional assessment of the situation, was also a Jew who honored his spiritual leaders. So regardless of his expectations, he complies with the request, and out we go. And the catch was so big that the weight of the fish in the nets almost sinks our boat, and the other boat too when it came to help. Simon's knowledge of the sea tells him that this was no lucky, coincidental catch.

Between the crowds that came, the healings that he had no doubt heard about, even seen, one happened right in his own home with his mother-

**What do recognize? In him? In ourselves?**

in-law. Then words he heard, and now the catch that Jesus granted, Simon knew this was someone special. It is not always clear in the English translations, but in the Greek it is very clear that Simon goes out in respect for a human (religious) authority; and returns bowing before him as a divine power. He may not have understood all the implications of what that might mean yet, but there was enough of a recognition of who Jesus was that led to an awareness of who we are as well. Simon asks Jesus to leave, for in typical Old Testament Jewish thought, sinful humanity cannot enter the presence of a holy God and live. Peter was speaking for all of us. We were rattled. Like most men, even when we know better in our heads, our lives are primarily wrapped up in our vocation and providing for our families. And that day all our expertise and self-sufficient confidence went sank into the sea.

Jesus, with the grace of a parent assuring a shaken child that they are indeed loved and have infinite value, tells us to not be afraid and that he would teach

**Are we willing to change directions to follow?**

us and redefine us to be a fisher of people in a completely different career. And we left and followed him. The real miracle that day wasn't that there were a lot of fish that got into the net, but that an encounter with God through Jesus forever changed

a group of hard-working men whose self-value was no longer wrapped up in jobs and careers but in their identity in Christ and his ability to work through them to fulfill God's mission in the world. (Pause)

Generally, we take our view of God a bit more casually, (we don't fear we are going to die if we come into his presence). And that is good. But sometimes, I think the pendulum has swung too far the other way... we get very casual with him. We're moved from being terrorized by God's presence to demanding that God be at our beck and call.



Do you remember the bumper sticker, "God is my co-pilot"? [Yes]. I am not an expert in aviation, so once I googled a comparison between a pilot and a co-pilot. According to that research, a long time ago -- Both are similarly trained, and share many tasks, but the co-pilot is usually less experienced. The pilot is responsible for the flight, the plane, the crew and the passengers before during and after the flight, makes all the critical decisions, handles every emergency situation, and directs the roles and responsibilities of the co-pilot on each flight, who steps in only if the pilot takes a break or gets ill.

In our modern world, this passage sometimes gets treated as if God were the co-pilot, helping us pilots move toward success according to our cultural standards. A tongue and cheek (sarcastic) rendition of the passage that was read was written to illustrate our modern culture's errant thinking. Let's call it the WTT (The Wishful Thinking Translation). And this is what it sounds like.

*Jesus was standing by the lake trying to escape the pressing of the crowd, He saw two boats. He saw Simon, a strapping, fine-looking young man, skin golden bronzed by the sun, rippling muscles from the hard work he was constantly doing, white glistening teeth that shone as he spoke with customers. It was obvious he was a successful, busy winsome type A personality. Since everyone knows if you want something done, you ask a busy person, and if you want it done well, you ask a beautiful / handsome, charismatic person. Therefore, Jesus got into Simon's boat. When he finished speaking, Jesus asked to go fishing and Simon immediately and eagerly volunteered, saying "I'll do it! Pick me!" Whereupon Jesus selected Simon and told him to let down his nets and commence fishing for the Lord; and his business increased one hundred-fold.*

No reaction at all... [laughter] It fits right into our plans, doesn't it? But we know God looks at the heart, but this make-believe version of the text says that Jesus picked Simon the way our culture picks people -- judging by superficial standards -- outward impressions, beautiful appearance, impressive actions, charismatic personality, inspiring words, people who are eager to please. In the Old Testament, Saul was made king at least in part because he stood a head higher than everyone us, and was handsome. And if that example is too antiquated for you, when I was in seminary and a janitor at Nazarene Headquarters, where all the hierarchy were -- there were six men (at that time they were all men -- probably still is) that led the whole denomination. They met in the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of that building. And they were all 6'4" -- at least. That impressive, formidable build -- tends to be seen as leadership material when we judge by worldly standards, and I am not saying they weren't good leaders, I'm just saying we tend to evaluate people that way -- by outward impressions. But God chooses all kinds of people who don't fit into our surface-y, first impressions of who we think might be best qualified.

### Outward impressions

The second errant idea presented in that wishful thinking text is that faithful people are always eager to volunteer to accept God's instruction. A careful reading of the Bible ironically shows that many who eagerly volunteered to follow -- Jesus tells them to go home and be quiet (after healings) or warns them away by the harshness of what it takes to follow (Sell all you have, and then come), or, animals have places to sleep, but not me ... you can't look back...

### Eager Acceptance

On the other hand, many who God calls, especially in the Old Testament, were reluctant to answer -- They weren't eager. "Go away, I don't deserve, I'm not qualified, I'm too young, I can't, I won't, send someone else" those were the kind of phrases we hear over and over again from the people God is calling. We even see it in the story with Peter: "Go away, Jesus." And it took God some patient, persistent, and sometimes dramatic demonstrations before those he called finally realized that it was best for them to follow God and let him have his way with them.

The third creative cultural edit incorrectly implies that Jesus is joining us to prosper *our* efforts on *our* terms. SP's (Simon Peter's) Galilean Seafood Inc will prosper because Jesus has joined the company. We are often eager to invite Jesus into our life because as our co-pilot, we think

### Who joins who?

he can make *our* business, *our* family, *our* organization, *our* church, *our* personal goals prosper beyond our wildest dreams. And in some cases, certainly in many cases, living by Jesus' principles may well cause areas of our life to fare much better -- but we need to be clear about who is joining who. Jesus may well initiate an invitation to be joined to us, but he isn't filling out a job application to serve our agenda, to be our co-pilot in the tangible areas of our life, or even in our spiritual journey.

This is where the Corinthians of the responsive reading slide into the story. You heard some of this last week, but they wanted the Holy Spirit to touch their individual hearts and work within them making them spiritual giants. Rather than maturing into cooperative members of God's family, their attitudes led to a divisive competition -- like children chaotically clamoring for their parent's attention -- each wanting to be the favorite child, or the only child, or the best child. It reminded me of an introduction of a TV star on his classic show: The MC said "It is my pleasure to bring you a man who was great in vaudeville, great in motion pictures, great in radio and is now great in television -- as a matter of fact, he has grated on more people than anyone in America (Jack Benny Show 1:2 Jack goes to the doctor) Of course, that intro was a deliberately crafted joke, but the Corinthians attempt to "be the greatest Christian" did grate on each other -- they rubbed each other the wrong way and it was creating a bad witness to everyone outside as well.

Paul answered their attitude of spiritual one-upmanship by saying real maturity in Christianity is not about gatekeeping -- Do you know what gatekeeping is? [Some yes, some no] Gatekeeping is what some people do on social media in which somebody posts something online saying they are real so and so, and you guys aren't because..." One really weird one is that someone got on there and said that "You aren't a real mother if you had a C-section." In other words, they attempted to eliminate a whole lot of people for a really stupid reason. The attempt is to elevate themselves at the expense of everyone else. Excluding, shutting the gate on others by disqualifying them by whatever category they can come up with so they can be on top. The Corinthians used gatekeeping principles like that to make themselves better than everyone else, you have to have this certain spiritual gift, you have to hold this certain role, you have to be able to give so much, you have to do this or that or the other thing to exclude everybody else to make them inferior to who they were. But Paul says real mature Christianity is living in a way that is helpful for everyone..

There is a difference between knowing and showing (or even showing off) our Christianity -- and actually living as a Christian. Paul tells them that instead of trying so hard to know -- to prove to themselves and others that they were spiritually superior and to build *themselves* up in everyone else's eyes, it was much better if they moved beyond knowing and wanting to be known as Christians and actually focused on living out their Christianity, which was about encouraging and building others up, so that Christ is built up in everyone's eyes.

So while many Corinthian Christians were chasing self-promotion, Paul drives home a completely different teaching by the frequent repetition of two words in this text. The first is a word from which we get zeal/eager -- in verb form, "to strive", to zealously pursue... The second word is what he wants them to zealously pursue -- our text translates it as "building up [people]".

<p><b>Two words: Strive (for) Edification</b></p>
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And the companion point (a la "our Theme time") is -- if our goal is to build others up within and without the church -- we must build them up in a way that *they* can understand they are being built up. We don't get caught up in our own language and style and sentimental and emotional triggers, but we also use our minds and get into the lives of others with understanding, so that so that we can then present our faith in a way that those others can also understand and become alive (or more alive) in Christ. For God equips us with praise and prayers and thanks and gifts so that through us, he can recruit and build up *his* family of believers.

Jesus assures the kneeling Peter in Peter's terms, in a language that he can understand. After the teaching, the healing, the catch, the call -- all these things Peter witnessed; how could Peter not understand that just as he was a profound expert in catching fish, so would he now become a profound expert in catching people? If he had been a waiter, Jesus may have said, "I'll show you how to set a heavenly banquet before people. If he had been a builder, he may have said, "I'll show you how to build people's hearts into homes for the kingdom God". Jesus would teach him how to not tear down and cast out by competing with those he is trying to reach (like the Corinthians were doing) but to draw in and build up.

One pastor talks about how he got the flu and in order not to infect his wife and son, he needed to keep his distance. Since covid, many of you may better be able to relate to that. When he would hear his baby boy cry from across the house, he knew he couldn't hold him, couldn't soothe him, couldn't stop his tears. He learned the staggering difference between knowing he was a father and being a father.

Peter knew he was a child of Abraham, but he cried out because he knew his sin sickness separated him from being God's child. God sent Jesus to take away that problem, that sin-sickness, and incorporate us into his family as we are meant to be.

We can be assured we are God's children by believing in the grace of Jesus Christ. Our focus should go beyond that confident knowledge to live out our faith with each other and for the world. For some in the Bible, this commitment was a continuation of what they were already doing, for others, like Simon, it was a radical change in direction and career. For us today, for some it is a change in career, for others it is a change in how we use our spare time. For all of us, it is an "all-in commitment" to allow him to reshape (or continue reshaping) our hearts and guide our priorities. To complete the metaphor, if God is your co-pilot, and you have been directing him, maybe you need to switch seats and let him take over and fly you into a new course of action. Like Peter, we may not immediately understand *all* the implications, but let the desire of your heart be to surrender our lives to him as best we can understand what that means, and trust that it is best for us, and for all, if we let God have his way with us.

**Prayer** Let's pray. Lord, we realize Jesus was able to transform Peter and the Corinthians only because they allowed Jesus to search them and redefine them by God's grace. We too seek to find our identity in you -- and yet so often we fall back to superficial presumptions about ourselves or even worse -- of others. Sometimes, we seek your service of us in inappropriately selfish ways, and demand you meet our agenda rather than desiring to be equipped to participate in your mission. Forgive us. Restore us to right relationships with you and with others.

We know you will do this because you promised to heal the separation that is caused by sin -- through Christ who died for us while we were yet sinners, proving how much you love us and are willing to forgive. It is in his name that we are forgiven, renamed, redefined, transformed and equipped for your mission in your world. So Lord, when we encounter you, you lead us to a discipleship that cannot be done in isolation. We are called to do it together so that the nets won't break, and the boats won't sink. We realize it is you who gives the catch of fish, and so we turn away from our own expertise and turn to your wisdom and power and grace and seek and crave your presence, that we may be one with each other and one in ministry to all the world as the body of Christ. And it is Christ's name that we pray. Amen.

**Music** So as Jesus walks by us in our activities of our life, may we answer his call and become his disciples too -- respect his position as king of the world and of our hearts, and come to him – letting him guide our living by learning his teaching about God’s kingdom. So that as Peter said near the end of his life, Live humbly toward one another and under God’s mighty hand so that when the time is right, he will lift you up. Let’s sing this prayer of surrender, I Surrender All.

### **I Surrender All**

Words: JW Van Deventer, 1896 Music: WS Weeden, 1896

1. All to Jesus I surrender; all to him I freely give;  
I will ever love and trust him, in his presence daily live.

#### Refrain

I surrender all, I surrender all,  
all to thee, my blessed Savior, I surrender all.

3. All to Jesus I surrender; make me, Savior, wholly thine;  
let me feel the Holy Spirit; truly know that thou art mine.

#### Refrain

4. All to Jesus I surrender; Lord, I give myself to thee;  
fill me with thy love and power; let thy blessing fall on me.

#### Refrain

**Blessing** Now for all the works our great God has done for fishermen turned followers and for us -- boldly go in the name of our great God with dedication and purpose. Go in love and peace, with hearts and minds that are enriched by Christ Jesus, our Lord. Amen.