

02042007

SERMON TITLE: PUSH OUT INTO THE DEEP

[Luke 5:1-11]

“PUT OUT – PUSH OUT – PULL OUT”

Introduction: Did you hear about the new employee who just started his first day on a job working for Donald Trump’s large organization? All excited, he called down to what he thought was food services and shouted “Get me coffee up here right now.” The voice from the other side responded – “You idiot – you’ve dialed the wrong extension – Do you know who you’re talking to, dumb?” The new hire replied “No.” “It’s the Donald, CEO and President of Trump Enterprises, you bozo.” The new hire shouted back – “And do you know who you are talking to, you jerk?” “No,” said The Donald. “Good,” replied the new employee, and hung up the phone.

You might just get away with that with an earthly employer, but with God, it’s different. God knows you and God knows a couple of things about your calling and purpose in life. God knows what you are called to do; God knows what it takes to get you there. God knows your responses and works with you to get past your resistance . . . your fears. . . and your tendency to hang up or hang on to what you already have.

God’s knowledge and abilities to help you walk and learn in this process is clearly seen in our story from Luke in which Jesus calls followers to be learners in answer to God’s purpose for their lives.

You will discover here, the “3 P’s” practical to your own need to be more competent in living a fulfilling life. You’ll see the very process you must continue to engage in if you are living in your purpose; as you live out your reasons for being here.

The 3 Practical P’s are these:

Put. . .

Push. . .

Pull. . .

Add to them the three letter word that goes with each “OUT”.

Put Out. .

Push Out. . .

Pull Out. . . .

Now those three will be easy for you to remember and take with you from this message. But first let’s put this story in a bit of context.

Jesus is speaking and teaching the Word of God to a crowd – beside the Lake of Gennesaret. Now we soon learn that he is looking for disciples, persons who will give themselves to learning the path to God – through Christ. First notice this: Jesus isn't looking for good-lookers. It's not that kind of modeling he has in mind. Jesus isn't looking for volunteers who finish a task and then are finished. What he is looking for is commitment and that's something you can demonstrate, by processing from the invitation, through your own issues and responses, right where you are.

As we look at the invitation to the fishermen at the Lake, get these three keys, because they unlock your insights:

- 1) The Invitation – the call is a process; a three step process.
- 2) It (the process) takes place right where you are.
- 3) The process engages and enlarges your faith.

Christ's call to these fishermen takes three steps; it's a process. I'll show you those three steps and share their responses which I think you'll find are much like yours and mine.

First, Christ extends a call and invites us to commit.

Secondly, the invitation to follow and go further comes to you right where you are. They were cleaning their nets after a night of unsuccessful fishing. "Not even a minnow was caught." They were called in a place of failure, right where you are also, in your place of failure.

Thirdly, Christ's/God's call takes on your current faith and challenges it to enlarge. Be encouraged not to fear or to grow weary in this continuing cycle of faith's development.

Ok – Here's the practical presentation of the 3 P's and the responses.

PUT – Jesus wanted to reach more of the crowd so he goes to these fishermen and says, "**PUT OUT A LITTLE**". This is the first part of God's call to you. Put out a little – have just a little more faith that God will direct your path to fulfillment. Surely, we, like the fishermen are gifted with certain things. They had boats, nets, some abilities and skills in managing the use of the boats and nets. So God wants to further the understanding of God's Word among people. God wants more to be able to hear. So Christ says, "Put yourselves out there a little bit, so we can teach." Their response: they put out and listened . They listened, they acted, and they listened some more. Good teaching took place. But with good teaching always comes a TEST. Test stands for:

To
Evaluate
Subject
Taught

Say that: "To Evaluate Subject Taught."

How do you know something is true or if it works, if you don't TEST it? How do you know if you understand it, without a TEST. So evaluate away.

Jesus taught. Fishermen heard. Jesus wanted to test and reward them, so then began the second phase of the process: **"PUSH OUT INTO THE DEEP"**. Step out into the deep. Here's your test. Christ invited them to assist him, they agreed (i.e. Put Out a little). Then he invited them to the deep. It becomes pretty clear who the best fisherman was in the group, as Christ baited and hooked them, one step at a time.

Well, what's their response: "But If Faith." Simon answered, "We've fished all night, haven't caught even a minnow." "But if you say so." (Ho hum). No commitment here. Doesn't that sound like us at times. When invitation comes to push out, we tend to provide limited faith, based on the Word and call of God. Going out a little further with a "If you say so God" attitude. Wonder why folks so often have "But If Faith"?

So out in the deep, they let down their nets of faith. Notice that the nets were empty. It's necessary to let down things that keep our nets full in order that God can fill them. There has to be a void, a space to be filled. And, WOW, immediately, the catch was greater than their CAPACITY. This is the 'past capacity' stage.

Now listen to this list of words:

Put out. . . Push out. . . Let down . . . Beyond Capacity.

Do you think this is only about fishing. No – it's about LIFE, yours and mine. WE can put out a little more, can't we? We can push out into the deep, can't we? And when we get more than we need, more than we can handle, we can call out to others to join in the process and to receive the overabundance of blessing from answering God's calls for us.

But, what was the response? Simon reveals so much about you and me in this event. He comes to Christ in the presence of enormous blessings and says – "Please leave. I'm not worthy. I'm unholy – I'm a sinner." Can't you imagine Christ thinking, "But of course you are a sinner, all people are. So what. But who am I. I declare you worthy, I take your condition of empty nets, empty lives, and lead you through a process to abundance. It started when I asked you to put out alit, and you did. Then I tested you, to push out into the deep and lower your nets, and you did. And now, because you have received, you don't feel worthy. God, the Source makes you the recipient of grace."

When a student has just experienced an A+ on a test, it is not the time to shove the Teacher away, but rather the time to move into the next phase. What Simon

and the others were feeling was a sense of being overwhelmed. Feeling overwhelmed can make you question your worth, limit your capacity, and to coward in fear.

Jesus, in the third part of the process, goes right to the FEAR issue (**False Education Appearing Real**). He says: “There is Nothing to Fear.” Pull yourself together Dude. From now on you’ll catch men and women.” Their response: they pulled their boats up on the beach and left them, nets and all to follow Jesus. Notice their condition:

Leaving behind. . . Lacking competence. . . Full of Commitment. . . Off to Learn The Next Lesson by repeating the same process of Putting out. . . Pushing out. . . Pulling out. . . hearing the next truth, doing and passing the faith test and receiving and growing.

That’s your process and mine: Repeat. . . Repeat . . . Repeat.

Here are a few questions to get you on with the process when you are feeling overwhelmed:

- 1) When and where did you quit living?
- 2) When did your faith stop at “But, if you say so” (ho hum)
- 3) When were you last surprised by God’s fulfillment of giving you a beyond capacity?
- 4) When did you say, “Go away God – I’m not worthy.”

Will you now leave the things upon which you have depended? Let go of your fear and catch the abundant catch. How, tell me how!

Reverse the Process:

- () Pull back away from such fear filled thinking. . .
- () Push back against limited beliefs. . .
- () Put back you confidence into the purpose, the call, the lessons of God and Repeat – Repeat – Repeat the process.

My partner Dick wanted to put in a tile floor in our upstairs bathroom. He’d never done that before. So last weekend, we went to Lowe’s and purchased \$250 of items to do the job. He put out a little. Then he studied on line, read materials, and pushed out into the project. On the recent snow day, he pulled up the old floor, cut the hardboard to go down first. That didn’t go well. He could have given up. No. He let go of any sense of “I can’t do this” and any idea that he couldn’t gain the capacity to do the task. He overcame the limits, and had some success. Then came the time to put the grout down and lay the tile. Something didn’t appear right. He studied further, learned more, tested, and pulled past the stops that could have caused him to give up. Today, we have a nice new tile floor in place at a much lower cost and he has the confidence to try other new things.

Do you want to expand your capacities, discover more of God's fulfillment, and learn more? Follow the Christ Process.

There's an old joke about two birds perched on a limb of a tree. Their names are Pete and Repete. Pete falls off. Who's left? (Answer: Repete). Pete and Repete are standing on a limb, Pete falls off. Who's left? (Repete) PETE AND REPETE ARE STANDING ON A LIMB. PETE FALLS OFF. WHO'S LEFT? REPETE.

So repeat the process over and over again:

Put Out. . . Push Out. . . Pull Out and your catch will be GREAT.

Do you want to learn more? Come be our guest.

Pastor Ike

PUSH OUT INTO THE DEEP
LUKE 5:1-11

February 4, 2007
Rev. Ike Parker

Luke 5:1-11

“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 tie 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 had 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. 'Master, 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."

PUT . . . PUSH . . . PULL OUT - THE
THREE STEPS TO FOLLOWING GOD.

The Process Is The Same

- 1) The invitation (call) is a process of calling and responses. . . (Pete and RePete)
- 2) The invitation and process comes to you right where you are
- 3) God's call takes on your current faith and challenges it to enlarge.

The Layers: PUT – PUSH – PULL OUT

Put a little effort

Push the limits to the deep

Pull out all the STOPS that are stopping
you.

Your response to what is taught begins with
the little put effort you give to your faith. Then
there's a TEST:

TEST = To
Evaluate
Subject
Taught

PUSH OUT FOR YOUR REWARD

The Second Part of the Call: Push Out

“But if you say so faith” Ho Hummmm

Put out. . . Push out. . . Let Down. . .

Beyond Capacity.

When tested what's revealed – I'm overwhelmed,
I'm not worthy, I'm afraid.

Go Away. . . Leave me to my on struggles.

Third Part of Call/Response Process: PULL OUT

I made you worthy. . .

Pull out of your Fears. . .

Pull up your past and leave it on the beach:

Leaving behind. . .

Doing and Passing the Faith Test

Receiving Growing Faith.

QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES

They: Left Behind the Faith that no longer worked – “but if you say so”
Still lack Competence
Were Full of Commitment
Were off to Learn the Next Lesson
And repeated the process over and over and over.

Putting Out. . . Pushing Out. . . Pulling Out

When and Where Did You Quit Living?

When Did Your Faith Stop At “But, If You
say so?”

When Were You Last Surprised By God’s
Fulfillment Of Giving You A Full Net?

When Did You Say, Go Away God – I’m not
Worthy?

Want to Reverse The Process?

THEN REVERSE AND REPEAT IT

Pull Back away from such thinking.

Push Back against limited belief.

Put Back your confidence into God,
the call, and the process and
repeat. . . Repeat. . . REPEAT

Your Catch Will Be Great.