

7.5.2026 Trinity 5 (Luke 5:1-11)

The Screwtape Letters is a novel in which a senior demon, named Screwtape, writes a series of letters to his nephew, an inexperienced demonic tempter named Wormwood. In one of these letters, Screwtape tells Wormwood that “the humans live in time but our Enemy (God) destines them to eternity. He therefore, I believe, wants them to attend chiefly to two things, to eternity itself (their eternal union with Him), and to that point of time which they call the Present. For the Present is the point at which time touches eternity.”

We live in a universe bound by time, and Screwtape is correct in his assessment that the present is the point at which time touches eternity, or in other words, because the past is history and the future is neither known nor guaranteed, the present is the only time in which we, as sons and daughters of God, can be about our Father’s business - the business of things eternal and Divine. For example, if you want to exercise the God-given gift of free will, if you want to make a free choice, you’ll have to do it now. If you want to receive the grace of God, or give thanks to the Giver of every good gift, the present moment is your only opportunity to do so. If you want to love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength, and love your neighbor as yourself, now is the only moment in which you can act on that desire.

The Present is the point at which time touches eternity. It is the sacred intersection of our earthly lives and God’s eternal realm. Therefore, the present is where God meets us, it’s the only place where His grace, mercy, and love are truly offered to us, and with that thought in mind the question I’d ask you to consider is: Where are you living? Is your life chained to the past, are you idly waiting for the future, or as a child of God, are you living in union with your Father in the present moment, the point at which time touches eternity.

The importance of living in the present moment is a theme found throughout Holy Scripture. In the Psalms, David reminded us, “*This is the day which the Lord hath made. We will rejoice and be glad in it*” (Psalm 118:24). St. James pointed out the importance of acting in accordance with God’s will today, because none of us know what tomorrow will bring. James wrote, “*What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes*”

(James 4:14), and when Jesus taught us to pray, He said, *“Give us this day our daily bread”* (Matthew 6:11).

We’re called to focus on this day, this moment, and in the Gospel lesson we read today, the crowd, our Lord, and Peter, James, and John all provide us with examples of those who are living at that sacred intersection of earthly life, bound by time, and God’s eternal realm. The Gospel passage begins by describing the crowd of people who *“pressed upon Him to hear the word of God”* (Luke 5:1). This lesson describes a day two thousand years ago, but I suspect demonic tempters like Screwtape and Wormwood were as active then as they are now, doing all they can to draw people away from the present moment by distracting them with thoughts of the past or fears over the future, and yet here you have this eager crowd, standing by the sea of Galilee, *“seeking first the kingdom of God”* (Matthew 6:33) by living in the moment, pressing upon our Lord because of their hunger to hear and receive the word of God.

St. Luke describes the crowd, living in the moment, and tells us that Jesus *“saw two ships standing by the lake... And He entered into one of the ships, which was Simon’s, and prayed him that he would thrust out a little from the land. And He sat down, and taught the people out of the ship”* (Luke 5:2-3). Here we have a beautiful picture of God, in the Person of Jesus Christ, living in the moment. *God sat down, and taught the people out of the ship.* Through the Incarnation, the Triune God of Heaven and Earth, who is without beginning and without end, who transcends the limits of time, space, and matter, humbled Himself and accepted the limitations of humanity. Because our Lord is fully God, and fully man, even as He in His Divine nature upheld *“all things by His powerful word”* (Hebrews 1:3), in His human nature He was, while on this earth, bound by time.

God, in Christ, chose to empty Himself (Philippians 2:7). God was bound by time, but you won’t find a single example of Him chained to the past or waiting for the future. Rather, Jesus is the One who must be in His Father’s house and about His business, the One who in every historical example was ever present at that sacred intersection of earthly life and eternity, and now, because our Risen Lord ascended to the right hand of the Father with His glorified, physical body that is not bound any limitation of this universe, He

is ever-present, alive and with us always, even to the end of the world.

In the first century, God *sat down, and taught the people out of the ship*, and when He finished, He said to Simon, “*Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught. And Simon answering said unto Him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net*” (Luke 5:4-5). Here we have Simon Peter, living in the moment. Simon was a professional fisherman who’d fished all night, caught nothing, and years of experience told him that no fish would be caught now. Nevertheless, Simon made the decision to live in the present. He chose not to be chained to the failure of the past, or to idly wait for a better time to cast his net in the future. Instead, he heard the call, acted in obedience, and as we continue to consider this passage notice the way his humility and faithfulness placed him in the position to receive the grace of God and to witness a miracle.

Simon obeyed Jesus’ command to launch out into the deep, he obediently let down his nets for a draught, and “*when they had this done, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes: and their net brake. And they beckoned unto their partners, which were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came, and filled both ships, so that they began to sink. When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus’ knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord. For he was astonished, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken*” (Luke 5:6-9). The Present is the point at which time touches eternity, and it was through living faithfully in the present that Simon Peter encountered God. He was a part of this miraculous event, he was living in the midst of things eternal and Divine, because he didn’t allow failures of the past or fear of the future keep him from living in the present.

After this miraculous catch, “*Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men. And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and followed Him*” (Luke 5:10-11). Our Gospel passage concludes with Peter, James, and John all living in the present - *they forsook all, and followed Him*, and their faithful example is written for us. Because the past is history and the future is neither known nor guaranteed, the present is the only time in which any of us can forsake all and follow

Him, and the present is the only place where God gives us grace to do so.

I'll leave you with these encouraging words of advice from another saint, Mother Teresa of Calcutta, who said, "Yesterday is gone. Tomorrow has not yet come. We only have today. Let us begin."