

Diana Anderson-Tyler: The Key to an Abundant Life

This article picks up right where last week's left off: with the dumbfounded fishermen whose boats nearly sank beneath the weight of a fish-filled treasure trove. Simon rightly viewed the bursting nets as a supernatural act of God through this Messiah, or "Anointed One," Jesus of Nazareth. Immediately realizing he was in the presence of no ordinary man, Simon fell to his knees, exclaiming:

"Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man" (Luke 5:8, NIV). Jesus calmed down this fiery, future follower and told him not to fear.

"From now on you will fish for **people**." (Luke 5:10, NIV (emphasis mine))

Moments before, these fishermen had been sitting on a sea of hopelessness. Then, one simple act of obedience sent them past their comfort zones and scrambling to hoist heavy nets into their boat. Seconds later, they found themselves face to face with a holiness they'd never known, accompanied by a conviction they'd never felt:

They were sinners unworthy of help from this Sinless One.

As I wrote last week, Simon, James, and John represent you and me and anyone who's sat listlessly in an empty boat, staring into unpromising stillness. They also represent anyone who's obeyed the Word of God, cast their nets into deeper waters even when the tide was against them, and reaped an unthinkably grand reward. But today we shift our focus from the heaven-sent answer for our emptiness to the Holy Spirit-sent follow-up question that only you and I can answer:

What happens next?

All of us have a choice when, like Simon Peter, we sense an uncomfortable tug persisting within our souls. Granted, most of us probably won't experience an up-close encounter with Jesus this side of Heaven, but God will surely continue to gain our attention in ways only He can orchestrate and in ways only you can understand.

For Simon and his fishing partners, God chose to send His Son into their boat and make a miracle before their forlorn, fish-seeking eyes.

For Ruth, He gave her favor with the venerable Boaz, who himself was a picture of the coming Messiah.

For Job, the Lord allowed Satan to take his family, steal his wealth, and destroy his health so that his faith in God would be intensified by an unprecedented time of testing.

For the wise men from the east, God placed a star in the heavens that led them to the Christ-child before whom they fell down in worship.

For the leprous outcast in Luke 15, God provided immediate healing that saved and restored him to a normal life among his friends and family.

When the Holy Spirit tugged at their hearts, each of the people mentioned above made the decision to believe and trust the Lord with all their hearts. No matter what it cost them, they knew they would soon be gaining much, much more as children in God's everlasting kingdom.

The Galilean fishermen left everything and followed Christ. Have you done the same? Have you surrendered your self-made plans and your harmful habits, poured out your pride, shed your selfishness, and let go of your iron grip on a comfortable, risk-free, I-can-handle-this life?

The fishermen could have gone home that night and enjoyed a

giant fish fry with their families while Jesus walked on to the next seaside village. They could have led simple, happy lives along the lake they loved before dying peacefully in their sleeps at a ripe old age.

But they didn't.

Instead, they committed their lives to Christ, poured themselves out for the sake of the cross, and walked courageously to crosses of their own as martyrs and exiles.

We were never promised an easy life. We were promised an abundant one.

In John 10:10, Jesus says He came so we may have life more "abundantly." The Greek word for "abundantly" used here is *perissos*, which means "exceeding, going beyond, full of, abundant."

God wants to give us more adventure, more joy, more health and wellness, more satisfaction, more riches and reward than we could ever imagine. But before we can accept all the marvelous "mores" of His eternal abundance, we must be willing to live with less of what the world and self have to offer.

Diana Anderson-Tyler is the author of *Creation House's Fit for Faith: A Christian Woman's Guide to Total Fitness* and her latest book, *Perfect Fit: Weekly Wisdom and Workouts for Women of Faith and Fitness*. Her popular website can be found at [www.dianataylor.com](#), and she is the owner and a coach at CrossFit 925. Diana can be reached on Twitter.