

THE PRESIDENT'S



TRINITY COLLEGE OF FLORIDA

Two Empty Boats

Have you ever noticed the **'two empty boats'** in the narrative described by Luke in chapter 5? I have read this passage over and over in my fifty-plus years as a Christian, preached from it countless of times, and yet I discovered something new, enriching, and so profound!

You know the story well. Great crowds are pressing in on Jesus as they listen to Him. Then these verses appear:

"He noticed two empty boats at the water's edge, for the fishermen had left them and were washing their nets. Stepping into one of the boats, Jesus asked Simon, its owner, to push it out into the water. So he sat in the boat and taught the crowds from there."

Luke 5:2-3 NLT

The narrative continues regarding **taking the boat out** into the deep as directed by Jesus and letting down the nets to catch fish. Peter had been fishing all night and 'caught nothing' (Luke 5:5 NLT)! Yet he agrees and follows the directive of Jesus and lets the nets down as instructed. The Bible records the following:

*"And this time their nets were so full of fish they began to tear. A shout for help brought their partners in **the other boat**, and soon both boats were filled with fish, and on the verge of sinking."* Luke 5:6-7 NLT

There is so much here. Where do I start? Empty Boats ... no longer empty, but filled!! Here is what caught my attention: Two Empty Boats and Jesus chose one of them. Why did he choose one over another? How was that selection made? I pondered this because so many people with whom I meet and deal with 'feel like empty boats!' They are 'empty'... empty of joy, hope, and courage, empty of confidence and passion ... *they are empty!* They have been 'out all night' and yet feel so unfilled and useless ... like a weary, useless, empty boat!

I pondered this, thought about it, and then a 'lightning bolt' from the Holy Spirit got my attention! The boat only remains empty until the owner gives permission and accessibility to enter or board! *Jesus gets into the boat with the permission of the owner!* Maybe Peter owned both boats, but he was present at one of them. He is the one who allowed Jesus into the vessel and pushed it out into the water! When the one boat began to be filled with fish, 'a shout for help brought their partners in the other boat' to help and they were filled with fish.

Here is the lesson: If you feel like you are empty, have 'toiled all night,' have nothing and have accomplished nothing, but **feel useless, unwanted and unproductive**, simply give Jesus **permission** to get in your boat, teach you, and follow His directions! **Grant accessibility, total accessibility**, to the 'whole boat,' to the whole life! Emptiness is soon FILLED with what you were seeking, and that for which you were fishing and were longing for in the first place! You discover a 'big catch!'

And here is the special event ... you will fill up other 'empty boats' and the lives around you, with the 'catch' Jesus is giving you! They cease to be empty and they become filled with peace, purpose,

and productivity! *They are blessed by Jesus from your agreement with Him.* Wow! Do you see it? Do you feel it?

Look what the Bible says: "For he was awestruck by the number of fish they had caught, as were the others with him" Luke 5:9. Jesus says the following to Peter.

"... 'Don't be afraid! From now on you'll be fishing for people!' And as soon as they landed, they left everything and followed Jesus" Luke 5:9-11 NLT.

When Jesus is invited into your 'boat' totally and unrestricted, ***things happen and change!***

Time to go fishing...with Jesus!

The Latest Happenings:

- ✦ The foundation for the new Residence Hall is being formed. One hundred seven pilings have been poured and forms are being prepared for a good foundation of the three-story facility.



- ✦ New bookshelves were given to the library this past month.
- ✦ **Over thirty pastors and leadership personnel** were invited to campus in June. Admissions informed them of opportunities that are available for young people in furthering their education. Drs. Eric Bargerhuff and Shannon Hogan were speakers along with others. They were fed "spiritually and physically" by faculty and staff. Books were given to those who attended and all enjoyed a Trinity College of Florida experience of enrichment!



- ✦ **Many summer activities:**

Online courses are available at this time of the year.

Soccer camp was held on campus last month and Trinity College is participating in **summer camps** such as Lake Swan Camp.

Ten of our student athletes were on a missions trip to Costa Rica. Many came to Christ and a strong influence for Christ was left with hundreds of young people. Dr. Joe Allotta, campus chaplain, and his wife Amanda, were in attendance.

Approximately twenty are leaving this week, traveling to New England for the **2017 Summer Honors Tour** for study of the history of the development of the church in the beginning years of the colonies.

- ✦ **Steve Hunter, Assistant to the President for Marketing**, is working to increase our presence on social media platforms. He is in the process of enhancing our image and messaging within many venues. He is also working with admissions through monthly goal settings and activities. Our goal for TrinityQuest is 25 new students while our traditional program is working toward 75 new students.
- ✦ **Trinity College of Florida will celebrate 85 years beginning this September!** *It will be a year of reflection, remembrance, and rejoicing with the 'eye' on the future. **Eighty-five years of Biblical Higher Education!***

- ✦ **Trinity's professors** are ministering the year in various venues. Missions, church conferences, radio, TV, and church services are on the schedule along with many teaching opportunities.
- ✦ The **2017 Faculty and Staff Retreat** is scheduled for Wednesday, August 9, 2017. Dr. Tim Beard, President of Pasco-Hernando State College, will be speaking along with others, as we begin a new collegiate year. **Classes begin August 22, and Convocation is slated for Friday, August 25.**
- ✦ **Buddy Paynter, IT Director**, reports:
 "The long-awaited, drastically improved access points are being installed ... a new WiFi network on your portable devices will appear named TrinityCollege-WiFi."
- ✦ **Dr. Jim Daly, President of *Focus on the Family***, writes:
"It was great to join you for Trinity College of Florida's 2017 Awards and Fundraising Banquet! I was pleased to serve as keynote speaker, and it was such an honor to receive the Macedonian Call Award. This tribute meant so much to me, and I was deeply encouraged by the evident commitment of you and your faculty and staff to nurture the next generation of Christian leaders. That mission is desperately needed these days – especially throughout higher education – and I trust the Lord will continue to guide and multiply your efforts."

You Are What You Love!

Prayer and Praise:

- ✦ **Pray for Admissions** with regard to new students choosing Trinity College of Florida. The goal of 100 new students in the Fall can be a reality as we pray and work. God is Able!
- ✦ **Pray for the summer activities** of the College, faculty, and staff.
- ✦ **Pray for a spiritual renewal in 2017-2018** ... Celebrating 85 years!
- ✦ **Pray for God's leadership in performing the right activities at the right time in every department!**
- ✦ **Praise Report:** After some unexpected "housekeeping issues" such as flood elevations for the Library, were resolved, the financing for the New Student Residence Hall has been finalized.

ECFA (Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability) reports that millennials are optimistic about their giving, are self-motivated, inquisitive, and put a premium on honesty. *To that we embrace and move forward as we seek their support in Biblical Higher Education!*

With a grateful heart for your partnership,

