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Rick Myatt

HOPE FOR THE SCRUB

John 21

Late last Saturday night a remarkable football game took place between the University of California and Washington State University. At halftime Washington State led 24-13 and there was little indication of what was about to happen in the second half. In that half there was an unlikely scoring explosion by both teams. At one point in the third quarter, Washington State, after falling behind, scored a touchdown to regain the lead 31-27. They then surprised everyone by attempting an onside kick and it worked. They got the ball and quickly drove down the field to score another touchdown, making the lead 38-27. They kicked off and Cal's kick returner went 100 yards, going all the way to score for Cal making it 38-34. Cal kicked off. Washington State then drove down the field in two and a half minutes to score again. Now it was 45-34. They kicked off and the Cal kick returner went 98 yards, going all the way to score again, making it 45-41. Then Washington State proceeded on the next possession to once again drive down the field and score yet again, 52-41. So the game went. It is considered a phenomenal game for a quarterback if he can pass the ball for 300 yards in a game. It is fairly unusual for that to happen, and especially to do it without throwing an interception. Jared Goff, the Cal quarterback, did way better than that. He threw for a whopping 527 yards in the game with zero interceptions. And he only had the second best statistics in the game. Washington State's qb, Connor Halliday, threw for a ridiculous 734 yards, an all-time record, with no interceptions. After all of that, in the final minute of the game WSU, now trailing 60-59, drove down inside the Cal 5 yard line. They tried to run the ball into the endzone a couple of times but only got to the 1 yard line. No problem. With 19 seconds left they lined up for a field goal that would win the game. Kicker Quinton Breshears only had to make a kick that was shorter than an extra point. It's a kick that even now at my advanced age I could make. It's a kick Laurie could make, even at her young age. Breshears, a healthy young college-age man, going through college on a scholarship because of his *kicking* ability, pushed it wide right. He missed. After all of that, after 119 points scored, after 1300 yards of offense, after more than 4 hours of play, shortly before midnight Cal won the game 60-59 because Breshears failed to make a piddling 19-yard field goal. I sure wouldn't want to be him. What a colossal flop.

I feel bad for that young man. There's no way to hide from a failure that glaring. He's just going to have to work through it. Few of us have had a failure as visible as that one, but all of us have failed in one way or another. There are ways that we have not done what we should have or not been what we think we should. We all, if we are honest, see ways we fall short. We hide them, we try to convince ourselves and others that it's not true or if it is, it's not our fault. But if we are going to live in peace we are going to have to find some way of dealing with our own shortcomings, failures and inadequacies. Another downside of life is failure and inadequacy. To find out how to handle those downsides today we will look at John 21 where one of the most famous and ugly failures in history is confronted.

JESUS GIVES WHAT WE NEED

This incident took place after Jesus had risen from the dead and had already met with the disciples twice. They were in Galilee, the northern part of Israel, not real sure what to do next. Peter decided since he had nothing better to do he might as well go fishing. Peter wasn't a recreational fisherman. He wasn't going to just drop a line in the water and relax. This was work. He was going to use a net to catch as many fish as possible and sell them. He figured he had to support himself somehow and this is what he knew. Six of the other disciples, including John, James and (Doubting) Thomas, go with him. Some preachers criticize the disciples for this, saying they were abandoning Jesus' call and going back to their old life. I don't agree. Jesus never criticized them for this. I think they simply didn't know what else to do as they waited for whatever Jesus was going to do next. They figured they needed to support themselves, so they went to work.

I have not done a lot of fishing in my life, but the little I have done has yielded a consistent result. I've caught weeds and underwater growth, but almost never any fish. I can't call it fishing. Maybe killing bait or something like that, but not fishing. I lived with a couple of guys who were dedicated, expert fishermen right after I graduated from college. One year they insisted I go with them to a spot up in the Sierras where the trout were thick in the water. They wanted to get me excited about fishing and were going to show me how it's done. They guaranteed I would haul those fish in almost faster than I could toss my line in the stream and I would see what fun fishing is. I reluctantly agreed. As we were planning the trip I asked what food we were bringing. They said we didn't have to bring a lot because we'd be eating the fish we caught. I balked. I wasn't going unless we brought along plenty to eat. So at my insistence we took hot dogs, canned beans, soup and other such food. So there we were at Strawberry Creek up in the Sierra Nevadas, a stream they claimed was teeming with trout. We caught nothing. Zero fish for three days. We ate a lot of franks and beans, and my friends ate a lot of crow. That's how it goes for me. So, Rick, you're a lousy athlete, a useless handyman, when it comes to cars all you can do is put gas in the tank, you're a hopeless failure at fishing, and you hate camping. I'm sorry, Mr. Myatt, but we're going to have to ask you to turn in your Man Card. Jesus' followers were not like me. They were expert fishermen. Several of them were professional fishermen. But that night they had the same result I've always had in fishing. They were shut out. They caught exactly nothing. Not one fish.

As the sun was just coming up they were heading back to shore after a frustrating night of failure. When they were about a hundred yards off shore some guy on the beach calls out, "Hey, how was the fishing? Kinda looks like your nets are empty. Didn't you catch anything?" Verse 5 tells us their answer was "No." Doesn't that answer seem awfully curt to you? There was no, "They just weren't biting tonight" or "man, we had a tough night and didn't catch a thing." The answer was just - "No." Doesn't that terse response fairly drip with annoyance? Can't you just see the "I don't want to talk about it" look on their faces? This was humiliating for these pros. The fish threw a no hitter at them and now some random guy on the beach is highlighting their failure for them. I wonder if they were thinking, "Sheesh. Maybe fishing isn't like riding a bike. I can't believe this. It hasn't been that long. How could we have lost it so quickly?"

Then random beach guy says, “Throw your nets out to starboard and you’ll catch some fish.” To me it was a miracle that the disciples did what the kibitzer on the beach said. Throw the net on the starboard side? Really? The fish are only on that side of the boat? They’re on that side now even though they haven’t been anywhere all night? Seriously? I’m pretty sure the most gracious response I would have had to this guy was to ignore him. More likely I would have looked for some snarky way to tell him to take a long walk off a short pier. Amazingly they threw the net out and to their surprise when they tried to pull it back in they found it was full of so many fish it was too heavy for them to haul it back aboard.

John knew immediately this was no coincidence. He remembered that Jesus had done exactly the same thing prior to calling the disciples to be his followers. It was kind of a signature miracle for Jesus so when it happened again John knew that guy on the beach wasn’t random at all. It was the risen Lord Jesus. He told Peter this and Peter instantly dove into the water and swam to shore because he couldn’t wait to see Jesus. The others brought the boat in, towing the net and all the fish. When they got to the beach they saw Jesus there with a fire already built on which he was cooking some fish and some bread. He invited them to come eat.

Jesus told them to bring some of their fish, but he already had fish cooking. There was a message in that. He could use their fish, but *he didn’t need them*. He already had fish and bread on the grill for them. He was showing them that although he invited them to bring their fish, he could and would *provide what they needed*. The way they caught the fish communicated the same idea. They knew that huge haul of fish only happened because Jesus wanted it to. That was no accident. It was a miracle. They got the message. Jesus had the power to make sure they didn’t catch fish if he didn’t want them to. And he had the power to have fish suddenly show up right next to their boat if he wanted to. In other words, he could provide all the fish they would ever need. If he wanted them to catch fish they would catch fish.

Imagine that you own a store. Let’s say it’s an electronics store. You are all set to have the biggest sale in your store’s history on Black Friday, the day after Thanksgiving. You’ve got the hottest item on the market, the latest electronic wonder, and you’ve cut prices. You’ve been advertising in the newspaper, on television and radio and on social networks. You are expecting to do more business this day than you’ve ever done. This sale will make your entire year. You’ve borrowed money in order to jam your store with merchandise, essentially going out on a limb, betting that you are going to have a landmark day and have a sales total like you’ve never had before. You are sure that because of the great prices you’ve advertised, that the store is going to be packed with customers, so you have extra employees on hand to handle the crush. You open the doors in the morning and to your dismay no one comes in. In fact, to your shock all day long only a handful of people come in and *no one* buys *anything*. It is a complete disaster. You are stunned and devastated. This likely will destroy your business. You’ll have to start calling your accounting books the Red Sea because they will be a sea of red ink. The tragic day is at an end. You are staying open until 10 P. M., but it’s now only a couple of minutes away and the store is totally devoid of customers. You are about to close the doors and send the

workers home in defeat when Jesus walks in. He says, “How did the big sale go?” You shake your head and say, “It was a disaster. I’m renaming the store The Titanic.” He says, “Look, keep the doors open another hour even though it’s very late and already past closing time, and put a sign out saying you’ve lowered prices another 1%.” You think that’s ridiculous. It’s so late. Who is going to come to the store at this hour? Who is going to see the sign and even if they saw it who would care about that small of a drop in prices? But you say, “This is really dumb, Lord, but just because it’s you I’ll do it. But after I do that will you leave me alone?” You put the sign out, and in minutes a couple walks in. They are followed by another, and another. You look out in the parking lot and see headlights pulling in at every entrance. On the street there is a traffic jam as cars try to get into the parking lot. The lot is filling up and people are getting out of their cars and *running* to get into the store. Within minutes you’ve got all the cash registers going at full speed. In the next hour you sell every item of merchandise in the store.

What’s your takeaway from that incident? Is it, “Dude, am I the best business owner in the world, or what?!” I don’t think so. I think your conclusion is that Jesus has all the power he needs to provide you with whatever he thinks is best. If he wants you to sell your merchandise, it will sell, and if he doesn’t, *then your best efforts are useless.*

Just like the disciples failed in their attempts to fish that night we too are going to fail at times. We are going to come up short in our efforts to measure up. Maybe it will be in our attempts to live the Christian life. It could be that we think we ought to be much better at telling others about Jesus, or teaching that Sunday school class, or just being a loving and kind person. Maybe we feel like we should be more faithful in reading the Bible and praying. Maybe in your job you feel like you have failed. It could be something that you view as a colossal failure. Maybe you feel like you come up far short as a parent or a spouse. I would like you to picture yourself in the boat with those guys, failing to catch fish. What is the message from Jesus? He supplies what we need, and what he supplies is enough. This message is the heart of the gospel and you can see it woven throughout the Bible.

God promised Abraham and Sarah a son, but no son came along. They cooked up a scheme to have a son they could sort of adopt, but God said, “I will provide you with a son just as I promised.” He waited until it was humanly impossible, when there was literally nothing that Abraham and Sarah could do to make that happen. Then he provided them with the son he had promised. God provides what we need.

In John 6 a huge crowd gathered to hear Jesus preach. Jesus said to Philip, “hey, where should we buy food for these folks?” Philip was stunned. He said, “Eight months’ wages would not buy enough bread for each one to have a bite.” If you took \$10 an hour as a wage, 8 months’ wages is almost \$14,000. Philip said that much money would only buy enough food for each to have one bite. In other words, this was an enormous crowd. The disciples had no hope of feeding those people, especially when all they had was one boy’s lunch. Do you remember what happened? Jesus made that paltry meal that the disciples came up with, be enough so that

everyone in that massive mob had all they could eat with food left over. This was the first “All You Can Eat” establishment in history. The message was clear. Jesus will provide all you need.

In 2 Corinthians 12 Paul wrote about how he was plagued by some ailment he called a thorn in his flesh. Not only was it physically a problem, but he was sure it would keep him from effective ministry. He prayed that it would be taken away repeatedly. Finally God answered him in verse 9, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.”

Whatever your failings, whatever your shortcomings, Jesus says *it was never up to you in the first place*. You never have been adequate in your own ability and merit and you never will be. But Jesus is more than sufficient. His grace is enough. So when you fall short, give thanks and trust that to accomplish God’s will in your life is really up to him to provide. Trust in his grace and adequacy.

JESUS FORGIVES US

After breakfast Jesus has a conversation with Peter that is now famous. He asks Peter, “Simon, son of John, do you truly love me more than these?” Peter responds “Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.” Jesus then repeated that exchange two more times. There are some details of this conversation that people pick up on and misinterpret, at least in my opinion, and in doing so they water down the big point of this story.

The first detail is the matter of “these” when Jesus asked, “do you love me more than these?” Did he love Jesus more than what? Some people think Jesus pointed to the fish and was asking if Peter loved him more than he loved fishing. The idea there is that Peter had returned to his fishing and Jesus was asking which was more important to Peter, following him or fishing.

I do not believe this is correct. This conversation is about Peter’s failure the night Jesus was arrested. That’s why Jesus asked the question 3 times. Peter had denied knowing Jesus 3 times. If you go back to the events of that terrible night you will see that Peter had boasted he loved Jesus more than the other disciples did and would be more faithful to him than the rest of them. In Matthew 26:31 Jesus told the disciples before he was arrested “you will all fall away on account of me.” In verse 33 Peter said, “Even if all fall away on account of you, I never will.” He said the others might fail but he wouldn’t because he was more loyal and loved Jesus more than any of them. Jesus, by repeatedly asking the question this way, is reminding Peter of that boast and his failure to keep it.

Another thing that some people make an issue of in this passage is the different use of words. Jesus used the word *agapao* when he asked if Peter loved him. Peter responded with *phileo* when he said, “You know I love you.” Peter’s word for love wasn’t as strong as the word Jesus used according to this interpretation. So people draw lessons from the difference in meaning of the two words.

I take issue with this analysis. There are a number of good reasons for rejecting it, but I will just mention two. One is, John consistently varied his vocabulary throughout his writing just as he does here. In fact, he made little distinction between these words for love. You can see in this passage some other similar variation of synonyms just as he did with these words for love and the variation has no significance other than just good writing. Another important thing to recognize is that the original conversation didn't take place in Greek at all. It was in Aramaic, which didn't have the fine distinctions in words for love that Greek did. So this distinction didn't happen in the original conversation.

We need to keep our attention on the point of what Jesus did here. The obvious triple repetition was a direct allusion to Peter's total failure and it was not something anyone present would have missed. After Peter's boast that he would do better than the other guys, Jesus had said, "This very night, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times" (Matthew 26:34). Peter's response to that in verse 35 was, "Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you." Jesus was now saying, "How did that work out for you, Peter?" Jesus was putting a bright spotlight on the fact that at the most important moment, Peter was a colossal, ignominious failure.

Do you think Peter really did love Jesus? I believe he loved him like crazy. Peter really had given up everything to follow him. He wanted nothing more than just to be with him. The thing he wanted most in life was to do what Jesus wanted him to do. If that's true how do you think Peter felt about his failure that awful night? It probably felt to Peter like the worst thing he had ever done. My guess is that he was painfully ashamed of his cowardly action and had nothing but loathing for himself.

I have told before the story of one of the low points of my life. It was the night we were helping Carissa move and were almost done. I was trying to anchor a bungee cord and it slipped, fired back and slammed into Laurie's face. It cut her right below her eye and began bleeding profusely. We had to rush her to the hospital. The doctor stitched it up and we went home. I could not sleep that night. In fact, I didn't sleep well for several days after that. The scene kept replaying in my mind and I kept kicking myself, telling myself what an idiot I was. My guess is Peter had not been sleeping well since that incident. Over and over he replayed those events and kept telling himself he was a worthless piece of garbage. He was such a coward. How could he have done that? He was ashamed and kept wishing that he could have it to do over. He would have preferred dying with Jesus to living with the guilt, the shame and the remorse of his ugly, cowardly betrayal.

Now Jesus seems to be mercilessly rubbing Peter's face in the worst failure of his life. Why is he doing that? It was because if Jesus didn't deal with it, that failure would forever be not just an elephant but a whole herd of elephants in the room of Peter's relationship with him. It would keep Peter from ever really feeling Jesus' love and from ever really wanting to be in his presence. It would mean Peter was always hiding from Jesus to some degree just like Adam and

Eve hid from God after their rebellion. At best Peter might try to somehow make up for it, but it would be out of shame, not out of love. He wouldn't be free.

The triple repetition was Jesus' way of getting it all out in the open. The whole failure is now on the table, nothing hidden, nothing held back. By saying repeatedly, "Feed my sheep, tend my lambs," Jesus is saying to Peter, "All right, Peter. It's over. It's paid for. Let it go. Leave it in the past just as I am doing. I have forgiven it, now I want you to do what I called you to do a long time ago." What Jesus provides is enough, and that includes total forgiveness.

Can you imagine how that must have felt to Peter? He knew that Jesus would not hold his failure against him. It did not destroy the relationship between Peter and Jesus, and it did not mean that Peter had forfeited his role in Jesus' kingdom. It meant that Peter could look Jesus in the face, that there would be no awkwardness between them. It meant that Jesus loved him and valued him just as he always had.

Peter got the message. In 1 Peter 2:24 referring to Jesus he wrote, "He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed." Peter was healed by Jesus's grace and forgiveness.

Paul had a worse problem than Peter. He had not just denied knowing Jesus, he had tried to do everything he could to oppose him. He had deliberately and with malice sought to injure the Body of Christ. Yet Jesus forgave him completely too. In 1 Timothy 1:14-15 Paul wrote, "The grace of our Lord Jesus was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the worst."

Last year Laurie had to have a couple of surgeries. We ended up with thousands of dollars of medical bills. We were able to pay some of it, but we had to pay off the rest of it over time. We agreed to pay the hospital hundreds of dollars each month until the bill was paid off. Just two weeks ago I paid off the last of the debt. I don't owe them a dime. If I start worrying about our bill at the hospital Laurie can just remind me that it is all paid. We owe them nothing. This is what God says about our sins, our failings, our shortcomings. The bill for them has been paid in full. The bill was paid at the cross, so nothing now stands between us and God. That's what grace means.

In his book, *Psychology, Religion and Healing*, Leslie Weatherhead wrote, "the most therapeutic idea in the world is the forgiveness of sins." Hebrews 10:22 says, "Let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water."

Pastor and author Matt Chandler says, "The litmus test of whether or not you understand the gospel is what you do when you fail. Do you run from God and go try to clean yourself up a bit before you come back into the throne room, or do you approach the throne of grace with

confidence? If you don't approach the throne of grace with confidence, you don't understand the gospel. You are most offensive to God when you come to him with all of your efforts, when you're still trying to earn what's freely given."

The life giving message of Jesus' words to Peter was that his failure, his cowardice and betrayal, as bad or worse than anything we will ever do, was not fatal. Jesus was not surprised by it. He told Peter beforehand that it would happen. He's not surprised by our failures and inadequacies either. They are not fatal, they are forgiven. All of them. Jesus knew about every one of them when he went to the cross to pay for them.

There is a huge relief and priceless freedom offered to us by our Lord. There is no need to hide, no need to cover up our shortcomings. Paul said he *boasted* in them. He bragged about his inadequacies! God's grace is magnified when we revel in his forgiveness. We don't need to live in shame, we don't need to try to somehow make up for our failings and shortcomings; we simply rejoice and give thanks that God has forgiven us.

JESUS CALLS US TO SERVE

Jesus did not just forgive Peter, he also told him that he had a significant role to play in the most awesome, the most important, the mightiest enterprise in all of creation. He had a vital role in the Kingdom of God's advance in this world. Jesus told him, "Peter, take care of my people."

Despite our failures, despite our thorns, despite all of our weaknesses and shortcomings, God has also got a big role for each of us to play in his Kingdom enterprise. Ephesians 2:10 says, "We are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." The word translated "handiwork" there could mean "masterpiece." You are his work of art, and you are created for good works, for a role that he has already prepared in advance.

Peter understood that this command from Jesus wasn't just for him. In 1 Peter 4:8-10 he wrote, "Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms." Jesus is saying to all of us "feed my sheep." Serve one another with whatever ability God has given you.

When I was in high school I played baseball. Or perhaps I should say I practiced playing baseball. I was on the baseball team but I was sort of the Halley's Comet of baseball players, I made very rare appearances in games. You might only witness it once in your lifetime. I went to practice every day, and I was technically part of the team, but I almost never played in the games. I got messages every day that I was inadequate and that I wasn't valuable. In practice the coach wouldn't work as much with me as with the guys who were actually going to play. After all, what was the point in trying to improve what meager skills I had since I wasn't going to actually use them in a game unless a strange virus wiped out half the team and there was no

one else to play? I didn't get as much batting practice or fielding practice. On game days I would sit on the bench. The coach would let me do a few things to break up the monotony like go coach first base where I couldn't do much damage or go catch a pitcher who was warming up in the bull pen. There were a few other guys like me. We were the scrubs, the guys who were not ready for prime time and never would be, who just didn't measure up. The message was quite clear. We really did not matter. Scrubs aren't worth much. I recall vividly the day in my junior year when I actually got put into a game. I was in the bull pen warming up a pitcher when I heard the coach call my name. I couldn't imagine what he wanted but I said, "I'm here, Coach. What's up?" I had been using a catcher's mitt in the bull pen. He said, "Get your glove, you're in." I said, "In what?" Impatiently he said, "The game, of course." I had two reactions. One was that "of course" was not exactly appropriate since me actually playing in the game was far from an "of course" occurrence; the other was, "wow, who died?" For our few remaining games that season I had the experience of being a real part of the team, a guy who was needed, who really mattered. Wow, that felt good. There was a point to me being on that team. I can remember to this day the next game when I actually started and played the whole game. It's not hard to understand why I would remember it clearly, it's only been four decades since that day. We played North High. We won 3-2, but what was really cool for me was I got two hits and knocked in two of our three runs. Without me we would not have won. The coach actually made that clear to me and everyone else. What a cool thing it was to actually have an important role to play.

Peter had proven himself to be a scrub, spiritually speaking. He deserved to be benched or even thrown off the team. But in his divine grace Jesus put him back in the starting lineup. He said, "Peter, I've got a role for you to play. It is crucially important. It matters more than you can imagine. So get in the game and take care of my people. Feed them with my word, encourage them, support them, love them and care for them." I can assure you, that felt infinitely better to him than my brief stint as a starting player for the East Bakersfield Blades did to me.

It is awfully easy to get caught up in feeling like a failure, feeling inadequate, being paralyzed by guilt and by our own weaknesses. Jesus has given us a remedy for all of that. He has forgiven us our failings, he has said his adequacy is what is important - not our inadequacy, and he has said, simply go serve other people. You don't need to worry about how good you are at it because what matters is *what Jesus can do, not what you can do*. You don't need to try to manufacture a particular outcome. Leave that in his hands. You just go and serve.

JESUS TELLS US TO FOLLOW HIM

One last important note. Jesus tells Peter how he will eventually die. He will indeed be faced with another threatening situation, only this time he will stand firm, be faithful and will die for Jesus. But then Peter looks over at John and says, "What about him?" In other words, is he going to have to die for you too? Will he be faithful until the end too? Jesus answered in verse 22, "If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you? You must follow me." In other words, don't worry about him. I have a plan for him that is none of your business. You just focus on what you must do.

A lot of our discouragement, our sense of inadequacy and failing, comes from comparing ourselves with other people. Jesus says to us, “Don’t worry about what I have for other people to do. You just follow me.” This truth has been crucial for me to survive in ministry. I knew a couple of guys when I was in grad school who were preparing for ministry at the same school I was. They were on the same track as me. They have been serving now about as long as I have. Both of those guys are pastors of mega churches that have thousands of people attending. One of them has a weekend attendance of 14,000. Sheesh, that would be a fair sized city in Mississippi. It could be very easy to look at that and say, “Yeah, uh, Rick, what’s wrong with you?” Fortunately that’s not what Jesus says. When I say, “Lord, what’s up with those guys? Why them and not me?” fortunately he doesn’t say, “Well the problem is you stink.” He says, “If I want them to lead churches of thousands of people, what is that to you? You must follow me.”

I have mentioned that we have a new car that we really like. But as nice as it is I feel sorry for our car. Recently I pulled up to a red light and stopped right next to a Maserati sports car. Our poor Honda, which is a terrific car, began feeling bad about itself. It apologized to me because it is just a generic sedan. It's not racy, sleek and powerful like that sports car. At the next intersection we stopped next to a Chevy Universe. Okay there is no such vehicle but it would be an appropriate name for this auto because it was infinitely vast. Huge is not a big enough word to describe it. It was so big it had drawn a Mini Cooper into orbit around it. My Honda started bemoaning its inadequacies again. It can't carry an entire armored division like that massive SUV can. Next it was just the opposite. We stopped next to a tiny Smart Car that gets 12,000 miles per gallon and my Honda began expressing shame. "I'm such a fat gas hog," Finally I said to my Honda, "I don't need you to be faster than a race car, I don't need you to be larger than a humpback whale and I don't need you to get any better gas mileage than you do. I just need you to do exactly what you've been doing. I just need you to go when I tell you to go. I am thrilled with you." And that's what Jesus was saying to Peter and he says to us. Just follow him and let his sufficiency make up for whatever you think you might lack.

As I do what he has for me to do I recall that what kind of haul the disciples got really wasn't up to them, it was up to Jesus. Their job was just to put the net where he told them. So it is with us.