May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing to you, O LORD, my rock and my redeemer. Amen.

Simon and Andrew were casting a net into the sea for they were fishermen. Day after day it was the same thing; the same sea, the same net, the same boat. Day after day it was wind, water, fish. They probably grew up watching their dad and granddad fishing, watching their future life, watching how they too would spend their time.

Cast the net, pull it in. Cast the net, pull it in. If you are not casting the net, then you sit in the boat mending the net. That’s what James and John were doing. Casting and mending. Casting and mending. You know about those days, right?

We may not fish for a living but we know about casting and mending nets. Days that all seem the same. One looks like another. Life is routine, nothing changes. We don’t expect much to happen. This is our life. We cast the nets. We mend the nets. Casting and mending to make a living, to feed our family, to pay the bills. Casting and mending to gain security and get to retirement. Casting and mending to hold our family together, to make our marriage work, to grow up our children. Casting and mending to gain the things we want; a house, a car, books, clothes, a vacation. Casting and mending to earn a reputation, gain approval, establish status. Casting and mending our way through another day of loneliness, sadness, or illness.

Casting and mending are realities of life. They are also the circumstances in which Jesus comes to us, the context in which we hear the call to new life, and the place where we are changed and the ordinary becomes the extraordinary.

These would be disciples, Simon and Andrew, James and John, are not looking for Jesus. They are too busy with the nets. It is another day of casting and mending. They may not have even noticed Jesus but he not only sees them he speaks to them. Jesus has a way of showing up in the ordinary places of life and interrupting the daily routines of casting and mending nets. That’s what he did to the lives of Simon and Andrew, James and John. That’s what he does to your life and my life.

“*Follow me*” is Jesus’ invitation to a new life. If these four fishermen accept the invitation, their lives will forever be different. They will be different. They will no longer catch just fish. They will fish for people.

“*Follow me*” is the call to participate with God in God’s own saving work. It’s the work of change and growth. That work is always about moving to a larger vision, orienting our life in a new direction, and experiencing that our little story of life is connected to and a part of a much larger story of life, God’s life.

As Jesus walked by the Sea of Galilee he saw Simon, Andrew, James, and John. Jesus called them. Mark records no discussions, no questions: “Where are we going? What will we do? How long will we be gone? What do I need to take? Where will we stay?” They simply “left… and followed him.”

The invitation, “*follow me*,” is also the invitation to leave behind; to leave behind our nets, our boats, and even our fathers and that’s the hard part for most of us. We’re pretty good at accumulating and clinging but not so good at letting go. More often than not our spiritual growth involves some kind of letting go. We never get anywhere new as long as we’re unwilling to leave where we are. We accept Jesus’ invitation to follow, not by packing up, but by letting go.

“*Follow me*” is both the invitation to and the promise of new life. So what are the nets that entangle us? What are the little boats that contain our life? What do we need to let go of and leave behind so that we might follow him?

When we let go, everything is transformed – including our nets, boats, and fathers.

Ultimately, it’s about letting go of our own little life so that we can receive God’s life. This letting go happens in the context of our everyday activities; work, school, families, paying the bills, fixing dinner, relationships, and trying to do the right thing. It happens in the casting and mending of our nets. These are the times and places Jesus shows up and calls into a new way of being and our world changes. It happened for Simon, Andrew, James, and John. It can happen for you and me. Amen.