



SIEBENQUELL

The Wildness of God: The Way of the Holy Springtime II

When Jesus enters Into our spaces



SOURCE: WWW.LIVOLI.DE

During these days of the Holy Spring, we want to consider and interpret the following text in greater depth. Luke 5, 1-11

While the people pressed upon him to hear the word of God, he was standing by the lake of Gennesaret. 2 And he saw two boats by the lake; but the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. 3 Getting into one of the boats, which was Simon's, he asked him to put out a little from the land. And he sat down and taught the people from the boat. 4 And when he had ceased speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch." 5 And Simon answered, "Master, we toiled all night and took nothing! But at your word I will let down the nets." 6 And when they had done this, they enclosed a great shoal of fish; and as their nets were breaking, 7 they beckoned to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. 8 But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." 9 For he was astonished, and all that were with him, at the catch of fish which they had taken; 10 and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid; henceforth you will be catching men." 11 And when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed him.

The first thing that happens occurs in the third verse. Jesus got »into one of the boats, which was Simon's«. Jesus sees a boat on the shore and gets in immediately. However, there is a problem. The boat does not belong to Jesus. In fact, the text makes it very clear that the boat belongs to Peter. And if we take this text seriously and do not trivialise it, we should be slightly shocked. For although the boat belongs to Peter, Jesus gets in and does not ask for permission.

Here we experience the way Jesus breaks into our lives. It is neither as harmless nor as orderly as we imagine. He will enter our rooms, and he will not clarify in advance whether we agree. And the rooms he enters are rooms that are important to us, that have great significance for our lives.

Let us look more closely at the boat. This is the space that belongs to Peter. This boat is of vital importance to him. He earns his living with it. It is the most important instrument he has so that he can provide for himself and for the lives of his beloved ones. He cannot fish from the shore. If something were to happen to this boat, he would no longer be able to do what is necessary to organise and support his life.

If we want to compare this, it would be similar to getting into a taxi driver's car. We would be shocked if someone got into our car without asking us. However, if we are a taxi driver, we realise that the shock is deeper, because the taxi driver's car is absolutely necessary to earn a living. There's more at stake now.

And this is the first life lesson of this text for the 40 days of the Holy Spring. Jesus will not only enter the small, pleasant and harmless rooms of our lives, where we could more or less say that we don't really care whether he enters them or not. He enters the vital rooms of our lives. He comes, uninvited and without invitation, and enters the rooms of our lives that play an important and decisive role in the way we organise our time on a daily basis.

We know such spaces. Jesus will break into the rooms where we make important decisions. These are the rooms in which we decide what is truly important and precious to us, the rooms in which we decide what the core relationships of our lives will be. He enters the rooms where we determine the fundamental directions of our lives. Jesus will break into our lives in the rooms where we make plans for our future.

Herein lays the challenge of these days. Peter could have said what we have said often enough. »That is my boat! You have no business here!« In these spaces of life, we are usually very careful that no one and nothing enters them without our permission. But what if Jesus himself is the one who wants to enter them? Will we, like Peter, allow that to happen? Or will we insist that God can only take up space in the places we assign to him?

Here we are confronted with a question of control. Where questions of control arise, there immediately arises a new question, namely, the question of trust. Can we grant Jesus access to the spaces of life where normally we alone determine everything? Can we relinquish some control over these spaces? Do we have the trust in him that something could arise here that will give salvation and life, even if we no longer determine everything?

We must not forget that there are no foregone conclusions to these questions. Indeed, Jesus will not ask for our permission to step into the boat of our life. Nevertheless, we could always toss him out. In the end, the way this story plays out will always also depend on our reaction to the challenging surprise of the way Jesus enters the spaces of our life.

It is all too easy to jump to the conclusion of this story and marvel at the wonderful catch of fish. But this abundance has a precondition. We must allow Jesus to enter our rooms. Otherwise, there will be no surprises of life and abundance. If we maintain control over the rooms of our lives, we are pretty sure that we know exactly what is coming and what is not. We must then be very clear about one thing. The spaces of our control offer us no surprises. And since we know what happens in the spaces where we alone are in charge, where we alone create, we also know that these spaces are often unsatisfying, bleak and without perspective. Of course it is risky to get involved in a surprise. What we must not forget is that it is just as risky to never wager one of the surprises of God.

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