Sermon for Bluff 10 February 2019

Sermon:

**“They left everything, and followed Jesus”** (Luke 5.11)

Little Johnny in Sunday School heard the song ‘I will make you fishers of men’ but would not sing – he did not want to become a vicious old man!

A lot is ordinary – crowd gather to hear the ‘celebrity’, Jesus gets into a boat, which happens to be Simon’s, Jesus suggests they go fishing, they explain they did so the previous night fruitlessly.

Then odd things occur: they decided to take a non-fisherman’s advice, got a huge catch, Simon became fearful admitting his sinfulness. Folk amazed at Jesus – was this because he knew there were fish at all, or that they caught so many?

And why did Simon (who became Peter) think he was sinful?

* Everybody is? (In which case why say it?)
* Did being a fisherman stop him from obeying the Law?
* Has he some sin we do not know about?
* Or is it the reaction of one who came face-to-face with the holy?

Question for us today: do we *have* to have a similar experience to start following Jesus?

Bible full of great conversion experiences – Woman at the well, man with the legion of demons, Zacchaeus, Cornelius, Saul/Paul, jailer at Philippi, to name some.

Others had different experiences – Ethiopian eunuch, Lydia, Apollos.

How dramatic was our conversion? Very, or hardly at all?

The important point is not how dramatic our reaction to Jesus is (amazed, fearful, sinful), but that we begin to follow at all?

But why do we follow? For that matter why did the first disciples follow?

Do you ever have that feeling when entering a church that it is holy?

They were compelled to follow– not in any robotic sense, but a reaction to encountering the holy.

I felt compelled to become a minister. How true is it that you sense you just have to follow Jesus?

If not, pray that you do, that following Jesus becomes not a lifestyle choice, like a new diet, but something much deeper, compelling.