Sermon: **“Push the boat out further to the deep water”** (Luke 5.4)

Nick Thomas, 45, tried to swim the English Channel but drowned less than one mile short.

Water is scary – always has been. So we get programmes like Piha Rescue, and films like Jaws.

Humans try to control water but we still get floods, drownings (average of over 100 in NZ), leaks, erosion. eg Dunwich lost to the sea in the Middle Ages.

Jews were especially scared of water and crossing water marked several important events, inc Red Sea & River Jordan. Remember also Jesus calming the storm, and walking on water?

TEXT - fishermen could have been reluctant – what would Jesus know? Hadn’t they been out all night?

Somehow they agreed and what a result!

Gospel writer wants us to know that Jesus (and thus God) is in control, even of terrifying water.

This is not a call to pray hard before fishing, though some of course do so.

TEXT – is a call to go into what scares us, beyond our own control. What might this mean in practice?

For some it might mean exploration of theology – trying to understand who God is, not tying self down to ideas learnt at Sunday School. I did this 2 years ago trying to see how early church came to believe that Jesus was God. And now I am trying to see how Jews came to monotheism from a world of polytheism.

For others it might mean service for God in the community – it is easy to serve God in the Church, the community can be scary, with folk who do not share God-like values, who might oppose God, and who might not attend church through our efforts.

For others yet it might mean embracing a new lifestyle – recycling, reducing energy use, growing food, living a less materialistic life. Easy to say, hard to practice.

In each case there is a risk, for setting off means allowing self to be changed – you will not be the same person, others and yourself might be upset at the results.

This is what happened to the disciples. Theology changed, they found opposition in their communities and began to live differently together. I wonder how many friends and family they lost…

TEXT. This is God’s call to us. Not control but a losing of control and in that abandonment finding true life.