



FISHING WITH A PURPOSE. A THREE DAY DEVOTIONAL

LESSONS FROM THE WATER



@NORTHGAFISHERMAN

DAY 1

“CAST OVER THERE”

LUKE 5:4 (NIV)

4 WHEN HE HAD FINISHED SPEAKING,
HE SAID TO SIMON, “PUT OUT
INTO **DEEP WATER**,
AND LET DOWN THE NETS FOR **A CATCH**.”



CAUGHT ON LAKE LANIER JUNE 4 2021

I remember being amazed by my home lake as a boy. At 33,000 acres across five counties, Lake Lanier was like the ocean to someone like me. I grew up fishing golf course ponds where I would catch bass the second the bait hit the water. Lake Lanier **changed** that quickly. I will never forget my first spring of kayak fishing on Lake Lanier. I went from catching 20-30 on the pond to multiple SKUNKS. I thought I knew how to fish but this beautiful lake taught me otherwise.

Eventually, I did research online and found a great guide with years of experience. That trip changed my life forever. I had never been on a bass boat with such incredible equipment, and most importantly an angler who knew the Lake. I will be honest with you, the day started a little slow. The **goal** was to get on a topwater bite period. With frustration building up, I asked the question; “so when are we gonna throw some finesse baits or a wacky rig“?

He looked at me, grinned, and said “were not, this is the right time of the year, and once we get a little more sun and wind, it will be on“

Moments later, God graced us with some sunlight and our guide pointed his finger to a wind-blown point and said “Throw that spook over there now“. That's when I landed the spotted bass you see in the picture above. It was on for the rest of the day.

Could you imagine Simon (Peter) in the scene described in Luke 5? Peter, a fisherman by trade let this carpenter named Jesus teach the crowd from his boat. He had been working all night trying to catch fish with his net with no success. Now, this carpenter was telling him to go out deep and try again.

Can you feel the frustration? This man dares to tell a professional fisherman where to cast his net after hours and hours of failure.

“I worked all night and I’m tired.”

· “I know a lot more about fishing than a carpenter does.”

· “The best fishing is at night, not in the daytime.”

· “We already washed our nets.”

· “Jesus may know religion, but He doesn’t know fishing.”

However, Peter listened and cast one more time, not knowing that he had the perfect guide. The chapter continues on to describe that Peter and his crew caught so many fish the nets began to break and had to call for help. That is the beauty of having the right guide on the water and in life. When it's on, it's on.

Reflection:

- Is there something in your life right now that you feel you are failing at? This could be at home with your family, at work, or internally. Who have you talked to about it? Have you tried a moment of prayer with Jesus and asked the Lord for His direction?
- Is there something you think Christ is calling you to try again but with His approach and direction? Many times He is trying to guide us and instruct us, but we are so tired from trying and failing that we miss his voice.
- Have you ever considered that you may be one more cast away from success as a believer? Cast one more time. Peter would have never known had he never trusted the carpenter on his boat.

DAY 2

ABOUT AN HOUR AWAY

PSALM 145:18 (NIV)

18 THE LORD IS NEAR TO ALL WHO CALL
ON HIM, TO ALL WHO CALL ON HIM IN TRUTH.



CAUGHT ON THE OCMULGEE RIVER JULY 4 2022

My parents may have come here from Mexico in the late 1980s, but I'm a Georgia boy. I was born and raised here. I mentioned in Day 1 that I spent most of my time fishing for bass out of golf course ponds. My dream was to grow up and be a professional fisherman, but we did not have the resources to buy a boat, and kayak fishing didn't exist. More **importantly**, I was afraid to leave the comfort of the ponds. I didn't want to fail or look foolish. Little did I know that I was missing out. The state of Georgia is brimming with reservoirs and beautiful rivers. It also has over ten species of bass in those rivers. Out of all of these, the shoal bass is my absolute favorite. Shoal bass are beautiful but mean. They roam the shoals of our rivers and put up an incredible fight in fast water. My favorite thing about them? They are only about an **hour** away. These amazing fish only exist in very specific bodies of water, and I had no idea they were in my backyard and so close by. In 2022 I finally took a chance and drove out with some friends and caught my first shoal bass. It was an amazing experience.

Psalm 145 talks about proximity. The word of God is his promise and this promise states that God is near to us if we call on him. I can't tell you how many times I have prayed for God to be close to me when in reality He was already **waiting** for me. I want to remind you of something right now. No matter what you are going through in this life, your heavenly father is near. All you need to do is call on Him and trust that He hears you. So many times we fear the idea of drawing near to a holy and perfect God so we keep God at a comfortable distance. I want to challenge you today. Take time to draw nearer to Him. Call out to him and bring him your troubles big and small. Remember all I had to do to catch the fish of a

lifetime was to make the drive to a body of water that was already there, waiting for me. Jesus already did all of the work to close the gap between us and God, all you have to do is call. He is waiting for you.

Reflection:

- Do you feel far from God right now? Why? Is it because of a failure or sin in your life? It does not matter. Call out to Him and He will be there.
- Remember, Christ died and was resurrected to defeat sin. Romans 8:35 says it clearly. Nothing can separate us from our Father. Never forget that God is close to you because of the love of Christ.
- Take the time to pray today and ask God to remind you that He is near. Take time to reflect on how you felt at the end of the day and when and where you felt His presence most.

DAY 3

IF YOU AINT SCOPIN, YOUR'E HOPIN

PSALM 4:1-3 (NIV)

SIGNS FOR MOSES

4 MOSES ANSWERED, "WHAT IF THEY DO NOT BELIEVE ME OR LISTEN TO ME AND SAY, 'THE LORD DID NOT APPEAR TO YOU?'"

2 THEN THE LORD SAID TO HIM,

"WHAT IS THAT IN YOUR HAND?" "A STAFF," HE REPLIED. 3 THE LORD SAID, "THROW IT ON THE GROUND."

MOSES THREW IT ON THE GROUND AND IT BECAME A SNAKE, AND HE RAN FROM IT.



CAUGHT ON LAKE SEMINOLE FEBRUARY 12 2023

We've all heard the terms Livescope, Active Target, or even video game fishin'. This innovative technology was introduced in 2018. Since then, it has helped catch many fish, changed the development of baits, and revolutionized the fishing industry. Whether you like it or not, it's been tremendously impactful. Some people even say it is changing the behavior of bass in our fisheries.

I've already shared my struggles with you in the previous sections. Due to my struggles on the water, I did what a lot of people have done. I bought myself a Lowrance unit with Active Target. I was just naive enough to think this would take me to the next level. I was wrong. After installing the unit the rest of the year was a roller coaster of emotions on the water. I struggled so badly that I gave my wife a call one day and could barely hold back tears. I told her that maybe fishing just wasn't for me. How could I still be so bad at fishing?

That's when I started doing my research on anglers that were successfully using this technology. Guess what I found out? They were already hammers. They were proficient in understanding where fish were, and how they behaved, and understood seasonal patterns and mapping on another level. In other words, I should have worked on all of those things first. I had everything I needed from the beginning.

Most of us are familiar with the story of Moses. In these particular verses, God is calling Moses to lead the people of Israel, and immediately Moses gives God multiple excuses. However, God responds by saying "You see that shepherd staff in your hands? Throw it on the ground". The staff then transformed in the presence of God. This was a way for God to show Moses that he had exactly what he needed in his hands.

All Moses had to do was let God use it. I want you to think about this. God took an old, smelly, shepherd's stick and used it for his glory. He went on to use that old staff eight times to show his power. So many times we claim need more money, more resources, more time, and so on to execute God's plan in our lives, but I want to challenge you with this. What do you have now that you can give to God for Him to use? Are you a parent? Are you in a leadership position at work? Do you have some time to serve at your local church or a non-profit? Give these things to God fully and allow watch Him miraculously transform your daily living.

Reflection

- God calls all of us to live for Him and like Moses, we give him excuses as to why we can't. What excuses are you using right now that are stopping you from fully living for God?
- Take time to pray today. Ask God to use you just like He used Moses. You never know what he has planned for you.
- I never thought I would be sitting here writing a devotional out of my fishing experiences. Can you think of a hobby or activity in your life that God could use to impact people around you?