

They dropped their nets and they followed him.

That's the story we heard a few weeks ago.
Jesus walking down the beach and saying,
"follow me,
and I'll teach you to fish for people."

And they did.
Peter and Andrew and all the rest.
They left everything and they followed him.

And it worked!
A few miles down the road:
demons' gone!
Woman healed!
Miracles all around!

They left everything:
families,
jobs,
whatever security they had in this world,
they turned our back on all that.
And just little while later,
they have their proof that it was worth it!

But then Jesus goes back to the desert.

Miracle after miracle,
time after time,
and he's always going back to the desert to pray.

Dove comes down,
voice from heaven,
and he heads straight for the desert.

Demons' gone,
woman healed,
and he heads straight for the desert.

And there's Peter,
tapping on his shoulder,
wondering what's next.

"Lord, we're so glad you healed those people.
You made amazing things happen.
And there are a lot more people to heal.
So many people we can show your power to.

Come on back from the desert Jesus.
Everyone's waiting."

And Jesus gets up
and he walks in the opposite direction,
walks away from before
and into what's next.

Calling back over his shoulder to Peter,
"Come on,
let's go,
let's go to the next place,
so I can proclaim the kingdom there.
That's what I came to do."

And Peter is left wondering.
Wondering yet again,
if it was all worth it.
If maybe he shouldn't go back
and see if his net is still laying there on the beach.

Peter and all the rest,
they're happy when Jesus is strong.
When Jesus is miraculous.

That's where they want to stop.
That's what they want to see.

Because when Jesus is strong and miraculous,
then that means that they're in for something good.

But Jesus doesn't care one whit
about being strong or miraculous.
Jesus cares about the kingdom.
Jesus cares about making sure
that everyone knows that the kingdom is real;
the kingdom is here;
the kingdom is just waiting to bust out
of every tomb that was shut and sealed.

We forget that, sometimes.
We forget what the miracles were all about,
what Jesus was all about.

Jesus wasn't the Son of God
because he could work miracles
or raise the dead
or cast out demons.

Jesus was the Son of God
because he could bring the kingdom.

And every miracle we see,
every demon that's gone,
every bit of new life;
that's just one more sign of the kingdom.
That's just one more way
that Jesus is telling folks the truth
about the way things are.

We are just like Peter.

Looking at Jesus and saying:

“why did you come out here to the desert?

Nobody can see you be big and powerful out here!”

Why can't you just keep healing?

Why do you have to keep talking about the kingdom?

Why do you have to keep talking about dying and rising again?

There's a kingdom all around.
There's a kingdom in your heart.

And that kingdom of God
is driving out every demon that ever tried to possess you.

That kingdom of God
is healing every bit of sick
that ever tried to make you die.

But we don't want the kingdom.

We want the miracle.
We want the proof.

But God never promised us any proof.

God only promised
that we would be made to live

again and again.

for children

When Jesus healed, it was his way of telling people about how much God loved them.

When you share with your sister or brother, it's one way of telling them how much you love them. When your dad cooks you dinner, that's part of how they tell you they love you

Jesus had a job to do. And his friends tried to help him do it.

Sometimes his friends would say, "Come on Jesus, let's go play." And Jesus would say, "No, I've got work to do. We can't play right now, but you can help me do my job."

Jesus had a job to do.

Do you know what Jesus' job was?

Jesus' job was to tell the WHOLE WORLD about how much God loved them. Jesus told his friends how much God loved them. Jesus told his family how much God loved them. And Jesus even told strangers about how much God loved them. That was his job. And he was really good at it.

Jesus did lots of different things to help folks know about God's love. He healed people, made 'em feel better. He talked to them. And he ate meals with them, even when nobody else would.

Well, it was Jesus job to tell them how much God loved them. But that's our job too! We get to tell everybody about how much God loves them and cares for them.

What are some things we can do to show people that God loves them?