

April 17, 2024

Enthusiastic. Strong-willed. Impulsive. Brash. Big-hearted and big mouthed. Sometimes foul-mouthed. A manly man and a hard worker. Does this describe anyone you know?

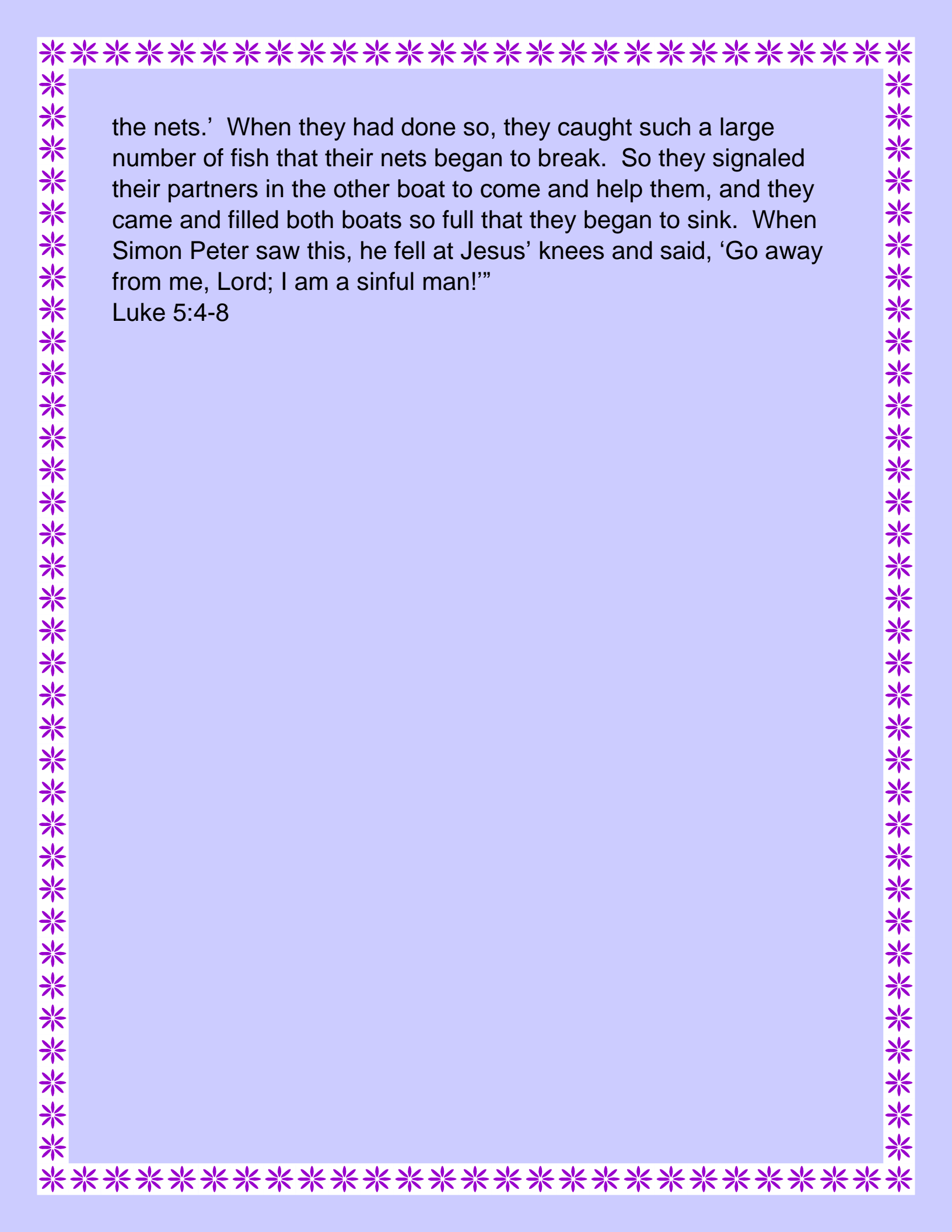
Simon Peter (Cephas) was definitely all of those things and yet Jesus chose him to be His disciple probably because of those very character traits. Jesus knew that Peter would be a natural leader for Him. Jesus even called Peter “The Rock” so Dwayne Johnson isn’t the original one! 😊 Jesus promised that Peter would be the one who established Jesus’ Church and through him even the gentiles (you and I) would come to Christ.

Simon Peter was from Bethsaida but lived in Capernaum, both of which were coastal cities, which fit him well because he was a fisherman. He had a great fishing business with the brothers James and John, and his own brother Andrew introduced him to Jesus. Peter proclaimed Jesus as “the Christ, the Son of the living God once he met Him. (Matthew 16:16-17). He was part of Jesus’ inner circle and was present at Jesus’ Transfiguration. Peter vehemently loved Jesus and was always quick to defend Him and be with Him. One time he saw Jesus walking on the water towards his fishing boat when he and the other disciples were going onto another shoreline. Peter called out to Jesus and asked Him to “bid me to come to you on the water”. So Jesus told Peter to come on over and Peter got out of the boat and started walking towards Jesus. But once Peter saw the wind and the waves, he panicked and began sinking. He cried out for Jesus to save him and Jesus took his hand and said, “Your faith is small.” (Matthew 14:29-33). And we all know the story of Peter taking the Roman’s sword to cut off his ear when a group of them came to

arrest Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. Later, because he was selfishly afraid for his life, he denied even knowing Jesus. But Jesus forgave him because that is what Jesus does when we are truly repentant. Peter was ashamed of himself for denying to know Jesus and was truly remorseful for it.

Peter became a great speaker for Jesus and did many miracles. On the day of Pentecost, (a festival celebrating the Feast of Weeks-50 days after Passover, and the day that the Holy Spirit came over the 12 in the Upper Room.), Peter was the main speaker to a huge crowd in Jerusalem and about 3,000 people came to believe in Jesus that day. Peter understood that anyone could come to believe in Jesus and he was a strong defender of all gentiles in that they didn't have to conform to the Jewish laws. Peter wrote the epistles 1 and 2 Peter and later he died a martyr's death for his belief. It is said that Peter was crucified upside down while he was in the city of Rome.

We can learn a lot from impulsive and brash Peter. He loved Jesus with everything in him and was loyal to the very end of his life. He wasn't afraid to tell people all about His Lord and convince them that we all need the Savior in our lives. Just like Peter we can be courageous in following Jesus. Just like Peter we can fail Jesus but He is willing to forgive and restore us to Him. Just like Peter we can become learning students of our Lord and Savior, who is always patient with us. Just like Peter, Jesus sees all of us as He intends us to be. Jesus uses us just as we are – ordinary and sometimes contrary and ornery people – to tell others all about who He is and save their souls for the sake of His kingdom. “Put out into deep water, and let down your nets for a catch. Simon answered, ‘Master, we’ve worked hard all night and haven’t caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down

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the nets.’ When they had done so, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break. So they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them, and they came and filled both boats so full that they began to sink. When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus’ knees and said, ‘Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!’”

Luke 5:4-8