

## REV. DR. TALMAGE.

### THE BROOKLYN DIVINE'S SUNDAY SERMON.

Subject: "Mend the Nets."

TEXT: "James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets."—Matthew iv., 21.

"I go a-fishing," cried Simon Peter to his comrades, and the most of the apostles had hands laid from fishing tackle. The fisheries of the world have always attracted attention. In the third century the queen of Egypt had for pin money four hundred and seventy thousand dollars, received from the fisheries of Lake Moeris. And if the time should ever come when the immensity of the world's population could not be fed by the vegetables and fruits of the land, the sea has an amount of animal life that would feed all the populations of the earth, and fatten them with a food that by its phosphorus would make a generation brainy and intellectual beyond anything that the world has ever imagined. My text takes us among the Galilean fishermen. One day, Walter Scott, while hunting in an old drawer, found among some old fishing tackle the manuscript of his immortal book "Waverley," which he had put away there as of no worth, and who knows but that to-day we may find some unknown wealth of thought while looking at the fishing tackle in the text?

It is not a good day for fishing, and three men are in the boat repairing the broken fishing-nets. If you are fishing with a hook and line and the fish will not bite it is a good time to put the angler's apparatus into better condition. Perhaps the last fish you hauled in was so large that something snapped. Or if you were fishing with a net there was a mighty floundering of the scales, or an exposed nail on the side of the boat which broke some of the threads and let part or all of the captives of the deep escape into their natural element. And hardly anything is more provoking than to nearly land a score or a hundred of trophies from the deep and when you are in the full glee of hauling in the spotted treasures through some imperfection of the net they splash back into the water.

This is too much of a trial of patience for most fishermen to endure, and many a man ordinarily correct of speech in such circumstances comes to an intensity of utterance unjustifiable. Therefore no good fisherman considers the time wasted that is spent in mending his net. Now the Bible again and again represents Christian workers as fishermen of men, and we are all sweeping through the sea of humanity some kind of a net. Indeed, there have been enough nets out and enough fishermen busy to have landed the whole human race in the kingdom of God long before this. What is the matter? The Gospel is all right, and it has been a good time for catching souls for thousands of years. Why, then, the failures? The trouble is with the nets, and most of them need to be mended. I propose to show you what is the matter with most of the nets and how to mend them. In the text old Zebedee and his two boys, James and John, were doing a good thing when they sat in the boat mending their nets.

The trouble with many of our nets is that the meshes are too large. If a fish can get his gills and half his body through the network, he tears and rends and works his way out and leaves the place through which he quivered a tangle of broken threads. The Bible weaves faith and works right together, the law and the Gospel, righteousness and forgiveness. Some of our nets have meshes so wide that the sinner floats in and out and is not at any moment caught for the heavenly landing. In our desire to make everything so easy, we relax, we loosen, we widen. We let men after they are once in the Gospel net escape into the world and go into indulgences and swim all around Galilee, from north side to south side and from east side to west side, expecting that they will come back again. We ought to make it easy for them to get into the kingdom of God, and as far as we can, make it impossible for them to get out.

The poor advice nowadays to many is: "Go and do just as you did before, you were captured for God on heaven. The net was not intended to be any restraint or any hindrance. What you did before you were a Christian, do now. Go to all styles of amusement, read all the styles of books, engage in all the styles of behavior as before you were converted." And so through these meshes of permission and laxity they wriggle out through this opening and that opening, tearing the net as they go, and soon all the souls that we expected to land in heaven before we knew it are back in the deep sea of the world. Oh, when we go a-Gospel fishing let us make it as easy as possible for souls to get in, and as hard as possible to get out.

There should be no rivalry between churches. Each one does a work peculiar to itself. There should be no rivalry between ministers. God never repeats Himself, and He never makes two ministers alike, and each one has a work that no other man in the universe can accomplish. If fishermen are wise, they will not allow their nets to entangle, or if they accidentally get inter-twined, the work of extrication should be kindly and gently conducted. What a glad spectacle for men and angels when on our recent dedication day ministers of all denominations stood on this platform and wished for each other the widest prosperity and usefulness, but there are cities in this country where there is now going on an awful rivalry between the churches and the fishing nets. Indeed, all over Christendom at this time there is a great war going on between fishermen, ministers against ministers.

Now I have noticed a man cannot fish and fight at the same time. He either neglects his net or his musket. It is amazing how much time some of the fishermen have to look after other fishermen. It is more than I can do to take care of my own net. You see the wind is just right, and it is such a good time for fishing, and the fish are coming in so rapidly that I have to keep my eye and hand busy. There are about two hundred million souls wanting to get into the kingdom of God, and it will require all the nets and all the boats and all the fishermen of Christendom to safely land them.

Oh, brethren of ministry! Let us spend our time in fishing instead of fighting. But if I angrily jerk my net across your net, and you jerk your net angrily across mine, we will soon have two broken nets and no fish. The French revolution nearly destroyed the French fisheries, and ecclesiastical war is the worst thing possible while hauling souls into the kingdom. I had hoped that the millennium was about to dawn, but the lion is yet too fond of the lamb. My friends, I notice in the text that James, the son of Zebedee, and John, his brother, were busy not mending somebody else's nets but mending their own nets, and I rather think that we who are engaged in Christian work in this latter part of the nineteenth century will require all our spare time to mend our own nets. God help us in the important duty!

In this work of reparation we need to put into the nets more threads of common sense. When we can present religion as a great practicality we will catch a hundred souls where now we catch none. Present religion as an intellectual and we will fall. Out in the fisheries there are set across the

waters what are called gill nets, and the fish put their heads through the meshes and then cannot withdraw them because they are caught by the gills. But gill nets cannot be of any service in religious work. Men are never caught for the truth by their heads; it is by the heart or not at all. No argument ever saved a man, and no keen analysis ever brought a man into the kingdom of God. Heart work, not head work. Away with your gill nets! Sympathy, helpfulness, consolation, love, are the names of some of the threads that we need to weave in our Gospel nets when we are mending them.

Again, in mending our nets we need also to put in the threads of faith and tear out all the tangled meshes of unbelief. Our work is successful according to our faith. The man who believes in only half a Bible, or the Bible in spots; the man who thinks he cannot persuade others; the man who halts, doubting about this and about that, will be a failure in Christian work. Show me the man who rather thinks that the garden of Eden may have been an allegory, and is not quite certain but that there may be another chance after death, and does not know whether or not the Bible is inspired, and I tell you that man for soul saving is a poor stick. Faith in God and in Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost, and the absolute necessity of a regenerated heart in order to see God in peace, is one thread you must have in your mended net or you will never be a successful fisher for men. Why, how can you doubt?

The hundreds of millions of men and women now standing in the church on earth, and the hundreds of millions in heaven, attest the power of the Gospel to save. With more than a certainty of a mathematical demonstration, let us start out to redeem all nations. The rottenest thread you are to tear out of your net is unbelief, and the most important thread you are to put in it is faith. Faith in God, triumphant faith, everlasting faith. If you cannot trust the infinite, the holy, the omnipotent Jehovah, who can you trust?

Oh, this important work of mending our nets! If we could get our nets right we would accomplish more in soul-saving in the next year than we have in the last twenty years. But where shall we get them mended? Just where the old Zebedee and his two boys mended their nets—where you are. "James, why don't you put your net in Galilee, or hoist your sail and land at Capernaum or Tiberias or Gurbura, and sail on the bank near your net? John, why don't you go ashore and mend your net? No, they sat on the quays of the boat, or at the prow of the boat, and they took up the thread and the needle, and the pieces and the wooden blocks, and went to work: sewing, sewing; tying, tying; weaving, weaving; pointing, pointing, until the net mended, they pushed it into the sea and drew it up and hoist sail, and the catamaran went through and the shoals of fish, some of the dearest of which we had for breakfast one morning while we were en route on the beach of beautiful Galilee. James and John had no time to go ashore. They were not fishing for fun, as you and I do in summer time. It was their livelihood and that of their families. They mended their nets when they were in the ship.

"Oh," says some one, "I mean to get my net mended, and I will go down to the public library, and I will see what the scientists say about evolution and about the survival of the fittest," and I will read up what the theologians say about advanced thought. I will leave the ship awhile, and I will go ashore and stay there until my net is mended. Do that, my brother, and you will have no net left. Instead of their helping you mend your net, they will steal the pieces that remain. Better stay in the Gospel boat, where you have all the means for mending your net. What are they, do you ask? I answer all you need you have where you are, namely, a Bible and a place to pray. The more you study evolution, and adopt what is called advanced thought, the bigger fool you will be. Stay in the ship and mend your net. That is where James the son of Zebedee and John his brother staid. That is where all who get their nets mended stay.

These dear brethren of all denominations, afflicted with theological figlets, had better go to mending nets instead of breaking them. Before they break up the old religion and try to foist on us a new religion let them go through some great sacrifice for God and will prove them worthy for such a work, asking the advice of Talleyrand to a man who wanted to upset the religion of Jesus Christ and start a new one, when he said: "Go and be crucified and then raise yourself from the grave the third day." Those who propose to mend their nets by secular skeptical books are just like a man who has just one week for fishing, and six of the days he spends in reading Isaac Walton's "Complete Angler," and Wheatley's "Rod and Line," and Scott's "Fishing in Northern Waters," and Pullman's "Vade Mecum of Fly Fishing for Trout," and then on Saturday morning, his last day out, goes to the river to ply his art, but that day the fish will not bite, and late on Saturday night he goes home with empty basket and a disappointed heart.

Meanwhile a man who never saw a big library in all his life, has that week caught with an old fishing tackle, enough to supply his own table and the table of all his neighbors, and enough to salt down in barrels for the long winter that will soon come in. Alas! Alas! If, when the Saturday night of our life drops on us it shall be found that we have spent our time in the libraries of worldly philosophy, trying to mend our nets, and we have only a few souls to report as brought to God through our instrumentality, while some humble Gospel fisherman, his library made up of a Bible and an almanac, shall come home laden with the results, his trophies the souls within fifteen miles of his log cabin meeting house.

In the time of great disturbances in Naples in 1649 Massaniello, a bare footed fishing boy, dropped his fishing rod, and by strange magnetism took command of that city of six hundred thousand souls. He took off his fishing jacket and put on a robe of gold in the presence of howling mobs. He put his hand on his hip as a signal, and they were rent. He waved his hand away from him, and they retired to their homes. Armies passed in review before him. He became the nation's idol. The rapid rise and complete supremacy of that young fisherman, Massaniello, has no parallel in all history. But something equal to that and better than that is an everyday occurrence in heaven.

God takes some of those, who in this world were fishers of men, and who toiled very humbly, but because of the way they mended their nets and employed their nets after they were mended, and suddenly hoists them and robes them and makes them rulers over cities, and He marches armies of saved ones before them in review, Massaniellos unnumbered on earth, but radiated in heaven. The fisher boy of Naples soon lost his power, but those people of God who kept their nets mended and rightly swung them shall never lose their exalted place, but shall reign forever and ever. Keep that reward in sight.

But do not spend your time fishing with hook and line. Why did not James, the son of Zebedee, sit on the wharf at Cana, his feet hanging over the lake and with a long pole and a worm on the hook dipped into the wave, wait for some mullet to swim up and be caught? Why did not Zebedee spend his afternoon trying to catch one eel? No; that work was too slow. These men were not mending a hook and line; they were mending their nets. So let the church of God not be content with having here one soul and next month another soul brought into

the kingdom. Sweep all the seas with nets—scoop nets, seine nets, drag nets, all encompassing nets—and take the treasures in by hundreds and thousands and millions, and nations be born in a day, and the hemispheres quake with the tread of a ransoming God. Do you know what will be the two most tremendous hours in our heavenly existence? Among the quadrillions of ages which shall roll on, what two occasions will be to us the greatest?

The day of our arrival there will be to us one of the two greatest. The second greatest, I think, will be the day when we shall have put in parallel lines before us what Christ did for us and what we did for Christ—the one so great, the other so little. That will be the only embarrassment in heaven. My Lord and my God! What will we do and what will we say when on one side are placed the Saviour's great sacrifices for us and our small sacrifices for Him—His exile, His humiliation, His agonies on one hand, and our poor weak, insufficient sacrifices on the other? To make the contrast less overwhelming, let us quickly mend our nets and like the Galilean fishermen may we be divinely helped to cast them on the right side of the ship.

#### PEASIE OF THOUGHT.

Slang is the warts on language.

A broken silence is never repaired.

Silence is less injurious than a weak reply.

Energy is the sand in the craw of enterprise.

Man is cold as ice to truth; but he is as are to falsehood.

A little woman can tell just as big lie as a big woman can.

You can't climb a telegraph pole by skinning up a fence post.

Dis-trust of yourself really means consciousness of wrong.

Shallow men believe in luck; strong men believe in cause and effect.

Your bank account, unlike yourself, never gets tight by getting full.

Every life is a center, and all things are made for it as if there were no other.

Tie a coward's hand behind him and you give him an additional reason to boast.

Nothing but a mule occupies less space than his hind foot and makes less noise.

The word "friend" has been so abused as to remind one of the word "washlady."

There are no good men, but some are so much better than others that they are entitled to credit.

#### He Got the Job.

Farmer Crane, who lives over on the town line, has some very unique methods of examining the men who apply to him from time to time for work.

Last evening a tall, big-boned fellow, in his shirt sleeves, asked Crane if he had any work to do.

"I don't know," said the farmer, "can you 'tend horses?"

"Yes, indeed; I've worked about horses all my life."

"Come around here to the pump," said Crane, and he led the way to a common sucker-rod pump near the barn. Going inside, he got a long, narrow pitcher, and placed it under the spout. "There," said he, "pump that pitcher full of water." The big-boned fellow complied, carefully pumping the pitcher full without spilling a single drop.

"That'll do," said Crane. "Go inside and get ready for supper; I'll give you a job in the morning."

About a week later the big-boned fellow asked Crane what pumping the pitcher full of water had to do with his getting a job.

"Well, I'll just tell you. This is mighty dry weather, and water is getting scarce. You must have thought that far, for you didn't spill any water. If you hadn't pumped hard the water would have been spilled: and if you had pumped too hard the water would have gone over the pitcher. Now, the way I argue is this: If a fellow don't pump hard enough, he won't work hard enough. If he pumps too hard, he'll work too hard for a little while, and I don't want either kind to work for me. You pumped exactly right, and you got a job."—[Toledo Blade.

#### After a Proposal.

He—You weep, mademoiselle; have I offended you?

She—Oh, no, my dear; these are tears of joy. But yesterday morning mamma said to me: "You are so silly that not even an imbecile would marry you," and now, behold, you have asked me for my hand.

An electrician says that a very high speed on electric roads will never be practicable on account of the impossibility of stopping the trains quickly.

#### Another Consumption Cure.

Dr. Koch's treatment for the cure of consumption is exciting the deepest interest throughout the civilized world, and is already being tried in the United States with hopeful results. It will be remembered that Doctor Koch, though a man of known scientific caution, is confident that, in its earlier stage, the disease can be cured by his method.

Meanwhile, and for several years, Doctor Roussel, of Paris, has been experimenting with another mode of treatment. Doctor Koch seeks to kill the microbes by destroying the material that feeds them. Doctor Roussel aims to kill the microbes directly. Both employ hypodermic injections. Koch uses a fluid peculiarly compounded. Roussel uses a well-known antiseptic eucalyptol, mixed with sterilized olive-oil.

The eucalyptol is carried everywhere with the blood, reaching every tissue, and is finally eliminated by the lungs, kidneys and sweat-glands. It is believed by Dr. Roussel to be fatal to the microbe of consumption. The oil nourishes the system.

Doctor Roussel regards the usual consumptive symptoms—suppuration, expectoration, high temperature, and night sweats—as nature's efforts to get rid of the microbes, and holds that the remedy should not aim to check these symptoms, but to attack the microbes themselves. At the same time he does not lose sight of the fact that attention should be paid to general hygiene, ventilation, sunlight and sanitary clothing. The more fully to test the efficacy of his treatment, he made no changes in the surroundings of his patients, or in their mode of life.

His method requires the injections to be continued several months, to make sure that the eucalyptol pervades every tissue of the body. One of the earliest patients treated was sent to him by the eminent Doctor Fauvel.

The patient's right lung was affected, and the expectorations contained numerous microbes of consumption. In one year the microbes had all disappeared, the man's weight had increased, and he was able to return to work. He has continued well for six years. Many physicians have examined the case.

In 1888 Doctor Roussel brought eighteen consumptives before the Society of Practical Medicine. A year later fifteen of the same persons were brought before the society again for re-examination. All appeared to be cured or greatly improved. In thirty other cases Doctor Roussel had similar examinations made by eminent experts, with similar results.—*Youth's Companion.*



#### ONE ENJOYS

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as soon as she had eaten it. Two bottles of your August Flower have cured her, after many doctors failed. She can now eat anything, and enjoy it; and as for Dyspepsia, she does not know that she ever had it."



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