

Gleaning In The Fields Of Light

The Shore Where Jesus Stands Waiting

By Ken Woodley

The crescent moon was brilliantly visible in the low horizon early Tuesday morning, more than an hour before dawn. The perspective was unlike I'd ever seen before. The shining sliver of moon resembled a boat floating just above, and in the middle of, the road in front of our house.

As I walked our dog, Pugsley, in the freezing darkness, the moon seemed to be lighting the way. Giving me direction and encouragement. Offering a path.

I could not help but think about Jesus.

What an astonishing "light" it must have been to encounter Jesus in person.

Not exactly like the crescent moon I saw this week, but just as real.

This must have been a light that one felt inside. Surely there was a "lightness" about Jesus that was acutely perceptible to those of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke:

*"Land of Zebulun and Naphtali,
on the road by the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles—
the people who sat in darkness
have seen a great light,
and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death
light has dawned."*

What a light. We get a clue to its brightness through the actions of the two brothers, Simon and Andrew, Jesus encountered at the beginning of his ministry. Their lives depended on the ability to catch enough fish, and then sell them, to make ends meet.

Fishing was all they knew. The Sea of Galilee was full of fishing boats. Boats floating in darkness. Fishermen hearing, not seeing, the lapping waves on the sides of their fishing boats.

That is the world that Peter and Simon knew—fishing in the darkness. Casting their nets when the sun was gone because that is when fishing was done on the Sea of Galilee. At night.

What a sight it must have been on nights when the moon was blooming into fullness, its light dancing across the water like words of love whispered in the darkness.

But then Peter and Andrew saw Jesus and they experienced a different kind of light altogether.

What else could have led them—without warning, thought, debate, or consideration for the consequences—to abandon their careers and all hope of any means to assure their daily bread?

They simply dropped their nets. Left their boat on the shoreline. And followed Jesus.

Just like that.

“Follow me,” Jesus told them, “and I will make you fish for people.”

“Immediately,” the Gospel of Matthew tells us, “they left their nets and followed him.”

What a light they must have felt exuding from the spirit of Jesus. They could feel it within the look in his eyes, hear it in the sound of his voice. It was just *there*. This light simply *was*.

A light that did not rise and did not set.

A light the clouds could do nothing to obscure.

A light that makes the shadows flee from the region of death.

And I thank God for those two men. I owe those simple fishermen my life.

Had they not dropped their nets and followed Jesus, I might never have felt this light myself. I might still be sitting in darkness, waiting in Zebulun and Naphtali. And so might you.

In making them fishers of people, Jesus enabled Peter and Andrew—and others who followed him and spread his Good News of God’s love and grace—to catch us gently in their nets and bring us to the shore where Jesus stands, waiting.

Lighting the way.