

fleshless, would you not say that this one is already in the kingdom of heaven where there is neither food nor drink, even though heaven appears to be a long way off?

16-20. Now as He walked by the sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after Me, and I will make you to become fishers of men. And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed Him. And when He had gone a little farther thence, He saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the boat mending their nets. And straightway He called them: and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants, and went after Him. Peter and Andrew were disciples of John the Forerunner; but when they saw John bear witness to Jesus, they went to Jesus. Then when John was put into prison, they became sorrowful and went back again to their own trade. Therefore Christ called them a second time and this second calling is the one here described.¹³ See how they supported themselves by honest toil, not by dishonesty; such were they who were worthy to become Christ's first disciples. They immediately put down what was in their hands and followed Him. For one should not procrastinate, but follow at once. After Peter and Andrew, the Lord then draws James and John into His net. Although they too were poor, they nonetheless supported their father in his old age. But they left their father, not because it is good to leave one's father, but because he was about to hinder them from following Christ. If you, O reader, are likewise hindered by your parents, leave them and run towards the good. It appears that Zebedee did not believe; but his wife, the mother of the apostles, believed and followed,¹⁴ perhaps after Zebedee had died. Know this as well, that Christ first calls for action and deeds, and then for vision of the divine. For Peter signifies action because he is the most fervent and leaps out in front of the others. Such is the nature of action. But John signifies vision of the divine, for John is the most filled with theology.

¹³ John 1:35-42 describes the first calling.

¹⁴ See Mt. 20:20.

21-22. And they went into Capernaum; and straightway on the sabbath day He entered into the synagogue, and taught. And they were astonished at His teaching: for He taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes. Where were they coming from when they entered into Capernaum? From Nazareth. On the sabbath day the Jews would gather in the synagogue to read the Scriptures, and it was then that Christ also entered the synagogue and taught. For indeed the law commanded rest on the sabbath for this very reason, that men would have time for reading of the Scriptures when they gathered together. The Lord would rebuke when He taught, and not flatter as did the Pharisees. For He exhorted them to do good, and warned them of the punishment awaiting the disobedient.

23-28. And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out, saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with Thee, Thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art Thou come to destroy us? I know Thee Who Thou art, the Holy One of God. And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. And when the unclean spirit had torn him, and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him. And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? What new teaching is this? For with authority commandeth He even the unclean spirits, and they do obey Him. And immediately His fame spread abroad throughout all the region round about Galilee. The evil spirits are called unclean because they wickedly take pleasure in every kind of shameful deed. Moreover, the demon considers his departure from the man to be his own destruction; for the demons are without pity and believe that they suffer ill if they are not permitted to do evil to men. Also, because they love the flesh and are accustomed to feeding upon carnal vapors, they are starved when they do not dwell within a body. This is why the Lord says that the demons come out of a man by fasting.¹⁵ The foul demon did not say, "Thou art holy," for there were many prophets who were also holy. Instead he said, "The Holy One," with the article; that is, He Who alone and by definition is Holy. But Christ shut his mouth in order to teach us that even if the demons speak

¹⁵ Mk. 9:29