



“...a net...cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind.” Matthew 13:47

## Volume XXXIII

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**READY NOW**—In the city of Liverpool, not many years ago, on a cold, cloudy morning, the captain of a steamer was coming down the street on his way to the ship, when he noticed a hungry little boy standing in front of a fine restaurant. The captain placed his hand gently on the boy’s shoulder and asked, “What are you doing here, my little man?” The little boy said, “O, sir, I was just standing here looking at the good things they have to eat in the restaurant.” “Well,” said the Captain, “I have but thirty minutes to spare before my steamer leaves; but if you had on good clothes and a clean face, and your hair combed, I would take you to a restaurant and get something to eat.” The little boy, with a look of love and gentleness, and with tears in his eyes at the Captain’s kind words, brushed his hair with his hand and said, “**I am ready now,**” to which the Captain replied, “Well, my little man, God bless you. Come with me into the restaurant and I shall get you something to eat.” As the little fellow began to eat, the Captain asked, “Where is your mother, my boy?” “Mother died when I was about four years old,” replied the child. “Where is your father?” “I haven’t seen Father since Mother died.” “And who takes care of you?” inquired the Captain. The boy, with a look of calm said, “When Mother was sick, just before she died, she told me that Jesus would take care of me; she taught me to pray and love Jesus.” The Captain, with tears in his eyes said, “I have just a few more minutes before my steamer leaves, and if you were only dressed well and had a clean face, I would take you with me on the steamer. You could wait on me.” The little boy looked up into the Captain’s face and cried, “O Captain, **I am ready now.**” The Captain just put his arm around the boy, saying, “Come with me, my little man, and you will be my boy.” They both hurried to the steamer, and when on board, the Captain introduced the little boy to his men saying, “He will wait on me, and his name is **Ready Now.** He is always ready, and you must not call him by any other name other than **Ready Now.** The little boy cleaned up after the good Captain had given him a new blue suit of clothes, and he began his pleasant duty of waiting on the Captain, and did so most faithfully. The Captain learned to dearly love the child. Shortly after the little boy had been on board, he was taken sick, and one day he said to the good Captain, “I feel sick. I have awful pains in my breast, O Captain, and I want to get close to you.” The kindhearted man took the little child in his arms and pressed him to his heart. The little one fell asleep and was carried very carefully to his bed. A few days later the doctor said to the Captain, “I have done all I can for that poor child; he is seriously ill and will die.” In a few days the boy sent for the Captain whom he loved so dearly, and as the Captain looked him in the face,

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he saw death was very near. The little boy, in a low, weak voice said, “O Captain, I do love you; I am going to where Jesus and Mother are. O Captain, won’t you give your heart to Jesus? Meet me in heaven, Captain. Jesus loves you; won’t you let Him save you and be a Christian?” The Captain, with deep emotion and trembling voice replied, “I have been thinking about it, my little boy.” “But when, Captain? When will you be ready to give your heart to Jesus?” “Well,” said the Captain, “I will not put it off much longer.” “O Captain, won’t you let Jesus save you? When will you be ready?” With tears streaming down his cheeks, the Captain fell upon his knees and cried, “**I am ready now—READY NOW!**” And there on his knees, with a broken and contrite heart, the Captain gave his heart to God—surrendered to Jesus. About a half hour later some of the men came to the Captain’s room and found him kneeling in prayer, holding the child who was cold in death’s embrace. He had pleaded with the Captain to the end and had won. He was a faithful little worker for Jesus to the last. The Captain immediately gave up his position as captain of the steamer, and went out to preach the gospel of the grace of God to lost sinners, and to tell of the dear little boy who had been the means in God’s hand of leading him to the Saviour.

Are you ready? 2 Timothy 4:6, “*For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.*” I am **ready now!**

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**LITTLE SHIPS**—The little ships of Dunkirk were 700 private boats that sailed from Ramsgate in England to Dunkirk in France between May 26 and June 4, 1940, as part of Operation Dynamo, helping to rescue more than 338,000 British and French soldiers who were trapped on the beaches at Dunkirk during WW II.

The situation of the troops, who had been cut off from their retreat into France by a pincer movement from the German army, was regarded by the British prime minister, Winston Churchill, as the greatest military defeat for centuries; it appeared likely to cost Britain the war, leaving the country vulnerable to invasion by Germany. Because of the shallow waters, British destroyers were unable to approach the beaches, and soldiers were having to wade out to the warships, many of them waiting hours shoulder deep in water.

On May 27, the small craft section of the British Ministry of Shipping telephoned boat builders around the coast, asking them to collect all boats with “shallow draft” that could navigate the shallow waters. Some of them were taken with the owner’s permission, and with the owners insisting they would sail them, while others were requisitioned by the government with no time for the owners to be contacted. The boats were checked to make sure they

were seaworthy, fueled, and taken to Ramsgate to set sail for Dunkirk. They were manned by Naval Officers and other experienced volunteers. Very few owners manned their own vessel, apart from fishermen and one or two others.

When they reached France, some of the boats acted as shuttles between the beaches and the destroyers, ferrying soldiers to the warships. Others carried hundreds of soldiers each back to Ramsgate, protected by the Royal Air Force from the attacks of the Luftwaffe.

P.S. The success of the mission would have been impossible without the little ships. When we feel small and unimportant, maybe it is our smallness that can make us useful. Job 8:7, *“Though thy beginning was small, yet thy latter end should greatly increase.”*

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**MILK**—One day a poor young man who was selling goods from door-to-door to pay his way through school, found he was hungry and only had one thin dime in his pocket. He decided he would ask for a meal at the next house. However, he lost his nerve when a lovely young woman opened the door.

Instead of a meal, he asked for a drink of water. She thought he looked hungry, so brought him a large glass of milk. He drank it slowly and asked, “How much do I owe you?”

“You don’t owe me anything,” she replied. “Mother has taught us never to accept pay for a kindness.” He said, “Then I thank you from my heart.” As Howard Kelly left that house, he felt stronger physically, and his faith in God and man was strong also. He had been ready to give up and quit. Many years later that same young woman, now older, became critically ill. The local doctors were baffled. They finally sent her to the big city where they called in specialists to study her rare disease.

Dr. Howard Kelly was called in for consultation. When he heard the name of the town she was from, a strange light filled his eyes. Dressed in his doctor’s gown, he went in to see her and recognized her at once. From that day he gave special attention to her case. After a long struggle, the battle was won. Dr. Kelly requested the business office to pass the final bill to him for approval. He looked at it, then wrote something on the edge, and the bill was sent to her room. Upon receiving it, she feared to open it for she was sure it would take the rest of her life to pay for it all. Finally she looked, and saw something written on the side of the bill—“Paid in full with one glass of milk”. (Signed) Dr. Howard Kelly.

Ecclesiastes 11:1, *“Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days.”*

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**FINE KETTLE OF FISH**—This expression is mostly used in everyday contexts to mean a “difficult” or “troublesome situation”. When you say, “This is a fine kettle of fish,” you mean you have gotten yourself into an annoying or messy situation. Nobody is really sure about the origin of this rather peculiar idiom. The only thing that scholars are sure about it that the “kettle” in the expression has nothing to do with the

container that we use to boil water. Some believe that it refers to the “fish kettle”, an oval pan used to cook a whole fish. In fact, till about the 18<sup>th</sup> century, any large vessel that was used to boil things in was called a “kettle”. In the past, it was standard practice for Scottish aristocrats to entertain their neighbors during the summer by inviting them over for a picnic. Tents were put up by the riverbank, and while their master entertained his guests, the servants prepared food for them by catching fresh fish from the river and throwing them into a boiling “kettle”. Soon the picnic itself began to be called “kettle of fish”. Some scholars however, believe that the “kettle” is actually a corruption of the work “kiddle”—the net that was thrown into the river to catch fish. Since the captured fish splashed around quite a bit, causing a lot of commotion, the expression began to mean “confusing state of affairs”. Sometimes poachers stole the fish trapped in the kiddle, and in the process ruined the net. This led to the expression “pretty kiddle of fish”, to mean “sorry state of affairs”. Over a period of time, “kiddle” became “kettle”. Not everyone is satisfied with these explanations.

We all find ourselves facing a “fine kettle of fish”, so to speak (trouble). It is a part of life. Job 5:7, *“Yet man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward.”* Do you know the one who can lift you out? Psalm 91:15, *“He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honor him.”*

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**MORE**—When Antigonus I was ready to engage in a sea fight with Ptolemy’s armada, the pilot cried out, “How many are there more than we?” The courageous king replied, “Tis true, if you count their numbers, they surpass us, but for how many do you value me?”

So when our enemies come upon us like a flood, threatening to devour us with rage and fury, we must remember that though we are few and they many, our God must be counted for “MORE” than all that are against us. Amen! Matthew 19:26, *“But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.”*

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**HIGHER**—Take a straight stick and put it in the water and it will seem crooked. Why? Because you are looking at it through two mediums—air and water. That is why we cannot discern correctly. Things of God are not understood because we look at them through a double medium—flesh and spirit. The eyes of man are not competent to judge what God is doing. His way is higher! Isaiah 55:9, *“For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.”*

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**FISHY QUESTION**—For last edition, the area around Jordan is especially wealthy because in Joshua 3:15, *“...Jordan overfloweth all his banks....”*. This time tell me who, under Nehemiah’s return to Jerusalem, built the fish gate?

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--If you want to know what it’s like to be in a minority group, do more work than is expected of you.

--If you are not aware of the world and Satanic influences around you, you are like a man swimming in a snake and alligator infested swamp. You are going to get BIT.

--To know the road ahead, ask those coming back.