

(organ music)

- This morning, we welcome you to this service of worship in Duke Chapel. The Martin Luther King celebration scheduled for this evening has been moved to 5 p.m. rather than 7 p.m. Please make that note, details are in your bulletins. Any student who would like a ride to this service, if you'll just meet in front of the chape at 4 p.m. or slightly thereafter, we'll provide you transportation. If you're a graduate or a professional student here at Duke, we invite you to join the Graduate and Professional Students Fellowship forming this evening at 6 p.m., details are in the bulletin. Our guest preacher today is The Reverend Dr. John Vannorsdall, Chaplain at Battell Chapel, Yale University. We welcome this distinguished preacher here, you have heard him in the past on the Protestant Hour, he does a distinguished job at one of the great university pulpits in the country, and we welcome him. Let us continue our worship. (choir music)

- Ye who do truly and earnestly repent of your sins and are in love and charity with your neighbors, and intent to lead a new life, following the commandments of God, walking from henceforth in his holy ways, draw near with faith, and make your humble confession to almighty God. (people shuffling)

- Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone, we have not loved you with our whole heart, we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves, we are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us, that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways to the glory of your name, amen.

- Hear the good news, Christ died for us while we were yet sinners, that is God's own proof of his love towards us. In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.

- In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven, amen. (choir music)

- Let us pray.

- Open our hearts and minds, oh God, by the power of your Holy Spirit, so that as the word is read and proclaimed, we might hear with joy what you say to us this day, amen.

- The first lesson is taken from Job, chapter seven, versus one through seven, has not man a hard service upon earth, and are not his days like the days of a hireling, like a slave who longs for the shadow and like a hireling who looks for his wages, so I am allotted months of emptiness and nights of misery are a portion to me. When I lie down I say, when shall I arise? But the night is long, and I am full of tossing 'til the dawn, my flesh is clothed with worms and dirt, my skin hardens, then breaks out afresh, my days are swifter than a weavers shuttle, and come to their end without hope. Remember that my life is a breathe, my eye will never

again see good. (choir music)

- The second lesson is taken from first Corinthians, chapter nine, versus 16 through 23. For if I preach the gospel, that gives me no ground for boasting, for necessity is laid upon me. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel, if I do this of my own will, I have a reward, but if not of my own will, I am entrusted with a commission. What then is my reward? Just this, that in my preaching, I may make the gospel free of charge, not making full use of my right in the gospel, for though I am free from all men, I have made myself a slave to all, that I wend the more. To the Jews, I became as a Jew in order to win Jews. To those under the law, I became as one under the law, though not being myself under the law, that I might win those under the law. To those outside the law, I became as one outside the law, not being without law, toward God, but under the law of Christ, that I might win those outside the law. To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. I do it all for the sake of the gospel, that I might share it and its blessings. This ends the reading of the second lesson. (choir music)

- The gospel was taken from Mark, chapter one, versus 14 through 20, and verses 29 through 39. Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe in the gospel." And passing along by the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew, the brother of Simon, casting a net in the sea, for they were fishermen, and Jesus said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." And immediately, they left their nets and followed him. And going on a little farther, he saw James, the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who earned their boat mending the nets, and immediately, he called them and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants and followed him. Verses 29-39 And immediately, he left the synagogue, and entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. Now Simon's mother in law, lay sick with a fever, and immediately they told him of her. And he came and took her by the hand, and lifted her up, and the fever left her, and she served them. That evening, at sundown, they brought to him all who were sick or possessed with demons, and the whole city was gathered together about the door. And he healed many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons, and he would not permit the demons to speak because they knew him. And in the morning, a great while before day, he rose and went out to a lonely place and there he prayed. And Simon, and those who were with him, pursued him, and they found him and said to him, "Everyone is searching for you." And he said to them, "Let us go on to the next towns, that I may preach there also, for that is why I came out." And he went all throughout Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and casting out demons. Here ends the reading of the gospel.

- I'm glad even for a day to be a part of distinguished University, and of a vital chapel furnished with exceptional leadership. May the words of my mouth, and the meditation of our hearts be acceptable in thy sight, our Lord our strength, and our redeemer, amen. They were casting their nets into the sea, a graceful sight I'd guess, a matter of rhythm and strength, the net arching up spreading outward until its weighted edge touched the water, more slowly sinking to entrap whatever fish might lie below. Simon, Peter and Andrew, James and John, Jesus cast his net and drew them in, follow me and I will make you fishers of men, which is to say I will make you become fishers of men and of women and of children. And traditional piety celebrates this casting of the net as the invitation, which has eventually drawn millions upon millions of people into becoming followers of Jesus, and many of us as well, I'm not the only one here this morning,

who learned as a child these words of a hymn, Jesus calls us, or the tumult of our life's wild, restless sea, day by day his sweet voice soundeth, saying, "Christian, follow me." And most of us have no regrets, we have been freed by the gospel, guided by Christ, comforted in trouble, renewed in the hope of good things to come, but I'd like you to see this morning in the calling of the disciples this first in gathering, I'd like you to see it from the viewpoint of Zebedee, and of all the others over the centuries who have been left behind in the boat. Jesus saw James, the son of Zebedee, John, his brother, who were in the boat mending their nets and immediately, he called them and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants. And they followed him, Jesus came preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, James and John followed him, Zebedee was left behind in the boat. I'm not worried about the economics of it, the fishing no doubt continued, the family was fed, but think how you would feel, your two sons following a stranger. Ah, the son of God, you say, but Zebedee didn't know that. He only knew that Jesus was religious and not one of the main line branches of Judaism, and that somehow makes it worse. I think that he was heartbroken, and I think we have to understand that for three centuries, Jesus Christ broke the heart of the Roman world. The people of the Roman world had their religion, you see. The teachings were different, the practices, but religion was alive and functional everywhere. And there was a kind of unity about it, you had a people, the Jews, the Romans, the Egyptians, dozens of peoples, each people had a land, or at least had a point of origin, and each people had a religion, and the people, the land, and the religion, were one story, religion described their origin, provided their feast days, determined the laws under which they lived, sanctioned what was good and what was to be punished. True doctrine, wrote Cicero, was ancient doctrine. The preservation of the rights of the family and of our ancestors means preserving the religious rights, which we can almost say were handed down to us by the Gods themselves, since ancient times were closest to the Gods, and along comes Jesus with his net and his follow me? And it wasn't long before his followers were not just Jews, but Samaritans, before long the followers were from everywhere. From many nations, now we have something different. Not one story, in the old sense, where a land, a people, and a religion belong together. We had a new people who were no people in the older sense. We had people who were not born into our religion, but who made a choice to follow Jesus. We had a people with no land, because they were no people.