



■ † First Sunday of St. Luke

Living Communion with the Lord Brings Forth Fruits of Eternal Life*

The fishermen toiled for an entire night and took nothing; but when the Lord entered their ship and, after preaching, commanded them to cast their net, they caught so many that they could not pull them up, and the net broke.



This is an image of all work done without God's help, and again of work done with God's help. When a person works, wanting to achieve something by his strength alone, everything falls apart. But when the Lord draws near to him, then one good thing after another flows in.

In the spiritual and moral sense, the impossibility of success without the Lord is tangibly manifest: "Without Me ye can do nothing," said the Lord (St. John 15:5).

This law applies to all things. Just as a branch that is not grafted onto a tree not only does not bear fruit, but dries up and loses its life, so also people cannot bring forth fruits of truth worthy of eternal life **if they are not in living communion with the Lord.**

They might occasionally possess some good, but it is good in appearance only. In reality it is of poor quality, like a wild apple that appears red but is sour to the taste.

This is also tangibly evident in an external, worldly sense: someone struggles and struggles, but all in vain.

When God's blessing descends, you do not even know where everything comes from. Those who are attentive toward themselves and the paths of life know these truths from experience.



(*) St. Theophan the Recluse, *Thoughts for Each Day of the Year According to the Daily Church Readings from the Word of God*