



ONCE UPON A TIME there was a poor fisherman. He lived with his family on a small Island. Every morning, he would rise early and amble down to his small boat. He'd check his fishing gear, gas up the motor, stow his lunch, and slowly motor out into the bay to fish. Then in the afternoon, he'd return to his small island to sell his fish at the market. He had performed this same routine for many, many years.

One day, out in the bay with only a small fish to show for his labors, he noticed far away some birds diving. Were they catching fish? Starting up the old motor, he put-put-putted over to have a look. As he got closer, sure enough, he could make out that many of the birds proudly held LARGE fish in their mouths. Finally arriving at the spot, he too began to pull in one fish after another. "What a great day!" he thought. Satisfied with the mountain of fish onboard, he went to fire up the motor when, to his horror, he noticed that the gas level was far too low to make it back to the Island. And if that weren't bad enough, a gentle breeze had caused his little boat to drift even farther away from the Island. There was absolutely no one around. He was drifting farther and farther away from land into the open sea. And, if things couldn't get any worse, he noticed the fins of a familiar predator circling his boat. Just great. The poor fisherman began to cry.

Then, the poor fisherman did something he'd never done in his life: He prayed.

"Look up", came as a quiet whisper inside him. With tears still streaming from his eyes, he slowly gazed upward. What he first saw was a blurry sort of cross. Rubbing the tears away, he suddenly saw something that amazed him: his mast and sail bundled tightly. They'd never been used. He'd always been content to simply gas-power his way out to his fishing spot each day and motor back home, never entertaining the possibility of catching the wind's force. "How silly I've been!" he thought to himself, as he began unfurling the sail. The little boat immediately responded to the wind's force and began to move steadily through the water. What a fantastic feeling to be clipping along so quickly with the wind blowing his hair and the small boat bouncing through the waves! Both excited and relieved, he directed the boat back toward his Island home.

In the days that followed, he was now *sailing* to his fishing spot. In fact, he now discovered new fishing spots that had previously been out-of-range for his gas powered ventures. And the fish! Not only were they bigger but more diverse! With an ever growing income, he bought a bigger boat and hired a crew. He moved his family into a bigger house with new clothes for the kids and some nice jewelry for his wife. The family enjoyed more time together and he'd take them to different towns on the mainland, taking in new sights, making new friends. Life's landscape had grown considerably.

And, from time to time, he'd take his little sailboat out just to feel the wind in his face and the utter exhilaration of skipping over the waves. "What a gift!" He thought to himself. His heart was overflowing with gratitude. And he never forgot to look up.

Yours in the Spirit,

Scott

*P.S. Join us for **Lighthouse LIVE!** on Sunday mornings @ 10:30. Just click on Lighthouse Christian Church's Facebook page for inspiring worship, a life-changing message, and a chance to post your own comments or prayer requests. This is for everyone – tell a friend!*