

Gone Fishing!

Matthew 4:19. "Come follow me, Jesus said, "and I will send you out to fish for people."

The word evangelism means to publish or make known by open declaration. In Matthew 4 Jesus begins to gather His first disciples or followers. In verse 19 He explains to them that they will no longer be fishers of fish but with Him they will become fishers of men. In essence they will evangelize.

If you flip over to Luke 5 you will read this same story but from a different perspective. Luke goes into a little more detail than Matthew in retelling these events. Luke's writings wanted to put an emphasis on Jesus being the Savior of the world and it also puts emphasis on the Holy Spirit's contribution in the Gospel.

In Matthew 4, you read and it seems at first glance that Jesus' followers were just drawn immediately to the words He spoke but flip over to Luke 5 and you will notice how He drew His disciples to Him. Jesus taught then at His word something miraculous took place. In Luke 5 Jesus told Simon (later to be known as Peter) after He finished teaching to "Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch." In Luke 5:5 you read Simon's initial response to Jesus request but Simon responds, "I will because you say so, I will let down the nets."

Jesus uses the analogy of being a fishermen to let the men know that if they follow Him they would become much more than fishermen but they would become fishers of men. In this instance they realize what is impossible with men IS possible with God!

Don't continue with the negative thoughts that God can never use you. For nothing is impossible with God!

Research has stated that 95% of people who come to church has never lead someone else to Christ. This is more than just bringing someone else to church. Many believe the enemies lie that they can't evangelize. Simply put evangelism is sharing what God has done for you. Attending church is vital and necessary in order to learn how to live as a follower of Christ but more than that is leading someone into a personal relationship with Him. In Matthew 4:19, Jesus says "If

you come and follow me.... then I will do...". Until you know God things will not get better. Your job is to show others how God has touched you and that He can touch them too.

Evangelism allows you to lead someone to the love of God and we are all called to share His love. You can learn to evangelize. In order to evangelize you must be patient. Just like with fishing eliminate forcing time restraints on evangelizing people.

Not only being patient but also keep a positive confession. A positive confession will eliminate the desire of loving ungodly things.

Fishermen vs. Hunter

The Bible though physically written by men it is the Word of God given to men through the Holy Spirit. (See 2 Timothy 3:16) So it is not by happenstance that God chose fishermen and not hunters. Christianity has gotten a bad reputation because some Christians like the Pharisees and Sadducees have become hunters instead of following Jesus example of being a fisherman. Christian Hunters are those people who attack people with the Word of God. They are violent in their approach and use the Word of God to beat others down. They believe that fear is what produces change and present God as this untouchable, unapproachable being who is just waiting to strike people down as soon as a mistake is made. That's not our God and that's not our Jesus! It's religion that says you must meet man's idea of God and they push those requirements on others. This prevents people from having a relationship with God and causes them to stay in a continuous loop of negative cycles. On the other hand a relationship with Jesus brings people into fellowship and allows cohabitation with the Lord. It is the place where conversation takes place. God will allow a discussion to take place. He will speak power into the lives of those He is in relationship with. It's not difficult to be a fisher of men people just need to know that the Gospel works for you.

Fishing Boat vs. Pleasure Boat

A Believer is built different from other people. The world tries to convince people that life is all about obtaining things that please you. The world teaches you that the more you obtain the happier you will be everything is about comfort and the things around you. But most people no matter how much they

accomplish or obtain still feel lost and empty inside. That void in their life must be filled by the love of Christ. God designed us in His image and with that He built us with a purpose not to live life like we are on a pleasure cruise. (Genesis 1:26; Jeremiah 1:5 and Jeremiah 29:11) Life is not always comfortable but He has promised that all things will work for our good. He has placed us here to contribute into the lives of others. Our job is not to change the lake but to catch the fish. You can not change people but you can bring them to the One who can. Being a fisher of men will come with discouragement but in John 16:33 Jesus tells us to take heart He has overcome the world. So why should you take advise from someone who has already been declared the loser? If you have ever fished before you know that sometimes the fish will get away, it may break your line or steal your bait. Don't let that discourage you God has said "Go back out."

In Matthew 28:19 Jesus tells His disciples their assignment is to go out and make more disciples. What happened between chapters 4-28? They spent intimate close fellowship learning and growing with Jesus. For years they listened, prayed, studied and did good alongside Jesus. What chapter are you on? Get on with it...you can't stay in chapter 4! If you don't keep moving with God you will never make it to Acts, in Acts 1:8 the power of Holy Spirit fell upon the disciples and as you grow in Christ His power is available for you to use. God has selected certain people to be positively influenced by you, these people are going to be drawn to you because God designed them to find favor with you and likewise you find favor with them. The church itself can miss opportunities to help someone but if you are active in the church you will be able to make sure no one goes unnoticed. Be prepared and most importantly be available, 1 Peter 3:15 do your part and God will do the rest. Don't worry about convincing those who don't want to be convinced. Dust your feet off and keep moving forward. Be open to help people right where you are. All God wants is an open heart to work through He will give you what you need!