

Go Fishing!

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[0 : 00] I want to urge you today to go fishing.! Go fishing.

And Jesus walking by the sea of Galilee saw two brethren! Simon called Peter and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea.! For they were fishers. And he saith unto them, follow me and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left their nets and followed him. The Lord says here, follow me and I will make you fishers of men. Have you ever been fishing? How many of you have caught a fish?

It could be some of you haven't been fishing. Today we are going to show you a little bit about fishing. Now when you go fishing and you cast that line out into the water, you hope to catch some fish. But the fishing line itself won't catch fish. There has to be a bait, a lure that goes on the line. And for some lures they sink to the bottom, where fish who swim deep will be found. The line needs to be weighted. Other lures will rather float near the surface.

Others move through the water with spinning parts and reflectors to attract fish. Some fish are attracted rather to worms or live bait. Now the Lord Jesus says in Matthew 4 verse 19, basically he is saying, come along with me and I will show you how to fish for the souls of men. He was sending his disciples out to fish for men, rather than fish.

So how is telling others about the Lord like fishing? How can we help our friends receive the good news? I would tell you that the Lord Jesus wants each one of us to be about the work of fishing. To go fishing with him every day of our lives.

[1 : 48] We are to fish for people to bring to the Lord. We are to tell them how the Lord Jesus loved them so much that he died on the cross to forgive their sins. To tell people how they can receive salvation.

So let's go fishing. Some important things about fishing is you have to, number one, get going. If we are to catch fish we must go to where the fish are.

We aren't going to catch any fish if we just sit at home and talk about fishing. You cannot catch fish unless you go fishing. So if I want to go catch fish, I must go to the water, to the sea, to the river, to where the fish are.

And the fish, so called, the fish as in the human fish that we are looking for, are all around us. The people are swimming all around you at work and the Lord Jesus uses the picture of fishing as this vivid image of the work of saving souls.

It's a work that he calls us to, every one of his followers. Will you obey? Will you be a fisher of men? The task is to catch men. It has this sense of rescue.

[2 : 55] You know, witnessing is a rescue operation. Like fishing, it takes a little preparation to be successful, but it is important we don't just talk about it, but we get going.

So firstly we need to get going. Secondly we need to get tackled. We need the right tools. If we are to catch fish we need to have our tackle box ready and use bait. The good fisherman will always have a tackle box full of bait.

You will use different bait for different fish. Get the right bait and present it the right way. Sometimes churches can make the mistake of thinking that we can sit back in the boat and just wait for the fish to jump in without ever casting a line.

Are you a witness? Are you reaching people with your words, your deeds, your attitude? Talk to people about their soul. Here's some gear we need in our tackle box if you like.

Prayer. Now one of the tools that we do have at hand is prayer. Here's some things we can begin to pray that God will do. That God will soften the hearts of those who don't know Christ.

[4 : 05] That God will create a desire in the unchurched to seek God. That God will provide you the opportunities for you to share your faith with those who don't know the Lord. That God will have mercy on them and bless them.

And that God will surround them with godly people who will impact them for Christ. Another item in our tackle box is care. Show Christ by your care for others.

Love others. Demonstrate love towards them. Help with practical needs. Invite people to fellowship. To church activities.

Be aware of people around you and look for those opportunities to reach out. And share. Share your experiences with others. Share your experiences of God working in your own life.

Share how you were before you knew the Lord compared to how you are now that you know Christ. Share what you believe in and why by your conversation.

[5 : 05] And when it's appropriate. Share the word of God. That vital equipment. God uses people. Fishing in Bible days was mostly by nets. What is a net made of?

God is nothing but a bunch of holes tied together with string. That's all we really are. A bunch of nothings and nobodies woven together by the thread of God's grace.

Knit together by his spirit. You know, Paul wrote how there's not many wise men, not many mighty, not many noble at a call. God has chosen the foolish things. The weak things of the world.

Look at the charter members of the early church. Talk about a bunch of nothings. God uses the unlikely. What about all of us? We were nothing until the Lord found us and cleaned us up.

In John 21 verses 10 through 11, Jesus saith unto them, Bring of the fish which ye have now caught. And Simon Peter went up and drew the net to land full of great fishes, and hundred and fifty and three.

[6 : 06] And for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken. And it's been said there are 153 nations in the world. So we could consider that as well.

For us to be effective fishermen, we need to get serious. Going fishing usually means putting yourself out. It means we get wet. It can mean travelling to the water, even into the water.

It can mean riding on a boat on choppy seas, or braving the elements on a windy jetty. Have you cast your net out on the sea? That's the question. Are we prepared to get wet?

Or do we cling to the shore? A keen fisherman goes fishing every chance he can. Now we won't know whether the fish are biting unless we go fish.

It's been said the two best times to fish is when it's raining and when it ain't. It's serious work and it's also a great joy.

[7 : 03] The good fisherman has lots of patience. Fishing demands patience. It can take hours. And fishing, really it's simple. You don't have to be a marine biologist to catch fish.

Here's another quote. All you need to be a fisherman is patience and a worm. Now the dedicated fisherman will keep at it. It can mean getting up the next morning and heading out to the fishing area again, going out again after those elusive fish.

As someone said, the Christian life is not a sprint, it is a marathon. And to successfully run a marathon, a runner needs a disciplined patience. It's the same in the Christian life. So likewise when we go fishing.

Why should we go? There are three voices calling to us. Number one, a voice from above calling, Whom shall I send? There's a voice from the people calling, Come over here and help us.

And then there's thirdly, a voice in hell calling, Go and warn my brothers. It's truly a serious business. Reaching the lost is central. It's essential. It's the Gospel.

[8 : 08] This is GLAD Tidings. I hope I've been able to encourage you today to want to go fishing. And if you're not fishing, really you're not following Jesus. He's called all of us to be fishermen.

Are you really following Him? Then you will go fishing with Him. Maybe you could write down some names of some people that you know need to be caught for Jesus.

List them and put them on your heart, on your refrigerator. Begin praying for them. Let's go fishing.