

I Will Make You Fishers of Men

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[0 : 00] All right, would you look in Luke chapter number 5 with me, with our time remaining in here? I know what time it is, and I care. Not only do I know what time it is, but I'm aware of it. I won't make a mention of what sporting event comes after this, because at that sporting event, they won't make mention of what's happening right now.

And so I'll take that, all right? But in Luke chapter number 5, there's a story of Jesus that comes upon some people that are fishing, and we're going to get to that here in a moment. But how many of you in here work in, I thought I had a pin on me.

Any of you work in sales in here? How many of you all work in some form of sales? All right, you do? Okay, Julia, that's interesting. It's all right. Have you ever heard that example, though? Somebody brings out a pin, and they say, sell me this pin.

Have you ever heard that? And the idea is that you're not supposed to sell them on the value of the product itself. You're supposed to sell people on what is the need for that pin. And it's something they use in lessons and teaching on sales.

And that's not what evangelism is. One person said, we live in a day where it's easy to make converts, but very hard to make disciples. The only part I would disagree with that is we don't even live in a time where it's easy to make converts, where people don't even pretend to be interested in these things.

[1 : 12] But that's what we're called to do is calling people. And the Bible says a couple different ways. In Luke, it says, I will have you to catch men, and thou shalt catch men. In verse number 10 of Luke 5, other times in Mark 16, it says, I will make you to be fishers of men.

And that idea, that being fishers of men. And BARNAs, which is a group that does surveys of churches, they said that 51% of churchgoers don't recognize the phrase, the Great Commission, when they surveyed people.

51% don't understand it. And of the group, 25% say that they've heard of the Great Commission, but they don't know what it means, which means about three out of four people who attend church could not give you an understanding of what the Great Commission is.

That is the phrase that we give to the command that Jesus gave before He sends into heaven, what He wants us to continue doing as believers, explaining that after you get saved, why don't you just go straight to heaven?

That would make things quite exciting at an altar call, wouldn't it, right? That people just disappeared as soon as they got saved. But what is the plan that God would have? We're left here and with a purpose.

[2 : 21] An older pastor said this, he said, Baptists used to talk about so winning, then we talked about witnessing, then we talked about sharing, then we stopped talking about it altogether.

I don't think there's anything wrong with any of those words. Proverbs 11.30 tells us, The fruit of righteousness is a tree of life, and he that winneth souls is wise. All those are great expressions.

If you want to say so winning, if you want to say sharing, if you want to say witnessing, just keep talking about it, though. That's what we must do. We can't allow it just to be phased out of what's happening among us.

So we go back to the beginning where Jesus goes and he calls some men to follow after him. Mark, in Luke chapter number 5, I'll read that. We have it in different gospel accounts. But let me read to you the story in Luke chapter number 5.

And he came to pass that as the people pressed upon him to hear the word of God, he stood by the lake of Gennesaret, and he saw two ships standing by the lake. But the fishermen were gone out of them, and they were washing their nets.

[3 : 20] And he entered into one of the ships, which was Simon's, and prayed to him that he was thrust out a little from the land. And he sat down, and he taught the people out of the ship. Now when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a drought.

That means a lot of fish, okay? And Simon answering said unto him, Master, we have told all night, and we have nothing. Nevertheless, to thy word, I will let down the net. And when they had done this, they enclosed a great multitude of fishes, and their net break.

And they beckoned into their partners, which were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came and filled both the ships, so that they began to sink. When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.

For he was astonished, and all that were with him, at the drought of the fishes that had taken. And so was also James and John and the sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not, from henceforth thou shalt catch men.

And when they had brought their ships to the land, they forsook all and followed him. Jesus tells them that he is going to make them fishers of men. He tells them to forsake their nets. They knew that they were going to be leaving something.

[4 : 27] In Matthew 19, Peter asked that, Behold, we are forsaking all these things to follow you, and what should we get from it? It's not astonishing that Peter would answer that. It's astonishing that the creator of the universe would answer in such a gentle manner.

Forsake lesser pursuits in order to gain pleasures. The Bible speaks about that. A man finding a treasure in a field and selling all that he has. It has to do about the use of our time.

It has to use about our talents and abilities. It is setting things aside. We have time to be faithful in evangelism, but it has to become the greater pursuit. There has to be some forsaking that's going to take place.

A profession of faith is a profession that Jesus is the Christ. It isn't church programs that make disciples, but it's disciples that make disciples. You can't call others to follow him if you're not doing that yourself.

And so here we are, and there's some forsaking that Jesus says, I need you to forsake and follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. His agenda was to make disciples.

[5 : 33] Jesus calls them to himself. He ordained the twelve. He set them aside, and he calls them to himself. Our following Jesus should be evident. One way is the way that we forsake things in this world.

A mark of a person following Jesus is that we're forsaking things in this world. And in that forsaking, he says, I will make you to become fishers of men.

They had fished all day, and they had caught no fishes. I think we have a song like that, don't they? They fished all day, and they caught no fishes. And so they get to the point, I've done it. What's the use?

You know, Jesus, you may, you are the carpenter's son. We are fishermen. And then he helps them catch an unprecedented amount of fish from a place that seemed hopelessly unproductive to them the night before.

The catch was a powerful and authoritative sign that Jesus knew what he was speaking about. A comparison between trusting Christ to help gather fish and trusting Christ to help you gather people.

[6 : 34] Jesus says, I know fish. I know fishing. I know what you should do. And so as Jesus gives them that, Jesus came to them in Luke chapter number 5, verse 1, and he's teaching them so much that people were pressed about around him, and he has to get on a ship and set sail.

He talks to them about obedience. When he got done speaking, he said to Simon, launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a drought. Simple act of obedience is what was asked of Simon.

And Simon humbled himself. He fell down at Jesus' knees recognizing that Jesus knew. A.W. Tozer said, Sometimes I think that the church would be better off if we would call Miranda on activity for about six weeks and just wait on God to see what he was waiting to do for us.

That's what they did before Pentecost. Our churches don't need another event. Instead, all we need is to help recognize that Jesus wants to make you and me fishers of men.

I will make you to become. And so that comes with a decision that we're going to allow Jesus to make us to be the fishers of men that he has called us to be.

[7 : 47] And so I just ask you in here, I'm going to ask the men to join me at the altar, and I'm going to ask that we pray that that's who we would be as a church. We'd be people that forsake our nets, and we just simply obey Jesus.

What was amazing is they just obeyed. And you may be in some hopeless waters. You may be with a person, and you say, I've shared the gospel. I've done this. I haven't seen anybody come to Christ in a long time.

Let's just listen to his voice and say, Tell us what you want us to do. Jesus, you have called me to be a fisher of men, and so I'm going to have you to make me to become fishers of men.

I'm not telling you anything to do, but other than recognize that Jesus wants to help you become fishers of men. So let's do some inventory in our heart tonight and recognize that.

Is that a way in which we see ourselves? Do you see yourself as a person that Jesus could use to help draw other people to him? Do you feel kind of hopeless in what you're doing and say, Well, you just don't understand.

[8 : 42] You don't understand I'm in high school, and in high school it's really hard. Or you don't understand in the office that I'm in, the people don't want to listen to me, I'm with the same group of people. Or you don't understand because where I work, I'm just home and all the time with these kids around me.

Sorry, Lauren, looking at you, all right? Or whatever your situation is, and I understand. I get it too. I keep sharing the gospel with Beau and Greg and other people in the office, and I'd say, Well, I'm limited.

Father, I'm in a place right now, my boat's in a place, and I can't see people come to Christ, and that is not a problem to him. He knows where we are to fish. He knows where we are to cast the nets.

And so we just ask him. And sometimes it looks like becoming character coaches, and sometimes it looks like making fishing lures and taking your friends fishing on a Saturday and handing them out. And it looks many different ways, but it should just always look like obedience.

And so why don't we make that our prayer tonight? Say, Father, I know that you'd have me to be a fisher of men, and I want you to show me where to fish and what to do. And I believe, as he has promised in his word, he will do that.