

## What on Earth Is A “Fisher of Men”?

### Matthew 4: 18-22

#### I. “Come, follow me....”

- A. This is the invitation to a relationship with Jesus.
  - 1. It is the invitation that comes with the Gospel.
    - (a) When we trust in Christ, a relationship begins.
    - (b) Salvation and forgiveness come with this relationship.
  - 2. We are invited to be with Jesus.
    - (a) We do not live with the incarnate physical Christ.
    - (b) But the Spirit of Jesus lives within us.
    - (c) He is always with us.
    - (d) Yet, we need to intentionally choose to spend time with him.
- B. There is a calling in the invitation.
  - 1. We are called to follow Jesus.
    - (a) Jesus calls us to be his disciples.
    - (b) A disciple is a learner, a student, an apprentice.
  - 2. The goal is to become like Jesus (Romans 8:29).
    - (a) We are to be students of his character and values.
    - (b) So, we are to love one another as he has loved us.
    - (c) So, his life is the model we are to imitate.

#### II. “... and I will make you...”

- A. “I...” Jesus is the one who is working in us.
  - 1. His work is always good!
  - 2. He doesn’t force us to become fishers of men.
  - 3. He calls us to trust and obey, to follow him.
- B. He says that he “will make you” fishers of men.
  - 1. This is a process. He is training us for a purpose.
    - (a) There are “zap” things and process things.
    - (b) Process things take time, consistency, patience.
    - (c) It took 3 years to disciple the apostles.
  - 2. The transformation process involves change in our character. That is part of being a disciple.
  - 3. Disciples are becoming more like Jesus.
    - (a) Growing in Bible knowledge alone is not discipleship.
    - (b) We must grow in applying that knowledge to life.
    - (c) We must have our hearts (attitudes) renewed as well as our minds.
- C. But in this passage, Jesus is talking about a specific kind of change.

- 1. Not only do we change in character, we are also called to change in purpose.
- 2. As our heart changes, we join Jesus’ mission.
- 3. Apart from the cross, what was Jesus’ mission (John 17:4,6)?

#### III. “I will make you fishers of men.”

- A. Disciples join Jesus in his mission of making disciples.
  - 1. The irony is that Jesus is “fishing” when he says this.
    - (a) He is seeking men who will enter into a learning process.
    - (b) In effect he says, “Hey fish. Come with me. I’ll make you fishers of men.”
  - 2. What happens to the men that the apostles fish for?
    - (a) What do they become?
    - (b) The goal is for them also to become fishers of men.
    - (c) So, fishers of men are reproducing fishers of men.
    - (d) That is what God has commissioned us to do, to make disciples who then make disciples.
- B. The fish (the 12 disciples) are becoming like Jesus.
  - 1. They see and imitate his life, values, practices.
  - 2. Jesus is a fisher of men (people).
    - (a) His followers are called to be fishers of people, too.
  - 3. Followers of Christ are supposed to be reproductive.
    - (a) Good News Church isn’t called to do the fishing.
    - (b) As followers of Christ, we are!
    - (c) That is fundamental to what it means to follow Christ! Disciples are supposed to reproduce.
    - (d) Each of us is supposed to make disciples, who make disciples, who make disciples, who make disciples, etc., etc., etc., one life at a time.
  - 4. God’s vision in Ezekiel 37.
    - (a) It’s the Great Commission fulfilled.
  - 5. Living water pouring out of the temple.
    - (a) Jesus is the temple. The water is the Holy Spirit.
    - (b) Everything the water touches comes to life.
    - (c) It’s the Gospel going forth in the power of the Holy Spirit.
    - (d) Even the Dead Sea springs to life!
  - 6. Two metaphors, that are like time-lapsed photography.
    - (a) Trees that become fruitful (conversion to maturity).
    - (b) Fish becoming fishermen (disciples who disciple).