

FISHERS OF MEN



In both Matthew and Mark we read of Jesus calling his first disciples to be “fishers of men.” These passages would lead us to believe that Jesus was just walking along the Sea of Galilee and randomly called the first four disciples to follow Him. But the call to fish began days, weeks, or even months before.

John 1:35-42 records the beginning of the story. Andrew and John were drawn to Jesus because of John the Baptist’s testimony that He was “the Lamb of God.” After meeting Jesus, **“the first thing Andrew did was to find his brother, Simon, and tell him ‘we have found the Messiah’...and he brought him to Jesus.”**

In Luke 5:1-11 we find the rest of the story: **“One day as Jesus was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret, with the people crowding around him and listening to the word of God, he saw at the water’s edge two boats, left there by the fishermen, who were washing their nets. He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little from shore. Then he sat down and taught the people from the boat.**

When He finished speaking he said to Simon, ‘Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch.’ Simon answered, ‘Master, we’ve worked hard all night and haven’t caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets.’ When they had done so, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break so they signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them, and they came and filled both boats so full that they began to sink.

When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus’ knees and said ‘Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!’ for he and all his companions were astonished at the catch of fish they had taken, and so were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, Simon’s partners. Then Jesus said to Simon, ‘Don’t be afraid; from now on you will catch men.’ So they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed Him.”

Jesus needed Simon’s boat to effectively speak to the crowd. Simon needed to see the fish to personally know that Jesus was more than just a man. Jesus used what Simon was familiar with to reach his heart. In this He set the pattern for all who would follow Him and become “fishers of men.”

You may not be called to speak before thousands of people, casting your net across a large auditorium, watching as those whose hearts have been touched by the Holy Spirit swarm forward to receive the gift of salvation. But you can launch your boat into Friendship Lake in search for the right spot to let down your line and draw in those who are eager to receive Christ because of your example. You can sit day after day on the bank of the River of Prayer waiting for just a nibble from that lost family member who needs to know the love of God. Or you can be a Foundations for Living Volunteer, sharing the love of God with those in need, leading them to freedom in Christ.



We are all called to be “fishers of men.” You see, it doesn’t matter where you fish, or how you fish. What matters is that you listen to the call of the Master Fisherman, follow Him, and continue to fish.