

LET'S GO FISHING

Matthew 4:18-22

Introduction:

1. Fishing is a very popular hobby.
2. When I was a boy, I fished with a cane pole and a can of worms.
3. When I “retired,” I bought a rod and a lifetime fishing license.
4. I have not been fishing yet.
5. For 50 years I have fished for men.

Discussion:

I. THE APOSTLES WERE FISHERMEN.

A. Peter, Andrew, James and John earned their living as fishermen.

1. Fishing was an ancient and honorable profession.
2. It was a profitable business.
 - a. James and John had hired servants (Mark 1:20).
 - b. Peter and Andrew owned a house (Mark 1:29).
 - c. Peter, Andrew, James and John were partners (Luke 5:10).
3. They were not wealthy or educated, but were middle class businessmen.
4. Jesus called them to greater fishing - for men!

B. The early Christians were all fishers of men.

1. Those scattered by persecution “went everywhere preaching the Word” (Acts 8:4).
2. Barnabas was a “fisher of men” (Acts 9:26, 27; 11:19-26; 13: 2-4).
3. Aquila and Priscilla were “fishers of men” also (Acts 18:1-3; 24-28; Rom. 16:3-5).
4. The household of Stephanos “devoted themselves to the ministry of the saints” (1 Cor. 16:15).
5. Paul names many of his fellow “fishermen” at the close of his epistles (Rom. 16; 1 Cor. 16; Col. 4).
6. These saints understood they were saved to save others.
7. They knew “every soul with Christ is a missionary, and every soul without Christ is a mission field.”

II. THE EARLY CHURCH WAS INTENSELY EVANGELISTIC!

A. The church begin in Jerusalem with 3,000 converted (Acts 2:41).

1. The Lord “added to the church daily” because they were

- teaching daily (Acts 2:47).
- 2. “The number of the men came to be about five thousand” (Acts 4:4).
- 3. “And believers were increasingly added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women” (Acts 5:14).
- 4. The apostles “daily in the temple, and in every house did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ” (Acts 5:42).

B. The Christians “turned the world upside down” (Acts 17:6).

- 1. Paul wrote: “...the Gospel was preached to every creature under heaven” (Col. 1:23).
- 2. Herbert Kane wrote: “What began as a Jewish sect in A.D. 30 had grown into a world religion by A.D. 60 (A Concise History of the Christian World Mission, 7).
- 3. About 200, Tertullian wrote: “We are only of yesterday but already we fill the world.”
- 4. Historians estimate six million Christians died in the ten major Roman persecutions.
- 5. Will Durant estimates that by the end of the first century, one hundred million had embraced Christianity.

III. FISHERS OF MEN ARE MOTIVATED BY TWIN FACTS.

A. There is only one way to Heaven!

“Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life and there are few who find it” (Matt.e 7:13,14).

- 1. Jesus is the only Way to the Father.

“Jesus said to him, ‘I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through Me” (John 14:6).

- 2. Eternal life is only found in Christ.

“And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life: he who does not have the Son of God does not have life” (1 John 5:11,12).

- 3. There is but one Gospel.

“For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek” (Rom. 1:16).

- 4. There is but one way to enter Christ.

“For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ” (Gal. 3:26, 27).

5. **There is but one body (the church).**

“There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all” (Eph. 4:4-6).

B. All who have not heard the Gospel are lost!

1. **Some argue: “God would not be so unloving as to send people to Hell who have never heard the Gospel.”**
2. **People go to Hell because they have sinned, not because they have not heard the Gospel (1 Jno. 3:4; Rom. 6:23).**
3. **A non-swimmer who falls out of a boat is not drowning because I have not thrown him a life preserver; he is drowning because he is in the water; however, the only means by which he can be saved is by my throwing him a life preserver.**
4. **All who do not obey the Gospel are lost.**

“...when the Lord Jesus is revealed from Heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Thes. 1:7,8).

Conclusion:

1. **Most Christians today are “fishless fishermen” (Read Parable).**
2. **Let’s go fishing for men!**