

Don't Strangle The Fish!

Mark 1:17-18

¹⁷And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men.

¹⁸And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him.

I love how Jesus goes about church outreach. He compares men to fish, wheat, and sheep. Fish struggle, wheat just falls into place, and sheep...well lets face it, sheep are led in groups. This is how God wants us to look at the world.

We seem to get the wrong view so often. We either avoid getting our feet dirty altogether and think of the lost in the world as demons that we must somehow drag into the light... or we go out and slam the bible over someone's head when they least expect it!

"Thanks for waiting on our table...by the way, I see your in a rush so let me just ask you a question. Your tattoos seem to say you're going to hell, why would you want to do that?"

I've heard that line used before. Maybe not in the exact way but it still has a shock factor to it and comes off a little bit judgmental and really arrogant.

How about trying this approach:

"Thanks for waiting on our table... I'm going to lay a track on the table with your tip and would like you to read it when you get the chance."

See the difference? One way jumps into the water making the fish afraid and tries to grab them and strangle the fish into submission. The other leaves the bait out and lets the fish come to them.

Jesus was so amazing! Do you think the people came to hear Him because He was so loud and dragged them out to see Him? Let's take a look at another story.

John 4:3-42

This is the story of the woman from Samaria who met Jesus by the well. Notice in the story how Jesus simply asked for a drink of water? It amazes me how all He did was throw out a little bait to get her curious and asking questions. After that she went out and told the whole city about Him and they all came to see this man who simply asked for water!

Look at the stories of Elijah walking past Elishah where all Elijah did was cast His garment on the man and walk off. Moses just wanted to see a burning bush, Boaz showed kindness to Ruth (and she went to propose to HIM!), and Jesus

said to just lift Him up and He would draw all men to Himself. You don't have to jump into the water for the fish! Just send out the bait and let them come to you!

Jesus doesn't call fishers of men, He MAKES them!

I have seen so many people who ask *"How can I go out and witness to others? I don't feel right knocking on doors and I am not a preacher."* Jesus never called you expecting you or anyone else in the church for that matter to know anything about how to witness to someone.

What He did say you should do is follow Him. After that He will make you a key witness in someone's life. Remember, He called some to this ministry and some to that. Not everyone is equipped to be a fisherman, but you may be a harvester or herder. The point is that Jesus equips people in different ways.

It would be good for us to understand that the mouth that speaks can not do so without the nerves that carry signals from the brain. Even if you are not the mouth... you can support the ministry of another and win souls. Remember "He that wins souls is wise."

I will be honest, I love throwing out the big net rather than just a line.

I have witnessed to individual people before but I love a crowd. That is just how God chose to equip me. I go online to forums and just post simple messages that get people thinking. This is a great witnessing tool for someone who doesn't get out much. Believe me, online witnessing is NOT A BAD THING! I still get emails from people saying how their lives had been touched.

This is why I started SmallChurchAdvertising.com. I wanted to help churches grow in knowledge and souls. I design web sites and church advertising brochures for them. I guess you could say I am a supplier of nets and other fishing equipment for the church. I go so far as to call church business cards fishing poles since you can give them to your congregation to pass out to individual fish.

But not everyone knocks on doors, not everyone preaches, but everyone in the church has a job to do!

We will get into that in the next lesson.