

Fishers Of Men

I Will Make You Fishers of Men

“Now as he walked by the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men. And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him. And when he had gone a little further thence, he saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the ship mending their nets. And straightway he called them: and they left their father Zebedee in the ship with the hired servants, and went after him”
(Mark 1:16-20).



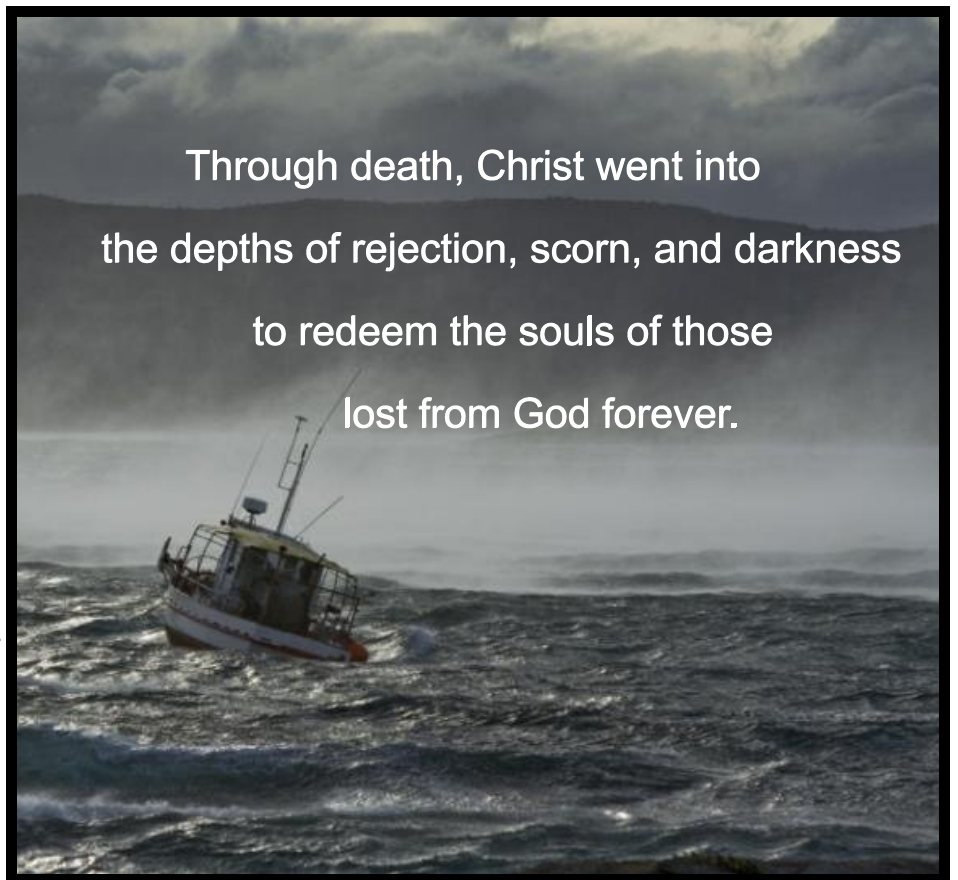
We've been talking a lot about farming for the past ten months. I felt it was time to take a break from farming and move on to fishing! Jesus not only used the example of farming to share about His kingdom, but He also used the example of fishing. In fact, several of Jesus first disciples were fishermen. He literally walked up to their boats and invited them to follow Him. Jesus spoke it to His first disciples there on the

shores of Galilee, and He still speaks it to us today; “I will make you fishers of men”. Immediately most of our thoughts turn to the concept of evangelization. We may assume that to be a fisher of men exclusively means that we go out and “catch” souls by sharing the gospel and leading them in a prayer of salvation. Just like regular fishermen, we can become proud of our “big catches” when the Lord moves on someone’s heart to receive Christ while using us as the vessel that shares and prays with them. Well praise God for evangelization and the great importance of leading people to receive Christ. By no means do I wish to lessen the importance of evangelization. Yet, receiving Christ as Savior is just the beginning. There is a greater “catching” of men that involves a deeper work of the Cross in us. In order to truly open our hearts to being made fishers of men we must first consider the method that Jesus used to catch fish.

Jesus Went Fishing From Calvary

*"I will bring my people again from the depths of the sea"
(Psalms 68:22b).*

In everything that Jesus said and did, He was always "Cross-minded". When it came to the true method and fulfillment of His ministry, Christ always spoke of the Cross as the way. In fact, Jesus said in John 12:24 that if He did not go to the cross and die He would bring forth no true and eternal fruit. In other words, for Jesus to catch mankind for eternity, He had to go through a deep death. Jesus did not just send a pamphlet down on a fishing line to those who were lost in chains of darkness, rather He became sin and made His bed in hell with the transgressors (Is. 53:9,12). Consider this in practical fishing terms. Imagine you are out at sea on a fishing vessel. You are ready to lower your net into a very dangerous and deep portion of the ocean. From the side of your boat you look down and wonder what might be lurking in those dark depths. In the case of typical fishing, only the net would have to go down into the murky blackness. But just consider if you were lowered into the lurking darkness rather than a net. Here is a slight picture of the kind of fishing Jesus did on Calvary. Through death, Christ went into the depths of rejection, scorn, and darkness to redeem the souls of those lost from God forever. Here we find the Great Fishermen Himself, setting His course from the cross of Calvary, venturing into the depths of loss and rejection. All of this that He might reach the fish He came to gather into the net of His heart. Jesus allowed Himself to be cast down into the realms of the rebels, those taken captive in chains of their own selfishness and sin. He was made to be sin, and that is a complete immersion into our corruption that we might find our new life in Him (II Cor. 5:21). He was able to reach all of mankind because He cast Himself into the lot and portion of the wicked (Is. 53:9). He did not simply preach a message of the great love, but brought salvation by giving Himself unto death. Only Jesus is capable of such love. And so Jesus the Great Fisherman becomes not only our teacher and example in the art of "fishing for men", but the very fulfillment in us as the only true Fisher. Christ in us is our hope of "catching men" (Col. 1:27).



We Are His Fishing Vessels

*“But we have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency may be of God and not of us”
(II Corinthians 4:7).*

Once we discover that it is Christ in us that MAKES us what we are (Jn. 8:36), we are ready stop working on our fishing techniques and starting crying out for Christ to be formed in us (Gal. 4:19). We must transition from being disciples learning about fishing methods and awaken to the reality that we are very Body where the Great Fisherman Himself lives and moves and expresses Himself. In Christ's resurrection we have become the Body of Jesus, the place where His Life manifests! As Christ grows in us, we will become conformed to His image. Paul put it this way in Phil. 3:10 *“That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death.”* Here Paul refers to being made conformable to His death. Paul understood that the Life of Jesus that was now in him still functioned through the way of the Cross (II Cor. 4:11-12). Therefore Paul prayed that he would be a vessel of Christ's nature that lays itself down for others. Paul wanted the Great Fisherman to live in him. As Christ is formed in us in this way, we are brought into the communion of His heart that will die for others. We are being “prepared to go fishing” by allowing Christ to form in us in His sacrificial nature. We are His fishing vessels, and it is through us that He will pour out His Life and reach mankind with His glorious self-giving love.

“I Will Send For Many Fishers”

*“Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that it shall no more be said, The Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; But, The Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither he had driven them: and I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers. Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith the Lord, and they shall fish them; and after will I send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks”
(Jeremiah 16:14- 16).*

Once Christ is formed in us to the degree that we have been made conformable to His self-giving nature, only then are we ready to be put out into the deep dark places where only the lost and drowning are found. Those who are vessels of the Great Fisherman can set their sails for such waters. They have been prepared through the indwelling Life of Jesus to throw themselves into dark unknown waters in the hope of reaching even one soul. The Good Shepherd gives His Life for His sheep, and the Great Fisherman gives His Life for His fish! Soon the lost soul drowning in depths of sin and despair feels the arms of a crucified messenger wrapping his net around them. In such an act of love and sacrifice, the desperate soul sees the beauty of Christ, and they are caught forever! They are carried out of their dead and drowning state and raised up as a new creature, a partaker of the Great Fisher Himself! Eventually these will learn to walk, to fly, to swim, and even to dive into the dark places of loss and pain for others. They will have transformed from the fish to the fisher, but in reality they have been translated from chains of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son!

Jesus, the Great Fisherman,
cast Himself into a deep death



to reach even the most unreachable
souls drowning in darkness.

This is a Fire ministries article By Kelly Koshatka
Meant to help draw your heart into a
Greater Hunger to pursue Jesus christ
As the One Who truly Lives in you.

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