



**Educate
+ Engage**



OUR MISSION
IS FISHIN'



It's Time
to go Fishin'

OVERVIEW

Jesus called Peter and Andrew to follow Him in Matthew 4. Since they were fishermen, Jesus related their life's purpose to their trade. He told them that as they followed Him, He would make them fishers of men. We have been made on purpose and with a purpose, which is to win souls and make disciples. In this series we learn how to be fishers of people.

This lesson focuses on inspiring students to fulfill the Great Commission—not only following Jesus—but also going into all the world to lead others to Him!

Scripture Passage

Matthew 4:18–20 (NKJV)

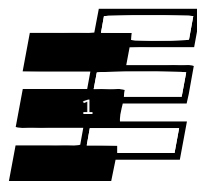
And Jesus, walking by the Sea of Galilee, saw two brothers, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. Then He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men." They immediately left their nets and followed Him.

EDUCATE

Consider this parable about a group who called themselves fishermen. There were many fish in the waters near where they lived. In fact, the whole area was surrounded by streams and lakes filled with fish. And the fish were hungry. Week after week, month after month, and year after year, these people who called themselves fishermen gathered in meetings and talked about their call to go fishing. However, they didn't actually go fishing.

This group of people collected money to be sent to fishermen all over the world to aid them in their endeavors to catch fish. Large, elaborate, and expensive buildings were built for the purpose of teaching fishermen how to fish, but nobody there fished! Imagine how hurt some were when one day a person suggested that those who don't catch fish were not really fishermen, no matter how much they claimed to be. They could dress like a fisherman. They could talk like a fisherman. They could have the mannerisms of a fisherman. They could even smell like a fisherman. Yet without actually catching fish, are they truly fishermen? Would you consider this group of people fishermen? Some might consider them posers.

We must refuse to just look, talk, and act the part; we must truly be fishers of people. God will use us to reach our friends and our family. We will forever be part of helping someone rise from death to life spiritually. We will win souls and make disciples. Our mission is fishin'!



Lesson 1

Point 1: Every time Jesus called His disciples to follow Him, He clearly commissioned them to go and lead others to a saving relationship with Him and develop them into fully devoted followers of Him. Can you name an instance in the Bible where such a charge was made? Examples are Matthew 5:14–16; Matthew 28:19; Mark 3:14–15; Mark 16:15; Acts 1:8; Romans 1:16; and I Peter 2:9. The call to follow God is inseparably interconnected to His call for us to invite others to follow Him as well. A true disciple makes more disciples.

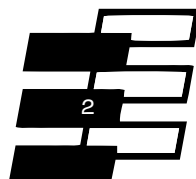
In Matthew 4 Jesus called Peter and Andrew to leave everything behind and follow Him. They would experience the greatest adventure ever: the call of God! They would travel the world and witness amazing miracles. They would see hundreds of lives changed because of Jesus. Wouldn't you want to help others feel the joy, peace, love, freedom, and salvation you experience in Jesus? We should strive to be followers of Him, which includes being fishers of people. Jesus wanted these two fishermen to understand their call, so He related it to what they knew so well: fishing. He called them to a life of catching people instead of fish. Like them, our mission is fishin'!

Discussion Question: If you were brand new to church, what would you think about the metaphor of fishing for people?

Point 2: People are desperately seeking hope and freedom. We know the answer is Jesus, but we must tell them about Jesus. A study was done to find out how people got into a relationship with Jesus and started attending church:

- Special Need 1–2%
- Walk-In 2–3%
- Because of the pastor 5–6%
- Visitation 1–2%
- Sunday school 4–5%
- Evangelistic crusade or TV show .5%
- Church program 2–3%
- Friend or relative 75–90%

We learn from this study that the vast majority of people found their relationship with Jesus because a friend told them about Him. Our mission to fish can be accomplished by investing in relationships, interceding in prayer, and inviting others into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ.



Lesson 1

Bishop Stan Gleason says that we should turn sinners into friends and friends into disciples. The way we do this is through the three I's: investing, interceding, and inviting. In what way can you invest in relationships? Through positive interactions, people will know you truly care about them. As we often hear it said, people don't care how much you know until they know how much you care. Who can you spend time with and build a relationship with, and how can you show them you care? "Fish" are all around us; we have to spend time reaching for them because our mission is fishin'!

Discussion Question: How did you come to a relationship with Jesus?

Point 3: You were made on purpose and with a purpose. What does that mean to you? God did not make a mistake when He designed you. You were intentionally created and you have unique talents, characteristics, and giftings. God gave you these attributes to be part of His mission to seek and to save those who are lost. It's like a flashlight. A flashlight isn't accidentally made; a flashlight is made to shine light through darkness. God made us to have a relationship with Him and for us to help others connect to Him.

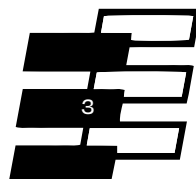
Why did God not immediately take you to Heaven when you were born again of water and of the Spirit? He is not willing that any should perish but that all enter into a saving relationship with Him. That is where you and I come in. As the body of Christ, we should actively be reaching for others. We are called not just to follow God but to go. We are called to be fishers of men. Our mission is fishin' and dishin' out the gospel!

Discussion Question: Who are you reaching for right now?

Closing

In order for us to be followers of Christ, we need to actively lead others into a saving relationship with Jesus and develop them into fully devoted followers of Him. The call to follow Him always comes with a commission to go!

People all around us are waiting for the hope we have experienced. We have to build relationships with them as we lead them to Jesus. The majority of people in church are there chiefly because someone invested in them and invited them.



Lesson 1

We are made on purpose and with a purpose. Fishin' for souls is both our purpose and our mission. You could not only change someone's life, but you could change their eternity. There are people you are connected to who are desperate for the answer you have. Let's share Jesus with them. Let's realize our responsibility and the opportunity we have to invest, intercede, and invite.

By doing these things, we won't be like the parable from earlier. We won't merely look, talk, and act the part; we will evangelize and disciple. We will win souls and make disciples. We will reach, teach, and preach. We will catch fish, fulfilling our mission to be fishers of men.

ENGAGE

Whom do you know right now that you could invest in, intercede for, and invite to know Jesus? What's their name? Write it down on a piece of paper or type it into your phone so you can carry it with you. Then take a moment to pray for a few things:

1. That you feel the burden to reach them and understand that your mission is to win souls and make disciples
2. That you are confident enough to invest and invite
3. That you remember to passionately intercede for them
4. That you realize the responsibility and opportunity to be a fisher of people
5. Lastly, that you will not be ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ that leads to salvation

Every day this week look at the name or names you wrote down. Pray daily for them, and at least one time this week, have a meaningful connection with them. Let's go fulfill our mission. It's time to go fishin'!

