



**Educate
+ Engage**



OUR MISSION
IS FISHING



Hooked:
Mastering the Art
of Fishing

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 wise methods of articulating the truth.

Scripture Passage

Matthew 4:18–20 (NKJV)

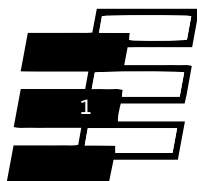
And Jesus, walking by the Sea of Galilee, saw two brothers, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. Then He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men." They immediately left their nets and followed Him.

EDUCATE

We can know truth and present it incorrectly. Imagine you are a doctor and you have to tell a family member that their loved one is going to pass away soon. Is there a wrong way to do this? Yes—announcing the upcoming death matter-of-factly and cold-heartedly. Wise doctors share upsetting news with kindness and compassion. Keeping reality a secret would be unfair and wrong; we must speak the truth, but we should tell what we know gracefully and with compassion.

The same is true about articulating the Word of God. We need to be honest and truthful with others that sin leads to eternal separation from Jesus (Romans 6:23). We should also be kind in our approach (Colossians 4:6). We must be unashamed when presenting Jesus just like Paul did in Romans 1:16, but we must be wise in that boldness. Today we are going to learn some practical methods on how to present Jesus with grace and truth.

Point 1: In our last lesson we discussed meeting people at the point of their need. This approach is vital, so we are going to discuss it even further. Let's go through some scenarios of how we can meet people at the point of their need.



Lesson 3

Scenario 1

How can we meet someone on common ground who grew up in church but has been away from God for years?

The answer definitely isn't to tell them they are going to Hell since they walked away from God. The answer could be found in Romans 8:1 and I John 1:8–9. We could help them to better understand forgiveness and restoration.

Scenario 2

How can we meet someone on common ground who believes something different on how to be saved than what the Bible declares?

The answer isn't to mock the beliefs that have been in their family for generations and declare them mere traditions. The answer could be to affirm that they love God and are seeking after Him, and let them know that God's Spirit can continue to guide them to full truth (John 16:13).

Scenario 3

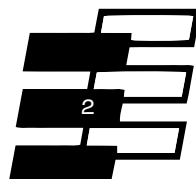
How can we meet someone on common ground who has never been to church or had a Bible study before?

The answer isn't to start with some often hard-to-understand prophecies, such as in the Book of Daniel or the Book of Revelation. The answer is to start with something that would be easier to understand like the Gospel of John.

We are reviewing this principle because if we are going to be successful fishers of men, we will catch them in the water where they live. Our mission is fishin'!

Discussion Question: When someone has questions about what you believe, how do you usually answer?

Point 2: People can and will argue about lots of different things, but one thing people can't disprove is your experience. Acts 1:8 declares that we will be witnesses when we are filled with His Spirit. A witness is someone who tells what they have seen and heard. We should be a witness of what God has done in our lives. A great pattern for how to share our testimony is "Before. How. Now."



Lesson 3

- **Before** my life was like...
- This is **how** God changed my life...
- **Now** my life is like...

Let's look at an example in the Bible that follows this pattern: the demon possessed man in Matthew 12.

- **Before**, he was possessed.
- Jesus healing him is **how** he was changed.
- **Now** he was no longer possessed, became a follower of Jesus, and proclaimed God's praises throughout town.

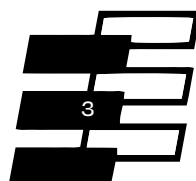
Before I was bound by and suffering the consequences of sin. One day I was born again by repenting of my sins, being baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit. That is **how** Jesus changed my life. **Now** I have joy and peace. I don't live with the same harmful habits I used to deal with before Jesus changed my life.

No one can argue the evidence of our life forever being different since we were born again! Take a few moments and write down your testimony using the "Before. How. Now." pattern. One of the greatest tools we have as a fisher of men is our testimony. Our testimony is the "bait" that people hear causing them to want to know more about Jesus. People all around you and me desperately desire hope. Let's share our testimony and tell them about Jesus. Our mission is fishin'!

Discussion Question: How many times have you shared your testimony in the last month or so? How can you share your testimony more?

Point 3: Having faith that God can change and save lives is imperative. Yet we must understand that fishing is more of an art than a science. You can have the picture-perfect weather, best bait, ideal fishing reel, and perfect conditions but still not catch fish. On other days, even in the worst of conditions, it seems like every time you cast into the water, you're catching something.

The same is true for winning souls and making disciples. Don't become so systematic in your approach that you are not being Spirit-led or flexible. On the other hand, don't try to rush the process so much that you aren't being practical in your approach.



Because making disciples is an art not a science, patterns that work for some will not work for others. Just like there are saltwater fish and freshwater fish, people are extremely different. Some fish like bait that floats on the surface of the water, while others like live bait that sinks below the surface. Some fish require you to set the hook while others don't. These fishing examples may seem puzzling if you are not into fishing. But the main point is that fishing is an art not a science.

The essential ingredient in every scenario is the "hook:" the Word of God. For one Bible study, a verse of Scripture in Matthew will be just what causes a light bulb moment. For someone else, a story in Genesis will cause the "ah-ha" moment of understanding. Don't get frustrated in the process; everyone is different. Ask God to lead you to help you lead others to Him.

Discussion Question: What is the most fascinating story or miracle in the Bible to you?

Closing

To be an effective fisher of people, we need a bait and hook. Our bait is our testimony, and the hook is the Word of God. Let us remember that one of the most important things about winning souls and making disciples is to first meet them on common ground so we can lead them to holy ground. A great bridge to that holy ground is our testimony. People are drawn to the changes that only God can make in our lives. They want that same change. How people get to Jesus will not always be the same, but they all have the same need for Jesus. Our mission is fishin', so let's go change lives with the good news of Jesus!

ENGAGE

Pray that God will help you love the process of soul winning and disciple making. Remember the person for whom you have been praying and trying to practically connect with. This week take some time to think through your testimony. Once you feel like you have a full grasp on it, share it with your friend. The God moments that result as you share your testimony will be amazing.

Also pray for wisdom to approach people with grace and truth. Pray that your testimony will further their interest in Jesus.

