



Fishers of Men by Gene Easley

“And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. ¹⁹And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. ²⁰And they straightway left *their* nets, and followed him” (Matthew 4:19).

There is a difference between a fisherman who is a fisherman by trade and one who does it as a hobby or as a sport. If fishing is a hobby and you don't catch anything, it's okay. You have other things going on in your life. But the fisherman who makes his living off of fishing has to get a real burden for it. After all, his life depends upon it.

When Jesus called His disciples to be fishers of men, He wasn't inviting them to join a sport's club to go out once a week and cast their nets. If they caught something, well and good, but if not, it is just a sport, it doesn't really matter. They had other things to live for.

Christ calling for fishers of men was talking about something for which they would be required to give their whole lives. They would be required to surrender their lives to a new purpose. Let me ask you: when we attend church on Sunday morning only, has it become to us no more than a hobby? Do we spend a little time there, but we are unwilling to give our lives for it?

Peter, Andrew, James and John were professional fishermen. They weren't fishing to pass their leisure time. When Jesus called them to be fishers of men, they could well understand the analogy. They knew Jesus wanted them to put the same fervor into soul winning as they had on their boats on the Sea of Galilee in order to catch fish. This fishing would be as important to them as the fishing which had allowed them to feed their families.

It was a “must” to become good fishermen. And there were things they learned through experience that enabled them to be successful in their profession. They gave themselves to it and enjoyed a certain amount of success. At least they seemed to have been gaining their livelihood by this means.

But the disciples were now being called to give up their trade and to learn how to win souls. They would learn how to become a fisher of men—just as they had learned how to catch the fish on the waters of Galilee. The call was demanding, life changing. And one who answers this call will find that the rewards of catching men are so much greater than commercial fishing. While not many give themselves to a life of casting nets, all Christians are called to the task of soul winning. All are eligible for its blessings.

Daniel spoke (Daniel 12:3) about the rewards of winning souls. In Proverbs 11:30, soul winners are called wise. Paul spoke (1 Thessalonians 2:19) about the crown of rejoicing that comes as a result of bringing people to Christ.

How much prayer and effort do we give to winning the lost? Have we heard the call of Jesus? Do we comprehend the great reward? Will we sacrifice our everyday wishes to become fishers of men? Are we willing to give up all to answer His call?