

Fishers of Men

MEMORY VERSE:

"Don't be afraid; from now on you will catch men."

Luke 5:10

Six weeks had passed since Jesus had been baptised by his cousin, John. It was now time for him to start teaching the people about the good news of the Kingdom. Coming out of the wilderness, he didn't go back to Nazareth where he had grown up but went to dwell in Capernaum, a little town by the sea.

One day when he was walking down by the sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon and Andrew working on their nets. They were fishermen. Jesus walked down to them and watched them getting ready to go out fishing. Quietly he said to them, "Come after me and I will make you fishers of men." And both brothers left their nets there beside their boats and followed Jesus.

A little further down, Jesus came across two more brothers, John and James, mending their nets. He called to them as well and right away they put down their nets and leaving their father in the boats with the hired servants, they followed Jesus.

Jesus talked to them about God, his Father and how much God wanted everyone to believe in Him and do good things. Jesus told them about the promise of a day when the earth would be full of God's glory and how people from all ages who loved God would live forever free of pain and sadness and evil.

Simon, Andrew, James and John would have been excited to hear what Jesus had to say! But they were fishermen and that was how they made their living. So they went back to their boats and out to the sea and fished all night. When day came, they made their weary way back to shore, sadly disappointed. They had caught nothing. There they met Jesus talking to a crowd of people so large that Jesus finally asked Simon if he could sit in his boat and teach the people from there.

When he had finished speaking, he told Simon, "Go out to the deep water and throw in your nets!" Simon wasn't too happy about doing it. They had just been fishing all night and caught nothing. But he obeyed Jesus, and no sooner had they let down their nets than it was full of fish and the net began to break. They called loudly to James and John to come and help them and soon both boats were full and the boats began to sink!

Simon saw at once that it was a miracle. He was ashamed that he had been busy washing and mending his nets while Jesus taught the people. He had been too busy to listen! If he was going to follow Jesus, he must count everything else as unimportant. God would provide whatever they needed as this miracle had clearly shown. They must spend their time teaching people about God's kingdom, and "fishing for men"!

The night before Jesus chose his special friends, he went up into a mountain to pray

to God. It was an important decision and Jesus needed God to guide him. The next morning, he named twelve men from his followers to be his "disciples" or students. They were not well-educated or rich, but he knew their hearts and he was the best teacher they could have. Later on they would become "apostles" and go out to teach about the coming Kingdom of God.

Things to Remember

- We must try to be disciples of Jesus and learn what he would have us do.
- To do this we must leave things that take up too much of our time.
- If we put God first, He will take care of us.

Discussion

Jesus wanted his disciples to leave behind their old ways of life and listen and learn from him. Of course not everyone can leave their jobs and simply follow Jesus, but we can certainly make sure that we put God first in our lives and leave behind the things that simply take our time. God has promised that if we put Him first and obey Him, He will take care of us.

Do you know what the word "disciple" mean?

Do you know what the word "apostle" means?

What did Jesus do before choosing his disciples?

Activity Suggestions

Fold a piece of paper crosswise in concertina fashion so that there are five folds (making six sections). Cut the paper in half and then draw a simple person shape on each top section, making sure the hands and feet touch the fold. Cut away the excess paper from the head and the sides leaving the hands and feet connected. Unfold and draw in the clothes and faces of your twelve disciples. Write their names on them.

Make some pretty fish out of light cardboard. Decorate them with markers, maybe some glitter glue. Attach a paper clip to each fish. Tie a length of string to the end of a stick and attach a magnet to the other end of the piece of string. Put the fish in a box and go fishing!