

PRACTICAL LIVING SERIES FIVE
GO FISH
Pastor Jack Schull
Mark 1:14-20; Acts 4:13; Luke 5:5; I Peter 3:15

Welcome:

Turn with me to Mark 1

ST

→ when I was kid, my dad took me fishing. How many of you have ever been fishing?

Leave the house early...got the canoe and began the trek to get it in the water, load all the stuff, get the gear set, Paddle down the river in PA. it was a pristine setting...birds chirping, breeze. My dad Showed me how to cast – got on the bait – then the moment arrived for my cast, I

Raised the rod and began the motion of bringing it back...what transpired next was extraordinary – a kind of thing you'd read about in a magazine...

(stop the story – walk to center stage)

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but I'll come back to: the rest of the story *as Paul Harvey would say*: let's peek in on another story about some guys fishing. This is the calling of the 1st disciples and there is a paramount truth within this narrative that has far reaching implications for you and me. Glenn and I want to take the next 2 wks to continue a journey on discovering what the spiritual life Jesus invites us too is about...as it comes to aligning with him in regards to following and fishing...

MK 1: 14-15 (there are 4 stories about Jesus' life – 4 gospel accts) Mark is the shortest acct

- John (John the baptist)
- Jesus went in preaching the good news of God
- “time has come; is near”
 - You were given this promise to Abraham, Moses – that a day would come where God himself would make things new – establish forever a people unto himself -
 - You've had false messiahs – now God is going to make good on the promise you've held onto for years.
 - Jews would have felt like ‘finally’ we're going to be freed from Roman rule

→ ‘repent’ in the OT – was about getting ready for God to do something; **it was a precursor** to God doing something

→ Jesus uses this term: to turn your attention toward God, have a change of mind/heart, get your heart aligned with what God is about to do. Get ready – don't miss it – don't sleep through it.

ILL

How many of you have ever seen a meteor shower? I might have seen one – I intend to see them - I mean too, want to; but I end up sleeping right through it. The shower doesn't happen b/c people are out there looking – it happens whether you're aware or not...just those who are awake to what's going on – see it, experience it.

- Jesus is saying God is getting ready to do something that you've been waiting for: don't miss it...

Look at MK 1 16-17a

MK 1: 16-17a

- i'll make you more spiritual; more disciplined; more organized; a better father, better mother, better friend,
- I'll make you more holy, honest!

NO → he's going to make you (to become) a fisher of MEN (of people)...

MK 1: 17-20

- i'm sure that these disciples (which we name our kids after) may not have heard him; or were confused by that phrase: *fishers' of men*
 - common phrase for philosophers/teachers – who captured men's minds/hearts by teaching and persuasion

→ Jesus is saying this key principle/reality: **FOLLOWERS = FISH**

→ but by the end of the N.T. – these 4 were sharing msg they heard/learned from Jesus

-sharing in their own spheres of influence

-in their own voices and personalities

-God used these men to relay the msg of God's love and reconciliation plan through Jesus to their generation – those people understood to follow meant to fish, and they told others, who understood to follow was to fish – and they told others, who told others... 'til 2000 yrs later, ½ round the world we gather to celebrate and worship Jesus - this Jewish Carpenter → b/c somehow, someway, somewhere God brought someone along in your life too 'fish' for you and fish for me!

And it wasn't just these guys – who had some religious background & with wrinkle free past

→ it was people who had troubled past...there was:

- tax collectors
- prostitutes
- woman who'd been married 5x
- guy plagued by demons – that Jesus freed and sent back to home town
- lepers – the outcasts of society

All types of people → fisher's of men (all kinds; anyone and everyone is welcome to participate in what God was up too – that's the msg of Jesus...

That's what Jesus is saying about your life and my life as a follower...he says "you come follow me and I WILL MAKE, HELP YOU BECOME A FISHER"

- now for many of us – we're like 'hey, I don't think I signed up for that' that seems intimidating
- "I can't do that" – "I'm not good enough" "I'll mess it up"...

--pause--

ST (cont'd)

→ as I was saying, we were in the canoe, we had the gear, I brought my arm back and brought my arm forward to cast the line...the problem was I didn't hold onto the pole...it went flying about 10 feet away into the water...I'm not an expert fisherman by any stretch – but in that moment it was confirmed by my father's bewildered face and muffled yell that – wasn't the correct thing to do. I will never forget the face of confusion and the 'what did you do – why?' as he had to hope out of the canoe in one motion and troll the bottom of the chest high water to try to retrieve the pole...

→ you know how people stutter – not in complete sentences when they're flustered...that was my dad...

→ when I 1st started: I sure put a bewildered look onto my dad's face – I was a pure rookie – an amateur that didn't have it all figured out ...

- I wasn't a great fishermen...it took practice and the process of him showing me – helping me become better...

I'm sure Jesus had those bewildered moments:

- Time where his disciples ran off the children – Jesus is saying that was my visual aid you just got rid of; I was going to illustrate what kind of faith it takes for God (okay bring back kids)
- Time where they don't like the reception they got from Samaritans and they asked him about calling down fire upon them...burn them up –
- Time they argued about who is the greatest – in front of Jesus; that's like 2 ants arguing about who is bigger in front of an elephant...

→ they struggled to get this – (and so will we at times)...but it's about following and letting God do what he says he is going to do...his power, his transformation at work within us

→ **this is a process of becoming a fisher of men** and it may not be great right out the shoot, but as you follow – Jesus will be faithful to continue to work within you...he's great at taking the ordinary and transforming it into the extraordinary!

ACTS 4:13

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Let's look at 2 quick aspects of this story that show us something about this process – this journey Jesus is inviting his disciples into...

MK 1:18 They left there nets and followed...doesn't this sound weird?

→ I used to think this was like “JEDI JESUS” mind trick: *you will follow me know...*

LK 5: (miracle catch)

- They've been fishing all night – b/c that's when you fish...tending and mending nets on shore
- Jesus preaching there b/c crowds were large – afterwards - says let's go fishing in the heat of the day
- You don't fish at daylight?! – b/c we're fishermen – we know...you're a carpenter! The only thing we'd catch right now is a sunburn!
- Peter feels guilty 'cause he's just heard a free sermon – so they go out and Jesus says cast your net and they pull in so many fish that the nets begin to break, call partners, both boats are so full they begin to sink – Peter's in shock – they're all astonished
- Pull boats back on shore and left their nets/everything and followed him!

→ **FOLLOW THE MAN THAT FILLED OUR BOATS!!**

They followed Jesus b/c of what they saw and experienced – b/c of what he did for them!

Truth is: we do too!

→ now, if you're not a Xtian: skeptical feelings; that's why I don't like...

**you need to know that we follow this Jesus b/c: We want too – We like HIM!

You're surrounded by people who are just like you – who don't think that we're better – we just know we're better off than we used to be!

We're glad someone fished for us – some people were used by God to get our attention – we're glad we got caught out of our brokenness

We like what God is doing around us, in us and through us – and b/c of that; how could we not share with others the invitation to experience the same kind of hope, love and life we're experiencing...

Somewhere (if you're a Christian – you're aware):

→ God did something in your life that was profound – healed you, repaired your broken heart, brought you out of a bad situation; you experienced an approval, acceptance and meaning you were searching for...

→ and he's still active – doing things in your life so that you experience his love and presence and guidance in fresh ways! (we gather in ABF communities, coffee conversations – to share the praises of what God is doing AND to pray for his intervention b/c we know what he can do!

The Bible shows us that God is intimately attuned to you – to me – that he's not reluctant to minister to our needs and He wants to be our deliverer and provider.

→ they left their nets to follow b/c their lives were filled with something they couldn't produce on their own!

Another thing: GOD'S LOVE AND CALL INTERSECTED THEIR LIFE AT THE RIGHT MOMENT!!

Think about Peter, James, Andrew John → if it's one thing they knew – it was fishing. It was their very livelihood → yet Jesus steps into their world and provides for them better than they could on their own. Think about how that would have felt...in that moment!

Luke 5:5 → we've worked hard all night, nothing...

Jesus says, trust me – follow my lead...and this overwhelming, miraculous catch...

→ perfect God precise timing

→ Some of you here: that was you! You knew life and how to manage and work – get things done. You didn't need help...until it came to that one night – or that season where things just didn't seem to work anymore...and you're sitting on the shore of life trying to figure out what to do...and Jesus intersected your path and something clicked – as you began to trust him, your life took an amazing turn...things made sense and you began to experience a kind of life that you had tried to build on your own, but never quite acquired...

Jesus knew their business better than they did!

We have those moments where God provides – he shows up and in ways that are almost overwhelming – he does something that goes beyond what I can imagine...

Ephesians 3:20

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine,

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Jesus is saying I'll take care of you – you follow me – and as you follow me –

If you'll let me → I'm going to take your eyes off the 'what have I done for you lately' and make you a person that begins looking to help others connect with God's love – to experience this God who is fishing and searching for them!!!

I'll make YOU a fisher of men

I'm going to leverage all the stuff that is in your life – all your circumstances, past, future – your successes, failures, THE WHO YOU ARE, WHERE YOU ARE, YOUR LIFE EXPERIENCES,

so that you are perfectly positioned to impact someone else's' faith...with the love of God!

I want to use you – the messenger
 With ME – the message
 To intersect others in their circumstances -- @ just right moments...

---IF WE LET HIM MAKE THAT CHANGE IN US---

b/c followers = fish!

Quote:
 Preach the Gospel at all times and when necessary use words.
St. Francis of Assisi

Some of you might say: Jack – that's easy for you, you're a pastor!
 I'd say: no it's great for you – your not a pastor! → people expect me to talk about it...reluctant...

→ we can all begin to make arguments for why we're not good fishers of men
 → but Jesus says: come follow me and I will make you fishers of men (if you let me) I don't expect you to have it all figured out
 → this isn't a method – or about methodology

this is a process that I want to do in your heart!

In NT – there is this correlation between following and fishing... Jesus said “I'm going to make you fishers of men...i'm going to do something in you that you're not already able to do...transform you!”

ILL

Extreme home makeover or Trading Spaces

→ they take something that is already there – and then transform it into something that it wasn't!

Followers = fish

There is somebody that will listen to you that won't listen to me...God wants all his followers to fish...

Look what Peter writes later in his life – see if you can notice the pattern, the process...

1 Peter 3:15a

- Follow Christ
- He will make you fishers – so be aware...don't miss it

God wants to perfectly position you to bring his message of hope/love – thru your unique style and story – at just the right moment in someone's life → b/c ultimately FOLLOWERS = FISH!

its getting to a place where our prayer – our attitude in living everyday is:

- God, if you can use my unique past, present, future – my life experiences - if you can use me to impact the faith of another – then use me – make me usable!
- I'm going to be on the lookout for who you have perfectly positioned me to impact and reach with your love

Conclusion:

→ today I want to invite you and I to practice remembering. In a couple different ways...

#1 fish letter

remembering that we were all fish once

– all lost, separated from God and yet God saw us and used someone with his love to intersect our life in the right moments to bring us to Jesus or bring us back to him...

I want to challenge you to write a letter to that person, group of people - don't have to send it...**just get your heart to remember that God saw you, he called you – he was fishing for you...**

- Write a letter to the ones that introduced you to God's love or who were instrumental in your life reconnecting to Jesus.

→ maybe you're here and your not a follower of Jesus; but maybe you'd begin to search your heart and ask God to remind you of the ways he's been active in your life – the ways he's noticed and intervened – the people he's putting around you to meet your needs and reveal himself to you...

READ MY LETTER AS AN EXAMPLE

→ I cried...this week...remembering out of a grateful heart God went fishing for me, through some very dear people that were willing to let him make them into fishers – givers of His love to me!

#2 remembrance through communion

I want us to approach the communion table...as an act of remembrance that Jesus not only sought us out, but was willing to pay the debt we owed on our behalf. That cost him dearly – but he thought you were worth it!

Ephesians 2: 1b, 4-5

***So as our ushers come to pass out the bread – we meditate on Jesus' , won't you prepare your hearts –

Communion with 2 songs in b/t...
1 Cor 11

Closing prayer after cup:

We're going to close our time in one more song, so let me pray for us...

God, we choose this day to remember that you loved us first – that your love pursued us -- that you brought some people into our lives to fish for us – thank you. Father – help us to be people that follow after you – but who aren't content with simply following – but engage in your desire that to follow means to fish.