



# FISH IN THE BOAT

# OPPORTUNITY

- Jesus never said evangelism would be *easy*, but He does make it clear that we would have plenty of opportunities.
- The key is to be **DISTINCTIVE**. The people loved hearing Jesus preach because He stood out, “speaking with authority, and not as their scribes” (Matt. 7:28-29). He broached subjects that were taboo with refreshing frankness, reached out to outcasts and the marginalized, and was not afraid to call out those in leadership for their hypocrisy.
- A later story involving a tax-gatherer (Matthew/Levi) serves as an illustration of this very point (Luke 5:27-32).

“Matthew may have been only one of that numerous class to whom religion is merely a matter quite outside of, and in another region from life, and who, having first gone astray through ignorance, feel themselves even farther repelled, or rather shut out, by the narrow, harsh uncharitableness of those whom they look upon as religious and pious.

But now quite another day had dawned on him. The Prophet from Nazareth was not like those other Rabbis, or the pietist, self-righteous imitators. There was something about Him which not only aroused the conscience, but drew the heart — compelling, not repelling... His very appearance bespoke Him not harsh, self-righteous, far away, but the Helper, if not even the Friend, of sinners.”

*The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, Edersheim, p. 358

A photograph of a wooden pier with fishing nets and buoys in the foreground, and the ocean in the background. The pier is made of weathered wooden planks. In the foreground, there is a large pile of tangled white fishing nets and several wooden buoys. The ocean is visible in the background, with gentle waves. The overall scene is peaceful and suggests a coastal setting.

**Similarly, our stand for simple New Testament teaching will be refreshing if we simply live it (Acts 5:12-14)!**



# **MONTE VISTA'S BUILT-IN CONVERSATION STARTERS**

- **Why do we sing? Avoid discussing it in negative terms (i.e., why we don't have a band).**
- **Why do we drive so far to worship and work with Monte Vista?**
- **Preaching content — Don't be afraid to direct friends, co-workers, and neighbors to our online resources so that they can hear, watch, and read what you get to be a part of every week!**
- **Why do we want our kids to be a part of our worship? What are they learning in Bible class? What about parents?**

# TEAMWORK

- Even Jesus recruited people to help Him — not because He couldn't do it by Himself, but because His desire was to build a kingdom where teamwork, community, and accountability to the job were at a premium (John 15:15-16, 17:11-21).
- Evangelism doesn't have to be a lonely job. Find others who are willing to join you for a Bible study, or volunteer to help during the week following up with visitors or sitting in on a study with our preachers or elders.
- Jesus was very intentional with His recruiting (John 6:70). He found people with potential and put them to work!

# **“BUT AT YOUR BIDDING”**

- **“The deep water” — Get out of your comfort zone, do something you have never done before, stop letting your excuses dictate your level of investment in kingdom work.**
- **“We worked hard all night” — Not every evangelistic effort will work out. Sometimes it just feels like we’re hitting our heads against a wall!**
- **“But at your bidding” — We do not evangelize at our convenience, but when Jesus calls us to the work. Perhaps it is just a matter of getting out of the gospel’s way and trusting that it will work on receptive hearts.**

A close-up, low-angle shot of a fishing net floating on the surface of the ocean. The net is made of dark, fine-mesh material and is strung with a line of large, light-brown wooden floats. The floats are arranged in a diagonal line from the top right towards the bottom left. The water is a deep blue with some whitecaps. The background is slightly blurred, showing the horizon and a distant landmass.

# AN AMAZING CATCH OF FISH

# AMAZEMENT

- Peter and his companions certainly would have used every trick they knew to attract the fish the night before. It was only when the fish were drawn by the power of God that the fishermen had any success (John 6:44, Acts 16:14).
- Human wisdom, gimmicks and giveaways, moral compromise, etc., might work to bring in big numbers, but that doesn't mean anybody has been converted. The numbers are not amazing — the love of God is (Romans 5:6ff)! While the gospel produced quite a catch on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:41), it was just as amazing when only a single soul was saved at a time (Acts 8:35-39, Luke 15:7, 10).



# “FISHERS OF MEN”

All other endeavors seem trivial compared to the work of teaching lost souls the Gospel!

# THE “EASY” CATCH

- Remember that not everybody out there is going to be hard to convince. Believe it or not, people still want the Gospel (Matt. 9:37f) and are only in need of a little guidance and encouragement. Instead of spending all our time casting our pearls before swine (Matt. 7:6), let's make sure we are not wasting the opportunities that are right in front of us.
- Children of Christians, visitors from the neighborhood, friends and co-workers who are receptive, etc. If this story from Luke teaches us anything, it's that Jesus will make sure we are never lacking opportunity. We must seize the fish that are jumping into the boat! Remember Isaiah 2:2-4.