

Lesson #1-We were all Fish Once

Welcome

Opening Prayer: Heavenly Father, we begin this journey together by giving You thanks. We pray that our lives can be used to make a difference in this world and bring honor to You. The most significant thing we can do is to simply love You and choose to love others, so please help us walk with humility and grace as we share Your truth. Fill us with Your spirit and open the eyes of our hearts so that we can honestly understand what it means to live as children of light. Help us to share our love for You so that those we encounter can see that nothing can separate us, or them, from that love. May we walk with joy as we serve You. Amen

INTRODUCTION TO EACH ONE REACH ONE

Why are we doing this? And why are you here?

Scripture is clear that the great commission is not directed just to a few trained pastors or missionaries. It is given to everyone who is a follower of Jesus. We have been given the ministry of reconciliation. We must shift from a passive Christian attitude to one of intentionally following Jesus in telling others about Him. We, the church, need to get serious about reaching people who are far from God.

- Matt 4:19
Come follow me, Jesus said, and I will make you fishers of men.
- Matt 28:18-20
Then Jesus came to them and said, all authority in heaven and `earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age.
- 2 Cor 5:19-20
God was reconciling the world to himself in Jesus Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: be reconciled to God.
- 1 Ptr 3:15
But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.
- Psalm 107:1-2 Give thanks to the Lord for he is good, his love endures forever. Let the redeemed of the Lord tell their story, those he redeemed from the hand of the foe.

The Word of the Lord, Thanks be to God

The objective of Each One Reach One is to minimize the barriers that restrain us from talking about Jesus and His good news with people in our sphere of influence. Our intention is to educate, equip, encourage and empower each member of CCPC to become a disciple who is not only unafraid, but motivated to share Jesus with others. We have no need to “sell” Jesus by making a grand presentation; we can plant seeds and water them in our everyday conversations and interactions with others.

Remember, it is not our responsibility to “save” people. God does that. We are to introduce others to Jesus, invite them into a relationship with Him and let the Holy Spirit lead them to the Lord. Success is not forcing someone to make a commitment to Christ.

Ask someone to read Matt.4:19. What do these words say you?

(a) Jesus invites us to follow and He will make us fishers of men. For what purpose?

Not to simply make us better people who do good things, not simply to get us into heaven. Scripture says we are to be his ambassadors, reconcilers, people who GO into the world.

(b) What type of people did Jesus use in his ministry to fish? Tax collectors, demon possessed, woman at the well, many women, even dead people, sinners of all stripes.

As Christians, we each have a story to tell about our personal encounters with Jesus, so we should tell people what Jesus has done and is doing in our life. And tell them who Jesus is and why he should be critical to their own life, both now and for eternity. What we need to do is ALLOW Jesus to make us fishers. Get out of our focus on the now, the temporal, and look to the eternal—for ourselves, our loved ones, our friends, for all God’s people.

Let’s watch the first video from Andy Stanley who tells us we were all fish once!

Start video. About 15 minutes.

Ask for reactions to Andy’s message.

Discussion questions.

1. what obstacles keep you from being a fisher of men?
2. Who is someone that God has perfectly positioned you to influence?

Our key right now is to **pray**; to seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit in every phase of our learning, our practice, our steps of obedience. **Pray** about everything! Especially pray that the Lord will show you the person/people He wants you to “fish for”.

How can you pray for that someone you just identified? Will you commit to praying for them daily this week?

- pray for the Lord to prepare their heart to hear and receive His message;
- pray for the Lord to present opportunities for you to talk to them about spiritual things and give us the words to speak;
- pray they will feel a deep need to know Jesus;
- pray for the Lord to make you bold enough to walk through the open door He has prepared for you.

Closing Prayer: Lord, as we begin this journey of faith to become more comfortable witnessing for you, we admit our fear and doubt that what we learn will be sufficient to cause us to be vibrant witnesses for You. We don't doubt You, Lord, but we doubt ourselves. And yet, the desire of our heart is to please You – is to be that witness You call us to be. It is encouraging that You take responsibility for “making” us fishers of men, and that our part is to be willing to be followers. It is encouraging to hear that You have placed us here in this particular time and place to be Your fishers of men to those living in this time and place with us.

Andy Stanley said, “The Christian life is a process of laying down our agendas and getting in on God's.” In the weeks ahead, help us to imagine doing just that! May Your desire for our lives become our own desire. In the name of the One who promises to make us what we could not, on our own, ever be. In the name of Jesus, may be willing to be made into Your “fishers.” Amen.

Halverson Benediction:

“You go nowhere by accident. Wherever you go, God is sending you. Wherever you are, God has put you there, He has a purpose in you being there. Christ who indwells you, has something He wants you to do through you, wherever you are. Christ who indwells you, has something He wants you to do through you, wherever you are.”