

Lesson # 4 - Fishing Buddies

Opening Prayer: Sovereign God – ever present, all knowing, and all powerful, we say those words as if we believe them, yet we doubt You are truly in control of our lives. Then we read Scripture and see where You carried out Your sovereign will at times in spite of prayers against the direction You ordained.

Remind us, Lord, that You are in control! Open our eyes as You did the disciples, so that we, like them, will see clearly and be bold to speak for You. In spite of the cost, whatever the cost, it is our desire to cooperate with Your sovereign will.

May the depth of our faith in You give us unshakable resolve. In Your most precious and awe-inspiring name we pray. Amen.

Welcome-Are there stories you can share about doors being opened for you to witness now that you are expecting them to open? Have you prayed for boldness as the disciples prayed; and have your prayers opened any doors for you? Have you experienced being perfectly positioned to impact another's life for Jesus?

Review of Sessions One through Three

Session One reminded us that none of us became followers of Jesus Christ because we wanted to be “fishers” – we came to Jesus Christ because we wanted to spend eternity in heaven rather than hell. Our motives were selfish. We realized our life needed fixing, and we believed Jesus Christ could do just that.

We were introduced to the first “fishermen” Jesus called by the Sea of Galilee, and how it took a “fishing” miracle for them to be convinced. Though they did not know what Jesus would teach them, **whatever it was, they wanted to find out!!**

We learned –

- that Jesus would teach them and us how to fish for men / how to make an eternal difference in someone else's life.
- that **God takes the responsibility** for making us fishers.
- We learned that God intends to use us and our individual background/personality/experience in life to speak to others about Him.
- That **God perfectly positions each of us** to witness for him using just who we are!

Session Two reminded us of the Great Commission given to each of us. We learned that sharing Christ is **not** having all the answers. Sharing Christ is **speaking about our own experience of Christ** – what **we** have “seen and heard” in our own life. We were encouraged to look back at what we have seen and heard – to remind ourselves of how God has touched our lives.

Again, we were told **we are “perfectly positioned” by our own life experiences to reach someone else for Jesus.**

Session Three - we acknowledged that telling others about Jesus can be intimidating, overwhelming and even disturbing. We discussed reasons we don't share the gospel, the excuses we give ourselves to justify our silence.

Stanley reminded us of the disciples **resolve to share what they had heard and seen** even in the face of imprisonment; and that it was prophesied that Jesus followers would be persecuted for following Him.

Today, Andy Stanley will speak to us about what it means to be a fishing buddy. He will speak to us about the role of the church (the covenant partners), and how we can partner with each other in **creating an environment where visitors will experience the presence of Jesus in our midst.**

Today we will learn about the **“Come and See” principle** that supports Jesus’ promise in Matthew 18: 20. Let us read it together, *“For where two or three have gathered together in My name, there I am in their midst.”*

With that in mind, let us view the video.

Andy Stanley says that the one thing all Christians have in common, no matter the denomination, is agreement with the statement Peter made, ***“Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God”*** which Peter declared when Jesus asked the disciples, ***“Who do you say that I am?”***

We are partners (fishing buddies) with each other and with God in bringing people to know Jesus. In describing his church’s environment, Stanley describes it as **a place where people want to come back.**

When people come and see the body of Christ acting like Christ’s body – **that is, the people love and support one another** - they will want to stay and become a part of the body.

As for inviting people to go with you to church, Stanley said, **“invest in them and invite them.”** . . .because **“the church is as good as it gets until Jesus comes!”**

Discussion questions -

- How can you begin to move toward a model of “fishing” that involves partnering with other believers?
- With that in mind, “Would you be comfortable inviting a non-believer to your church? Why or why not?”

Closing Prayer: Lord, Your Word calls us “the body of Christ.” Just as in our physical body, each part works in support of and in coordination with the other parts toward a specific goal – like standing, or speaking, or lifting. You call us to

work in coordination with, and in support of, each other toward the goals You set before us. Lord, that requires me to be aware of my neighbor in the church; and not just see, but support, their efforts to witness. We realize that when we work in harmony with each other, genuinely caring for each other, we are witnessing to those who come into our church environment. Help us to be Christ's body in such a way that those who visit will want to stay and be a part of the body. To God be the glory. 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."

Hebrews 10: 35-39 - *Do not, therefore, abandon that confidence of yours; it brings a great reward. For you need endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised. For yet in a very little while, the one who is coming will come and will not delay, but my righteous one will live by faith. My soul takes no pleasure in anyone who shrinks back. But we are not among those who shrink back and so are lost, but among those who have faith and so are saved.*

Mark 1: 17 – *“And Jesus said to them, ‘follow me and I will make you fishers of men.’”*

Acts 4: 18-20 - *They called them back and warned them that they were on no account ever again to speak or teach in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John spoke right back, “Whether it’s right in God’s eyes to listen to you rather than to God, you decide. As for us, there’s no question—we can’t keep quiet about what we’ve seen and heard.”*

Matthew 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.”*

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