



Daily Devotionals

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MATTHEW 4:18-22 CALLED AS WE ARE

¹⁸ As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. ¹⁹ "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men." ²⁰ At once they left their nets and followed him.

²¹ Going on from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John. They were in a boat with their father Zebedee, preparing their nets. Jesus called them, ²² and immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.

Before the Disciples, Peter and Andrew had heard the Greatest Commandment to love God and neighbor (Matthew 22:37-40), Jesus gave them the way to fulfill that commandment by calling them to follow him and become fishers of men. They were to allow Jesus to mold their lives back into what God had originally planned for them in his perfect will. The path that Jesus would lead them on was the path of perfect obedience to God. It is the path of divine love because Jesus came to reveal God's nature to the world and draw the world into a reconciled relationship with God. Their role as disciple of Jesus was to learn and do what the Master was doing. Their lives were to be ones that attracted other men to God so that they might know the saving power of his love. They were to be the instruments by which God would extend his love to their neighbors and bring them willingly under the power of his eternal reign - into the kingdom of heaven.

But what about becoming "fishers of men?" It sounds so harsh and tricky. For us the fisherman is the one who tricks the fish by hiding a sharp hook in some attractive bait and then moves it in such a way that the fish will think it is a real meal and become a real meal for the fisherman by biting the hook. The fact aside that fishing on the Sea of Galilee was with nets and not hooks, we are very sensitive to tricks and entrapments in our culture. We are also very much into marketing theories even in our churches. Yet we know that God would not call us to any slight-of-hand or sugar-coated version of the Christian life and message in order to build our community. The love of God is to be attractive, not as bait is attractive, but as a glass of water is the most beautiful thing a dehydrated man can see in a waterless desert.

In the case of the first Disciples, Jesus was calling fishermen, so it was natural that he put the call into terms that they could readily recognize and fully understand. They knew something about fishing in Galilee. Because of the storms it took courage. Because of the natural instincts of the fish it took perseverance. Because of the weight of the nets and fish it took strength. Because of the wear and tear on the equipment it took daily study and mending of the nets. In short, Jesus called them as they were into a new vocation in terms they could understand.

Discipleship is a personal relationship with the Master. Each of us has been called based on our giftedness - gifts that were given to us in the first place by God. If we have never cast a net, we should not enter into a time of training to become a net-casting fisherman. What we need to learn from the call of Peter and Andrew, is that they responded to Jesus call because he had authority and that he will use us for God's purposes employing the we have. The radical change is of your heart and not necessarily your vocation.

Lord Jesus, even before you called me you loved me and prepared me as your disciple through my life-experiences. The major experience of my life has been the vocation I took on. As the sovereign Lord of all, I will follow you wherever you lead me. But, Lord Jesus, help me not to overlook the vocation I have as the vehicle of my work as your disciple. Amen.

Chuck+