

Using Your Net

Theme: Stewardship and evangelism

Scripture: Luke 5:11

Memory Verse: Luke 5:11, 'And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and followed him.'

The Children's Sermon

What does it mean to be fishers of men? How can you catch men? Let me see how many I can catch. (Call on child) Did you know that Jesus loves you? I caught you! (Call on another child) Did you know that we have Sunday school at our church for all ages? I caught you! (Call on the third child) Did you know our church has a _____ program? I caught you too!

How did I catch all these people? God has given us a wonderful net, our church. We can invite people to worship service, Sunday school, and other activities that our church has. But just like this net, it takes a lot of people to help haul in the catch. Our church needs people to help keep our "net" strong. We need volunteers to help run the programs, people who pray for our church, our leaders, and our programs. We need those who tithe and give financially to the church to pay for all the wonderful programs. You can see it takes many kinds of fishermen to keep our net strong so we can haul in lots of "fish." Just like the disciples, Jesus has made us "Fishers of Men."

Now, let's imagine what it means to be Fishers of Men in a way that's easy to understand. Think about going fishing. What do you need? You need a fishing rod, bait, and a net, right? Being Fishers of Men is a bit like that, but instead of catching fish, we

are sharing God's love with others. Our "fishing rod" can be our words, telling others about Jesus. Our "bait" is our actions, showing kindness and love, just like Jesus did. And our "net?" That's our church and community, where we bring people together to learn more about God.

Being Fishers of Men doesn't mean we actually catch people like fish. It means we help people learn about Jesus and how much He loves them. We can do this in so many ways. Maybe it's inviting a friend to church or telling a story about Jesus to someone who feels sad. Every time we share love, we are being 'Fishers of Men'.

But remember, Fishers of Men work together. Just like when you see fishermen in a boat, they help each other. They share the work. In our church, we can all help too. Some of us might be really good at talking and can tell others about Jesus. Some of us might be really good at making people feel welcome or making crafts that we can share. Every little thing we do helps spread God's love.

And guess what? Being Fishers of Men is for everyone. It doesn't matter if you're big or small, young or old. We all have something special we can do to help others learn about Jesus. It's like being on a big team, and Jesus is our coach. He teaches us the best ways to share His love and bring people together.

Sometimes, being Fishers of Men might seem a bit scary. What if someone doesn't want to listen? What if they say no? That's okay. Remember, even the best fishermen don't catch a fish every time. The important thing is that we try, and we keep showing love and kindness, just like Jesus did.

And you know, the more we practice being Fishers of Men, the better we get at it. It's like learning to ride a bike or getting better at a video game. The more we do it, the easier it becomes. We start to see all the different ways we can help others and share God's love.

So, let's think about what we can do this week to be Fishers of Men. Maybe it's making a card for someone who is feeling lonely or inviting a friend to come with you to church next Sunday. Maybe it's helping out at home without being asked or saying a kind word to someone who needs it. Every little bit helps, and every act of kindness is like casting our net wide to show more people about Jesus's love.

Being Fishers of Men is a big adventure, and it's something we can all do together. We're part of a big team, and Jesus is leading the way. He's showing us how to share love, how to be kind, and how to bring people together. And when we all work together, we can do amazing things. We can make our church and our world a brighter, happier place, full of love and kindness.

So, let's go out there and be the best Fishers of Men we can be. Let's spread joy, share love, and show everyone how wonderful it is to know Jesus. And remember, no matter how small you might feel, you have a big part to play in this adventure. Every one of us is important, and together, we can make a huge difference.

Thank you for listening today, and let's all be excited about being Fishers of Men. Let's see how many people we can share Jesus's love with this week. Remember, we're all in this together, and with Jesus's help, we can bring lots of "fish" into our wonderful net. Let's go fishing!

Bible Memory Verse

Luke 5:11, 'And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and followed him.'

You Will Need:

- Construction paper (various colors)
- Scissors
- Glue sticks
- Fish stickers or fish cut-outs
- String or yarn
- A large picture of Jesus (can be printed or drawn)

Get Ready:

- Cut the construction paper into large 'ship' shapes, one for each child.
- Prepare a wall or board where the ships will be displayed, placing the large picture of Jesus at one end.

Do This:

1. Give each child a ship cut-out and let them decorate it with fish stickers or fish cut-outs to represent the fishermen's catch.
2. Help the children write the memory verse on their ship or assist them in doing so if they are too young.
3. Once the ships are decorated, use the string or yarn to create a path from each ship to the picture of Jesus. Explain that just like the fishermen left everything to follow Jesus, we can also follow Jesus in our lives. Attach the ships to the wall or board to show their journey towards following Jesus.

Bible Interactive Experience

You'll Need:

- A small toy boat or paper boats
- Several fish-shaped cutouts from colored paper
- A net (a piece of fabric with holes or a small fishing net)
- Blue cloth or paper to represent water

Get Ready:

- Lay the blue cloth or paper on the floor to represent the sea.
- Place the toy boat or paper boats on the "sea."
- Scatter the fish-shaped cutouts around the boat but not too far from it.

Do this:

1. Tell the children the story from Luke 5:11, focusing on how Jesus called His disciples to be fishers of men, explaining that being fishers of men means telling others about Jesus.
2. Invite the children to take turns using the net to "catch" the fish around the boat, encouraging them to count how many fish they can catch.
3. After everyone has a turn, explain that just like they caught fish, they can help gather people for Jesus by being kind and telling them about Jesus' love.

Snack Activity: Fishers of Men Snack Time

You'll Need:

- Blue Jell-O
- Gummy fish
- Clear plastic cups

Get Ready: Prepare the blue Jell-O according to the package instructions and let it cool until it's slightly thickened but not set.

Do this:

1. Talk to the children about Luke 5:11, explaining how Jesus called His disciples to be 'fishers of men' and what it means to follow Jesus and share His love with others.
2. Pour the slightly thickened Jell-O into clear plastic cups, filling them about two-thirds full. Let the children drop a few gummy fish into each cup, representing us sharing Jesus' love with everyone, just like the disciples did.
3. Place the cups in the refrigerator to set completely. As they wait, discuss the importance of stewardship and how we can be good stewards of God's creation by caring for others and telling them about Jesus.
4. Once the Jell-O has set, enjoy the snack together, reminding the children that just like the fish are in the 'sea', we are in the world, and our job is to 'catch' people by telling them about Jesus.

Game Activity: Fishers of Friends

You'll Need:

- A large blue sheet or tarp (representing the sea)
- Several plush toy fish or paper fish cutouts
- A small toy boat or a paper boat
- A net or a makeshift net from a piece of fabric

Get Ready: Spread the blue sheet on the floor to represent the sea. Place the toy fish or paper fish cutouts on the 'sea'. Put the toy boat at one end of the 'sea', and the net nearby.

Do this:

1. Gather the children around the 'sea' and tell them the story from Luke 5:11, emphasizing how Simon Peter and his friends left everything to follow Jesus and become fishers of men.
2. Explain that today, they will become 'fishers of friends' by catching the fish in the sea. Each fish will have a word or picture on it related to stewardship and evangelism (like 'share', 'care', 'pray', 'love').
3. Let the children take turns using the net to 'fish'. When they catch one, discuss how the word or picture on the fish can help us be good friends and followers of Jesus, sharing His love with others.

Craft Activity: Fishers of Men Boats

You'll Need:

- Paper plates (half per child)
- Colored markers or crayons
- Popsicle sticks (one per child)
- Construction paper (blue and other colors)
- Glue
- Scissors (for teacher use only)

Get Ready: Cut the paper plates in half to represent boats. Cut out small fish shapes from the blue construction paper and larger fish shapes from other colors to represent people. Pre-write 'Follow Me' on the popsicle sticks or have stickers ready with the phrase.

Do this:

1. Give each child a half paper plate and let them color it with markers or crayons to decorate their 'boat.'
 2. Help the children glue the popsicle stick vertically on the inside curve of the plate to represent a mast. Attach the 'Follow Me' sign at the top.
 3. Encourage the children to glue the blue fish around the boat to represent the sea and the colorful fish inside the boat to represent people being gathered by Jesus.
- Explain that just like the fishermen in Luke 5:11, we can help gather people for Jesus by being kind and telling them about God's love.

Prayer Activity: Fishers of Men Prayer Net

You'll Need:

- A small net or a piece of blue fabric
- Paper fish (one per child)
- Markers or crayons

Get Ready: Before the activity, cut out paper fish shapes. Write a simple prayer or action on each fish that relates to stewardship and evangelism, such as 'Help me share', 'Thank you for my friends', or 'Help me care for animals'. If using a piece of fabric, lay it out to represent water and place the net over it.

Do this:

1. Gather the children around the net or fabric and explain that just like the fishermen in Luke 5:11, we can also help spread God's love and take care of His creation.
2. Invite each child to choose a fish from the net. Help them read the prayer or action on their fish.

3. Encourage the children to say the prayer out loud or discuss how they can do the action in their daily life. End with a group prayer, asking God to help them be good stewards and share His love with others.