

# Using Your Net

## UPPER ELEMENTARY LESSON PLAN

**Theme:** Stewardship and evangelism

**Scripture:** Luke 5:11

**Memory Verse:** So they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed him. - Luke 5:11

## 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 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

**So they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed him. - Luke 5:11**

You Will Need:

- Fishing nets or large pieces of blue fabric
- Paper fish (enough for each child)
- Markers or crayons
- Scissors
- Tape

Get Ready:

- Cut out paper fish and write different follow-up actions inspired by the verse on each (e.g., 'Show kindness', 'Pray for someone', 'Read a Bible story').
- Spread the blue fabric or nets on the floor to represent the sea.

Do This:

1. Have each child pick a fish from the 'sea' and read the action on it.
2. Encourage them to decorate their fish with markers or crayons as they reflect on what it means to leave everything and follow Jesus.
3. Create a 'Follow Him' wall or board where children can tape their fish, forming a school of fish following Jesus. Discuss as a group how each action helps us follow Jesus in our daily lives.

## Bible Interactive Experience

You'll Need:

- A large empty fishnet or a piece of rope to create a makeshift net
- Paper fish templates (enough for each child to have one)
- Markers or crayons
- A "boat" setup (this could be a blue tarp or blanket spread on the floor, chairs arranged in a boat shape, etc.)
- A small "pond" area (a designated space in the room)
- Basket to collect the fish

Get Ready:

1. Prepare the "boat" and "pond" areas in your classroom.
2. Cut out paper fish templates.
3. Write different stewardship and evangelism actions on each fish (e.g., share a Bible story with a friend, help a neighbor, donate to a charity, etc.).

Do this:

1. Begin with a reading of Luke 5:11, focusing on the disciples' decision to follow Jesus and become fishers of men.
2. Explain to the children that they will be "fishing for actions" that represent being good stewards and evangelists in their community.
3. Have each child pick a fish from the pond, read the action on it, and discuss how they can apply this action in their life.
4. Once they've discussed their action, they can "cast" their fish into the net, symbolizing their commitment to follow through with the action.
5. Conclude with a group prayer, asking for God's help in becoming fishers of men through stewardship and evangelism, similar to the disciples.

## Snack Activity: Fishers of Men Edible Boats

You'll Need:

- Blue Jell-O (for the water)
- Mandarin orange segments (for the fish)
- Graham crackers (for the boats)
- Paper sails attached to toothpicks
- Plastic cups or small bowls

Get Ready: Prepare the blue Jell-O according to the package instructions and let it set in plastic cups or small bowls. This will represent the Sea of Galilee.

Do this:

1. Once the Jell-O is set, let the children place mandarin orange segments on top of the Jell-O to represent the fish in the sea.
2. Break graham crackers into rectangular pieces to create simple boat shapes. Insert a paper sail attached to a toothpick into each graham cracker boat.
3. Encourage the children to gently place their graham cracker boats on top of the Jell-O sea, navigating through the 'fish'. As they do this, discuss Luke 5:11, explaining how Jesus called His disciples to be 'fishers of men', leaving everything behind to follow Him. This activity symbolizes their call to stewardship and evangelism, spreading the Good News just as the disciples did.

## Game Activity: Fishers of Friends

You'll Need:

- A large open space
- Several small, lightweight balls or beanbags
- Cones or markers to define the play area

- A net or a designated 'boat' area (this can be a large blanket or a taped-off section of the ground)
- Copies of Luke 5:11 printed out

Get Ready: Before the game, set up the play area by placing the cones or markers around the perimeter to define the boundaries. Place the net or designate the 'boat' area on one side of the play area. Scatter the balls or beanbags (the 'fish') around the play area, but outside the 'boat'. Distribute copies of Luke 5:11 to each child and discuss the meaning of becoming 'fishers of men' and how this relates to stewardship and evangelism.

Do this:

1. Divide the children into two teams. One team will be the 'fishers' and the other team will be the 'fish'. The 'fishers' team will stand inside the 'boat' while the 'fish' team will spread out in the play area.
2. When the game starts, the 'fishers' team will try to 'catch' the fish by throwing the balls or beanbags to tag the 'fish'. If a 'fish' is tagged, they join the 'fishers' in the boat, symbolizing being gathered into the community of believers.
3. The game continues until all the 'fish' have been caught. Then, teams switch roles and play again. The aim is to reflect on the joy and responsibility of bringing others into the fold, just as Jesus called his disciples to be fishers of men.

## Craft Activity: Fisher of Friends

You'll Need:

- Construction paper (various colors)
- Yarn or string
- Scissors

- Markers or crayons
- Hole punch
- Paper clips

Get Ready: Cut the construction paper into fish shapes, one for each child plus a few extra. Write different acts of stewardship and evangelism on each fish, such as 'Help a neighbor', 'Invite a friend to church', or 'Donate old clothes'. Punch a hole near the mouth of each fish and attach a paper clip.

Do this:

1. Give each child a piece of yarn or string to serve as their 'fishing line'. Tie a magnet to one end of the string.
2. Spread the fish out on a table or the floor, making sure the written acts are visible.
3. Have the children use their fishing lines to 'catch' a fish. Once they catch one, they should read aloud the act of stewardship or evangelism on their fish. Discuss as a group how performing these acts can be a way of following Jesus' call to be 'fishers of men', as mentioned in Luke 5:11.

## Prayer Activity: Fishers of Men: A Stewardship and Evangelism Craft

You'll Need:

- Construction paper (various colors)
- Markers or crayons
- Scissors
- Glue sticks
- String or yarn



- Hole punch

Get Ready: Prepare an example fish ahead of time to show as a model for the activity. Print or write out Luke 5:11 on a large piece of paper or whiteboard for reference.

Do this:

1. Begin with a discussion on Luke 5:11, focusing on the phrase 'So they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed him.' Ask the children what it means to be 'fishers of men' and how this relates to stewardship and evangelism.
2. Have each child choose a piece of construction paper and instruct them to draw and cut out a fish shape. On one side of the fish, have them write 'Luke 5:11' and on the other side, write a personal commitment to being a 'fisher of men' in their own lives (e.g., 'I will invite a friend to Sunday School').
3. Once the fish are decorated and the commitments are written, help the children punch a hole at the top of each fish and thread a piece of string through it. Create a 'Fishing for Men' display area in the classroom where all the fish can be hung as a reminder of their commitment to follow Jesus and share His love with others.