

RUSSELL SANDERS
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FISHERS OF MEN

I had my first experience fishing at six years old with a cane pole. I was with my dad and his friend, and I caught several bream (sunfish) called stumpknockers, on the Withlacoochee River near Inverness, Florida. I fell in love with fishing and spent my youth doing just that.

As an adult, my dad and his friend introduced my brother and I to saltwater fishing in the Gulf of Mexico. In both cases, it was always a friend of my dad that insisted that I was brought along. I have caught many fish over my lifetime.

Jesus loved fishermen such as me. In fact, all his earliest chosen disciples were fishermen. As we see in Matthew 4:18-22, it was fishermen whom he called. Andrew brought his brother Peter to Jesus and Jesus said, ***“Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.”*** They immediately left their boat and nets to follow Jesus as also two other fishermen, namely James and his brother John.

As professional fishermen, they were well acquainted on how to harvest fish from the lake. Now, they had a different call. They were called out to a new kind of harvest, namely, the harvest of mankind for the kingdom of heaven.

You and I, along with every believer, are also called to that same harvest of souls. In Matthew 28:19-20 Jesus gives us all the “Great Commission” to, ***“go ye therefore and teach all nations...”*** and Mark 16:15, ***“...Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel...”*** Again, in Luke 24:47, ***“... should be preached in His name among all nations...”*** In Acts 1:8 Jesus said, ***“... ye shall be witnesses unto me... unto the uttermost part of the earth.”***

To witness for Jesus and to spread His gospel to others is the commission to every believer. It is not just the job of the fivefold ministry, namely, the Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors, or Teachers commission. The job of those called to the five-fold ministry, according to Ephesians 4:12, is to equip and teach every believer to do the work of God’s ministry. That means you, me, and every born-again believer [Christian].

I am doing my part. Are you doing your part? Are we mistakenly relying on Pastors and Evangelists to win the lost? We need to examine ourselves in the light of the Great Commission that Jesus gave to every believer.

We all should be fishermen for Jesus... fishers of men for the kingdom of heaven.