



Go Fish Save Fish

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Eternally Speaking Now

I have an update on my summer camping plans: they now include fishing. *Yikes.*

Here's my confession this month: I'm sorry to admit it, but I'm as interested in fishing as I am in camping.

Note:

*In case you missed it,
you can read about my "love" for camping
(and more importantly, you can read
some seriously profound and amazing things
from God about camping and tents),
in last month's writing entitled, "InTENTionALLity", [here](#).*

Back to fishing.

While some friends find fishing to be soothing, peaceful, and reviving, the few times I've ventured out to attempt this sport left me not only bored and disappointed (*because I caught nothing*) but also frustrated and grossed out (*because of the touching-a-worm or whatever-that-bait-is part*).

So, now I've got to get geared up for both camping *and* fishing. Um, *yay?*

Interestingly, as God's timing would have it, when I learned of my future fishing date, it ran parallel with a series of other fish-related things the Holy Spirit had been feeding me. When He does that, my attention and curiosity are piqued, as He will always teach me something through a repeated theme like that.

Then something happened that not only altered my perspective on fishing but also took it to a whole new level.

God successfully snapped me out of my fishing frustration, and now I'm actually looking forward to the adventure.
Incredible, right?

Here's how it all played out.

Our family recently visited my parents in Michigan. One of the many activities I enjoy while up north is walking the beach. As I set out our first day expecting to take a breathtaking walk along the pristine sands, I was amazed to discover a tragic sight: *thousands of dead fish.*



What was normally a gorgeous scene was instead littered with skeletal debris.

If you bothered to shovel and bury the fish, your work would be in vain, as days later, there would be thousands more, washed up on the shore, **dead.**



I asked my parents why this was happening, and my Mom explained,

"There aren't enough salmon to eat them. Instead of being used for food, they all just die."



Instead of
being used
to **fuel the
natural cycle
of life,**
the little
fish were
**left
for
dead.**
Purposeless.

What a waste, I thought.

As my eyes panned the beach that day, my heart **sank**.
Strangely, an hour later, the sadness persisted.
I asked the Lord, *"Why am I so bothered over a bunch of dead fish?"*

"Because I am," He responded.

At that, my heart **sank** farther.

Immediately these verses came to mind:

Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages,
teaching in their synagogues, **preaching the gospel of the kingdom**, and healing every
sickness and every disease among the people.

But when He saw the **multitudes**, He was **moved with compassion** for them, because they
were **weary and scattered**,
like sheep having no shepherd.

Then He said to His disciples,
"The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few.
Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest." *Matthew 9:35-38*

Still unsure how all this connected to fish, I asked the Lord for further guidance.

These Scriptures then came to mind:

From that time Jesus began to preach and to say,
"Repent, for the **kingdom of heaven** is at hand."

And Jesus, walking by the Sea of Galilee, saw two brothers,
Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea;
for they were fishermen. Then He said to them,
"Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men."
They immediately left their nets and followed Him.
Matthew 4:17-20

And then I caught the message:

On the beach that day was a timely illustration of what happens

when there aren't enough laborers-- fishers of men

(salmon)

who are hungry to make disciples-- more fishers of men

*(fulfill the cycle of nourishing **God's kingdom** as He has designed).*

Are you seeing the picture as well?

To go fishing for men is to share the truth and hope of Jesus with others.

It is living the Gospel in such a way that they see the **kingdom of heaven** in us.

This leads them to repentance.

What happens when God's people *don't* go fishing for others?

Waste.

Scattered fish.

Lost souls tossed by the waves and left for dead.

Now that's sad.

It's worse than that. It's tragic.

The day after the Lord impressed all this on my heart, I walked past one of my Mom's etchings hanging on a hook on the wall. It was a piece of artwork I've seen for years, but this time I perceived it with fresh vision: *look at this picture!*



Do you see the large (mature) fish
eating (seeking, finding, pursuing) the small fish,
perpetuating the healthy cycle of nourishment and growth?

What a vivid, creative confirmation of His calling to **go fish and save fish**.

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son,
that whoever believes in Him **should not perish** but have everlasting life.
For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world,
but that **the world through Him might be saved.**"
John 3:16-17

Now, check this out: I tried and tried to take the photo above without **my reflection** in it. After multiple attempts, the Lord left me chuckling when I finally realized He was saying,

*"Don't take yourself out of this picture.
I want you **IN** it!"*

Dear friends, *He wants us in the picture.*
He wants *you* in **His kingdom**.
Are you in it?

Hang on the line with me a little longer. God is about to get (even more) multidimensional with all this. Look back at the photo of my Mom's artwork. That reflection of mine was not the only one I couldn't get out of the shot. There were two more: the **green plant** on the right, and the **sunlight** blasting through.

The **plant** and **light** are not a part of the etching. In fact, in proper lighting, you'd see that it's a very dark-shaded work of art. Regardless of my attempts to capture the image without these reflections, *God wouldn't allow it*. He swiftly revealed why:

He is our **life** (green plant).

Jesus said to him, "**I am** the way, the truth, and **the life**.
No one comes to the Father except through Me."
John 14:6

He is our **light** (blast of sunlight).

Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying,
"I am the **light** of the world.
He who **follows Me** shall not walk in darkness,
but have the **light of life.**"
John 8:12

Do you realize how empowering this is?

Jesus, who is the light of the world,
gives us all we need to go **cast the line** for Him.
His very presence that dwells in us-- is *planted in us*--
undergirds all we do as we faithfully swim out into the depths...
Whether we're the fish fishing, or we're the fish being fished.

CHALLENGE

When it comes to going and making fishers of men,
God's people can lose the hunger for many reasons.

Maybe our reasons mirror the same I have for not wanting to fish on my camping trip:

- bored (self-absorbed, not interested)
- disappointed (afraid of failure, being let down, or getting rejected)
- frustrated (distracted by other things, irritated by interruptions)
- fearful of getting our hands dirty (people's lives can be messy, eh?).

Whatever the reasons may be, I'm left somewhat haunted by the exhibition of all those dead fish on the beach. Something tells me that nothing excuses us from being in the picture of God's plan to **receive His love and then reach others with that same life-saving love.**

*I can't help but notice that my mom's artwork is...an etching.
The call to go fish is not penciled in,
like an option waiting to be erased.
It's a command.
It's etched.
Permanent.*

And Jesus came and spoke to them (His disciples), saying,
"All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.
Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations,
baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, **teaching them to
observe all things that I have commanded you;**
and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.
Matthew 28:18-20

This doesn't read as an option, does it?

But look at the power God gives us!

If the One calling us to follow Him-- and to make more followers for Him--
has all authority in heaven and earth,
do you really think fear, apathy, or whatever else can stop us?
Jesus is with us. *Always.*
We need no more strength than that.

May I conclude by leaving you a tackle box of sorts?

One of the most successful ways I've found to navigate in God's kingdom as "His fisherman" is by understanding my reel identity. (*Yes, you can wink with me on that one. I couldn't resist.*) When our lives are established on the foundation of our reel identity, **it's like we're invincible.**

I recorded a short video about how to live in this invincible reality.
It's thrilling! It's like floating a foot off the ground:
still living on this earth, yet no longer swiveled around by it.

When we live this way, we cannot help but
follow Jesus, live Jesus, exemplify Him, and yes, share Him.

Click/Tap the button below to live invincibly.

This Video is our tackle box:

Open it, watch it, live it, experience it, and then share with others.

Tap the button below, join me in my living room for 12 minutes, and plunge deeper into your reel identity. I believe the truths recorded here will *change your life as they have mine*. Yes, *that is my prayer*.

[Short Video Teaching - Our Tackle Box: Invincible Living!](#)

The jig is up.
Don't be a sinker.
Be a leader!
Time is short.
Leave your nets behind,
and follow Jesus.

Let us be hungry enough to sustain the cycle of evangelism and discipleship
for the furtherance of the Gospel of Christ.

May none of us be responsible for a shore full of dead fish.

Go fish to save fish.



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