

# Weaving the Word

## Calling Fishers of Men

Part 8 – April 6, 2014

Welcome to the place where we count the cost to follow the One who paid the price!



Fishermen on the Sea of Galilee, c. 1895

Jesus calls four fishermen to follow Him as fishers of men. Two were casting from shore; two were preparing their nets in a boat.

At once they [Andrew and his brother Simon/Peter] left their nets and followed him. ... and immediately they [James and his brother John] left the boat and their father and followed him.

– Matthew 4:20, 22 NIV

So, how 'bout *you*? **Have you left *your* nets? What'd you drag into church with you today?**



Do you even *know* what's in your net? **Our nets are filled with the things we cling to that keep us from fully following Jesus.** Picture yourself trying to follow Jesus with an entangled net dragging behind you, filled with the people you gossip about or slander, the things you try to control, anything unforgiven, bad habits, secret sins, items purchased with offering money, and whatever or whoever dethrones God's authority in your life and causes you to compromise His Word.

**What's the cost of following Christ? God News! *Exactly everything that's in your net!***

So, what'd you drag into church today?

For much of my life it wasn't "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God Almighty," it was "Drag ye first the kingdom of *Bruce* almighty".

One by one though, I've done pretty well with leaving my nets. But, want to know the biggest, baddest thing I haven't fully let go of yet?

*You!* I'm called to love you and serve you ... and I *do*. But, I also like to *please* you ... because you *reward me* for that. So, *sometimes* when it comes to serving you as I believe God has called, or pleasing you as I know you'd prefer, I seek to please.

So, what'd *you* drag into church today? I drug *you!*



I don't like TV Jesus, He's usually cheesy and mystical and weird and otherworldly.

He approaches fishermen He's never met, and says, "Come, follow me, and I will make you fishers of men."

And, they just leave their nets like they're hypnotized or TV Jesus cast a spell on 'em.

**What percentage of your beliefs are based on TV Jesus?** If you're not seeking Him in His Word, a much bigger number than you think. **And the trap and the tragedy is that you can't relate to TV Jesus, so you'll justify ignoring what True Jesus commands.**



For instance, when Jesus actually calls His fishers-of-men, it's Andy and *his* brother, and John and *his* brother.

And, as we've seen in God's Word over the past few weeks, **Andy and John just spent an *entire year* with Jesus.**

And, they would've been astounding their brothers with their eyewitness accounts of miraculous ministry!



Jesus' last stop before this was Nazareth, His hometown, where they tried to throw Him off a cliff. There's no mention of His disciples intervening or running away.

**I think He sent Andy and John ahead to Capernaum to wait for Him and to prepare their brothers to follow.**

Mt Nitai; most likely, Nazareth

His other two disciples, Nate and Phil, were from Cana, the stop just before Nazareth, where they probably stayed to astound *their* families, and to prepare for the next two years of ministry.

Now, **Matthew** and **Mark** record Jesus' reunion with Andy and John.

As Jesus walked beside the Sea of Galilee, ... As Jesus was **walking** beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, ... he saw **Simon [Peter]** and **his brother Andrew** ... Simon **called Peter** and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men." At once they left their nets and followed him. **Going on from there, ... When he had gone a little farther, ... he saw two other brothers, ... he saw James** son of Zebedee and **his brother John** ... They were in a boat ... in a boat, **preparing their nets. ... with their father Zebedee**, preparing their nets. Jesus called them, ... **Without delay** he called them, ... and immediately they left the boat and their father ... and they left their father Zebedee **in the boat with the hired men** and followed him. (Mark 1:16-20; Mat 4:18-22)



There were at least five men in that boat preparing the nets: James, John, their dad, and the hired *men*. That's *at least* two more men than necessary for fishing. So, why the extra help? **They're not only preparing their nets, they're preparing their father, their family, and their business obligations.**

No Hypnotism, just faithful, responsible men who's example we can't justify ignoring.

James and John were preparing to leave their nets to follow Jesus. **True Jesus commands us to be ready, alert, and receptive, so we can act quickly and decisively when He comes calling.**

**Are you preparing to let go of what's holding you back?**



Jesus calls us to leave our nets because *we're* the ones that are usually *caught* in 'em. We need to open our eyes to the truth: **you don't hold the *net*, the net holds you.**

Let's be honest, **some of you, who think of yourselves as followers of Christ, have never asked Him to rule in your heart. You only asked Him to jump into your net, along with everything else that you're trying to control.**

**If so, you've made a grave error: you've asked Jesus to follow you!**

In our land-of-opportunity culture, striking out on our own and leaving our parents with the family business isn't *that* big of a deal; but, in James' and John's time and culture, it was a *huge!*

For Jesus to say, "Leave your father, friends, and family business, and follow Me as your number One priority," wasn't just radical, it was *fanatical!*

Ooh, we don't like that word. Fanatical. Religious fanatics have caused so much grief and destruction. But, **it isn't because they're fanatical, their just fanatical about the wrong things. They need to be *more fanatically* humble and sensitive, more fanatically understanding and generous, like Jesus.** They're just fanatical about religious rules. That's the *net* they won't leave.

**We often soften how radical Jesus *really* was.**



"Anyone who loves his father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves his son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and anyone who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me." – Matthew 10:37-38 NIV

**Jesus demands and commands us to release any influence or authority that asks us to deny total devotion to Him.**



**You can't take up the cross until you leave the net.**

**Placing anyone above Christ isn't loving them more, it's loving them less; because, when we love God *most*, we love others best.**

**That's why the position of supreme passion must be reserved for *following* Jesus, *learning* Jesus, *loving* Jesus, and *serving* Jesus.**



**Jesus doesn't allow us to drag our net and follow Him.**

**What Jesus does here is quite unique, and radical. In Jewish tradition, pupils chose rabbis; rabbis didn't choose pupils. We like to think we choose God; only true with the '*little g*' gods. The '*Big G*' chooses *us*, calls us, through Jesus, to leave our nets and follow. It's a *yes* or *no*.**

**If you say, "I'll follow wholeheartedly, *when* my career thrives, *when* my health improves, *when* I have more time," then you're not following Jesus, you're just following after the '*when*'.**

**God calls you when it's time; you don't call Him when it's convenient.**

**It's not about you; it's about Him, the Way, the Truth, and the Life.**

**He's the True Light that fills our darkness.**

**And, it's not fitting for a child of God, filled with the life and light of His Spirit, to allow such a dark thing to remain shackled to your soul, dragging along, hindering your walk.**



**... let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. – Hebrews 12:1b-2 NIV**

**Count the cost and cast off whatever nets are holding you back.**