



As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

Introduction to Teaching

Introduction to the Teachings

After these things Jesus showed Himself again to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias, and in this way He showed Himself: Simon Peter, Thomas called the Twin, Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of His disciples were together. Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We are going with you also." They went out and immediately got into the boat, and that night they caught nothing. But when the morning had now come, Jesus stood on the shore; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. Then Jesus said to them, "Children, have you any food?" They answered Him, "No." And He said to them, "Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some." So they cast, and now they were not able to draw it in because of the multitude of fish. Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" "Now when Simon Peter heard that is the Lord, he put on his outer garment (for he had removed it), and plunged into the sea. But the other disciples came in the little boat (for they were not far from land, but about two hundred cubits), dragging the net with fish. Then, as soon as they had come to land, they saw a fire with coals there, and fish laid on it, and bread. Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish which you have just caught." Simon Peter went up and dragged the net to land, full of large fish, one hundred and fifty-three; and although there were so many, the net was not broken. **(John 21:1-11)**

The above passage is the second time that Jesus had revealed himself to these men while they were fishing. The first time, recorded in Luke 5, was when Jesus called these men to follow Him. This event in John 21 is quite significant. These men had followed Jesus for a little more than three years. They had walked with Him, lived with Him, learned from Him, and witnessed His power. They had seen Jesus heal the sick, cast out demons, restore many to spiritual wholeness, and usher in the kingdom of God. Imagine how much they had learned in these few years with Jesus! Yet, after Jesus had died, these men went back to what they were used to doing - fishing! It was as if they had said to themselves: "Wow, these past few years have been great. We truly have been with a wonderful man of God, but that is all over now. Let's go back to fishing."

Just like the first time that Jesus encountered them fishing, these men had labored for many hours but caught nothing. This time, Jesus tells them to cast their net on the other side of the boat and they will catch fish. The disciples cast their net on the right side as Jesus instructed

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them to do, and, just like the first time, they pulled in a great catch of fish. The following lessons on Evangelism are designed to help us learn how to fish with greater results. Most of us develop specific patterns in our ministries. Sometimes our modes of ministry produce a great response. Sometimes they do not. Too often we use the same methods again and again simply because these are the methods we know and have grown used to using. Sometimes we need someone to come along and teach us how to fish more effectively.

Most of us desire to see many people trust in Christ. Most of us want to see many people saved. Most of us truly long to see God's kingdom expand among our focus people groups. The problem is our current ways of doing missions are not yielding the results for which we had hoped. Still, we do nothing about it. We do not change. Perhaps we do not know how to do missions any differently than the way we do now. Perhaps no one has ever shown us just how great our catch of fish could be.

You are about to embark on many weeks of intensive training. This training will be like casting your nets on the other side of the boat. Its aim is to help you learn some more effective ways to make disciples and plant churches. You will be exposed to many biblical principles that will help you facilitate rapid growth and multiplication of disciples and churches. You will work hard and learn much. Whether the training will be successful, however, depends on whether you, as participants in this training, are willing to step out in faith to learn ways to fish that will burst all your nets!

At the end of the training, you will have to make a decision, just as the disciples did. The disciples learned much from their time with Jesus. Yet, after Jesus died and was no longer with them, they went back to their old way of life. You will have the same decision to make. When the training is over, will you go back to your old ways of doing missions, or will you take the things you learn here and implement them into your mission work?

It will be easy to forget all that you learn during this training. It will be easy at the end to say, "That was a good training. I was excited by what I heard. It was a great time of fellowship with the other men and women. However, it is over now. Time to get back to work; the temptation will be to return to the same way of conducting your mission work because that is what you know best.

The challenge before you is to avoid that temptation. The biblical principles and various tools presented in this training will help you facilitate rapid church growth among your focus people group. Yet, as you learn ways to fish for greater catches, you must be intentional about implementing them into your mission work.

In summary, remember this training is about learning to fish more effectively. We will look extensively at God's Word and learn many biblical principles. You are going to receive some practical tools for making disciples and planting churches. You are going to develop comprehensive strategies that will serve as road maps for our ministries. All this is designed to help you expedite the rapid multiplication of disciples and churches among your focus people groups.

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1. Challenge each other to approach this training with an open mind to learn how to fish with greater results.
2. Also challenge others to implement what you learn in your ministries.
3. Think you will be surprised at the changes your ministry experiences.
4. Believe you will see growth in disciples, both in number and in spiritual maturity.
5. Believe you will witness the birthing of a church-plant.

Now let's look at another passage of Scripture. Ecclesiastes 1:9 says, "That which has been is what will be, that which is done is what will be done, and there is nothing new under the sun." What we are going to learn in these teachings on evangelism is really nothing new. The principles we will learn are rooted firmly in God's Word. We will discover that making reproducing disciples was Jesus' plan from the beginning. We will observe that the principles of rapid church growth and multiplication began in the book of Acts. There really is nothing new under the sun.

You may realize that you were unaware of some of these biblical principles, and they may be new to you. Just remember that the principles of biblical evangelism were not some good ideas that someone developed. They are not a new fad in missions. These principles and concepts are from God's Word and existed for thousands of years.

Nothing new under the sun, learning to fish more effectively, accepting the challenge to implement what we learn rather than returning to the old way of doing missions - these are essential to remember as we embark on this training. May God grant you the wisdom you need to learn these principles and concepts?

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