

GO FISH – Message 2

Pond Fishing

Open: Pond fishing is simple fishing ... we will discuss reaching those closest to us ... no high tech equipment necessary ... all you need is a pond, couple poles, and some appetizing bait.

(1) Reaching those closest to you.

* Why is it difficult to reach family or close friends?

– Even Jesus found His hometown to be a difficult sale.

Matthew 13:53-58 NLT ⁵³ When Jesus had finished telling these stories and illustrations, he left that part of the country. ⁵⁴ He returned to Nazareth, his hometown. When he taught there in the synagogue, everyone was amazed and said, “Where does he get this wisdom and the power to do miracles?” ⁵⁵ Then they scoffed, “He’s just the carpenter’s son, and we know Mary, his mother, and his brothers—James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas. ⁵⁶ All his sisters live right here among us. Where did he learn all these things?” ⁵⁷ And they were deeply offended and refused to believe in him.

Then Jesus told them, “A prophet is honored everywhere except in his own hometown and among his own family.” ⁵⁸ And so he did only a few miracles there because of their unbelief.

– You and I know Jesus as the “Son of God” but most in Nazareth saw Him as the “son of the carpenter” ... Joseph and Mary’s boy.

√ They wrongly concluded there was nothing special about Jesus.

a) **Pride can keep a person from being willing to listen. (PP Slide)** “What do you know?” “What gives you the right or authority to say such things?” “I’m as smart as you are, why should I listen to you?”

√ Ex.: In the story of David and Goliath, we see sibling rivalry ... his older brother questions his motive.

1 Samuel 17:28 The Message Why don't you mind your own business? Go tend to the scrawny sheep ... you've come down here to get a ringside seat and see some blood.

→ Jealousy, pride can become a road block ...

- Overcome this problem with love and patience. Don't give up, love them where they are ... don't speak down to them or be condescending (arrogant, superior, better or more holier-than-thou).
- Keep loving them and when you don't feel like it, ask God for strength to do so.

1 Corinthians 13:4-7 The Message Love never gives up. Love cares more for others than for self. Love doesn't want what it doesn't have. Love doesn't strut, Doesn't have a swelled head, Doesn't force itself on others, Isn't always "me first," Doesn't fly off the handle, Doesn't keep score of the sins of others, Doesn't revel (celebrate) when others grovel (to be so devastated you lie face down), Takes pleasure in the flowering of truth, Puts up with anything, Trusts God always, Always looks for the best, Never looks back, But keeps going to the end.

→ It was Christ's love that attracted you to Him ... it will be your love for your family/friend that will attract them to Christ.

b) **Past failures can keep a believer from speaking and your friend from hearing. (PP Slide)**

- Our weakness and struggles tend to silence us ... guilty and defeated we remain quiet and our enemy loves it that way.
 - ✓ We conclude if we can't keep our commitment to Jesus, how can we tell someone else about what He can do for them.
 - ✓ Preoccupied with our struggles, we spend the bulk of our time on defense and little on offense.
 - ✓ We are so busy protecting our bruised ribs we can't see the open man down the field.

→ We must get a grip on living a life that pleases God ... this will give us courage and power.

Romans 6:13 NLT Do not let any part of your body become an instrument of evil to serve sin. Instead, give yourselves completely to God, for you were dead, but now you have new life. So use your whole body as an instrument to do what is right for the glory of God.

- Our past and present sins may keep someone from hearing us.
 - √ Honestly, our family and friends often see us at our worst ... angry outbursts, selfish behavior, unkind words ...
 - √ When people see our “on again,” “off again” behavior, they write us off as hypocrites ...
 - √ While it’s true we are not perfect people ... just forgiven people ... we need to be making sincere attempts of living the Christian life.
- When we mess up we need to fess up. People appreciate honesty and respond to humility.
 - √ Be authentic, real and don’t try to “pull the wool over their eyes” ...

c) **Another turn-off is being too pushy ... avoid arguing. (PP Slide)**

- It is the job of the Holy Spirit to convict and open their heart.
- Seldom does constant nagging deliver desired results.
- Peter wrote: **1 Peter 3:1-2 NLT** ¹ In the same way, you wives must accept the authority of your husbands. Then, even if some refuse to obey the Good News, your godly lives will speak to them without any words. They will be won over ² by observing your pure and reverent lives.
- Having said that ... it is important to bring the Gospel conversation up.
 - √ Talk about the good things God is doing in your life. Share your story.
 - √ Be patient and kind in your presentation.

1 Peter 3:15b-16a NLT ... and if someone asks about your Christian hope, always be ready to explain it. But do this in a gentle and respectful way.

d) **Fear of rejection. (PP Slide)**

- We fear we might push them away ... we might lose a friend ... they might start avoiding us ... or worse ... the whole thing blows up into a full-blown argument.
- What to do? Pray ... the Spirit of God works in the heart of man.
 - √ Ask the Lord to open their heart.
 - √ Ask Him to make you sensitive, to give you boldness.
 - √ Look for teachable moments where you can turn the conversation toward God.

→ When they know you truly love them and want what is best for them ... they will be more likely to listen.

- √ You hold the key to Heaven ... how to be at peace with God ... it would be “selfish” not to share the truth.

(2) Keep the message simple – one verse method.

- Q. Do you feel like you have a personal relationship with God, or do you feel like you're still in the process?
- Q. May I explain to you what the Bible says about entering into a personal relationship with God?

*** (POWERPOINT SLIDE – JOHN 3:16)**

a) God's purpose: What does God desire for man?

***(POWERPOINT SLIDE)**

- God wants to have a personal relationship with us. This relationship is based on love ... He loves us and He desires for us to love Him.

b) Man's problem ... so why aren't more people experiencing this loving personal relationship?

***(POWERPOINT SLIDE)**

- It's because of sin. Sin is anything I think, say or do that offends God. When someone is offended, it strains the relationship.
- Sin separates us from God:

***(POWERPOINT SLIDE)**

- Some will perish. If someone dies physically while separated from God ... they will spend eternity in hell.
- The bad news gives way to good news ... there is hope!
- God does not want us to spend eternity in hell because of our sin ... He wants to have a personal relationship with us.

***(POWERPOINT SLIDE)**

c) God's remedy: How does He deal with the problem of sin?

***(POWERPOINT SLIDE)**

- God sent his Son, Jesus Christ. Jesus can make us right with God.
 - √ He died on the cross paying sin's debt and rose from the dead proving God accepted the payment.
 - √ He is our bridge to God.
- How do we cross the bridge and experience God's love and forgiveness?

d) Man's response:

***(POWERPOINT SLIDE)**

- Our personal goodness is not enough. We are made right with God by trusting Christ as Savior.
 - √ We invite Him into our life, receive Him by faith.

- We will talk about how this is done in more detail in another “Go Fish” lesson.

- * Point: One verse and you have the Gospel message at your fingertips.
- * Another way to reach out to family and friends is to invite them to a good Christian movie.

**** (VIDEO – “Unstoppable” video trailer: 2.24) Playing at Columbiana Grande Theater on Bower Parkway on September 24.**

Close:

- Agreeably ... reaching your family and close friends can be a challenge ... but it’s a challenge worth pursuing.
- You don’t have to be a theologian ... keep the message clear and simple.

Message Notes
First Baptist Church of Lexington
Pastor Ralph Schneck
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