

Who's Really Fishing?

Intro. Because they think I have a connection, some of my fishing partners want me to ask God to put us on the fish. If that worked, I would never need to hire a fishing guide. *[Saturday: Jack gave me the name of a good one; I caught fish. Sunday 8: Don can tell you I didn't find us any fish. Sunday 10:30: If you saw Friday's paper, you read that on one day, Allen knew where the fish were.]* In this gospel it isn't hard to see who is *really* fishing. And who is caught.

I. As the crowd of people gathered to listen to his words, it seemed as if the Lord was worried about being trampled. Several men were nearby, cleaning up after a night of fishing. The Lord sat in the boat belonging to Simon. The Lord and Simon already

knew each other. A day or two before, the Lord was a dinner guest in Simon's home. While there, he healed Simon's mother-in-law. So getting into Simon's boat was *not* a coincidence. The Lord had a reason for doing that. The fishermen were tired and discouraged and probably wanted to go home. Simon probably wondered what a carpenter knew about fishing [M.McGlone, *NCR*]. But because he had seen and heard the power of the Lord's word, Simon agreed to go out again. When the nets kept filling up with fish Simon knew he was in the presence of someone with great power. It was one thing when the miracle happened to his mother-in-law; now it was happening to him! He instinctively felt unworthy. That didn't keep the Lord from inviting him to ministry. He knew fishermen were hard workers, used to long hours in all kinds of

weather. Based on these experiences with the Lord, the first disciples left behind a life of *certainty* as fishermen for the *uncertain* life of a follower of Jesus.

Concl. Simon wasn't just cleaning his nets. He was also *listening* to the Lord the whole time. And the Lord wasn't just teaching the crowd. He was *fishing*. For Simon. Simon just didn't know it. Simon was as caught as the fish were. James and John as well. Not bad; three big fish in one cast. Like a good fisherman, the Lord targeted his catch and reeled them in carefully.

The Lord does the same to us. He knows our strengths and weaknesses, sees potential for growth and calls us anyway. It does seem strange the Lord would build his ministry on the foundation of sinful

people like Isaiah, Paul and Simon. **And us.** He asks us to trust him and put out in the deep water. The deep water is any new adventure or decision we face. It can be both terrifying and exhilarating. The first step is getting in the boat with the Lord [Ibid]. The second is accepting the challenge of going deep; deep into ourselves. **That's where grace and miracles are found.**

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