

## January 23, 2011 “Going Fishing” Matthew 4

I read a story that included some statistics for mainline Christian churches from a few years ago. According to this article a middle-aged church member who attended church fairly regularly had heard over 1700 sermons, sung over 5200 hymns, and given an offering over 1500 times,(can't figure out how sermons heard isn't the same as offering given) and hasn't ever introduced anyone to Jesus. How many of us have ever shared our faith with a non-believer? We're not really good fishermen or fisherwomen Jesus wants, are we? We bait the hook, go out into the lake, we float along yet never put the bait in the water. Do we expect the fish to jump into the boat?

The story is told of an old fisherman out in a boat with sticks of dynamite. He'd light a stick; throw it in the water and BOOM, fish float to the top to be netted. One day the Game Warden saw him and was angry. The Game Warden went out in his boat to confront this old guy. “What are you doing?” he asked. “I'm fishing,” the old guy replied. “No one fishes that way. I'm gonna fine you for this,” the Game Warden replied. At this the old guy lit a stick of dynamite, threw it to the game Warden and asked, “Are you gonna fish or just sit there?” His approach was unusual, but effective. At least he was doing something.

In our Gospel lesson from Matthew 4, we read that Jesus approached these fishermen and told them that if they follow Him, He will teach them to be fishers of people. In other words, a disciple is a fisherman or fisherwoman; that's the job description for a follower of Jesus. The word disciple comes from the same root word as discipline. A disciple is a disciplined follower of Jesus. We trust in Jesus as our Lord Who died and rose for us and then are led by the Holy Spirit to study His Word, worship and pray, and invite others to get to know Jesus. We're not here to save them, just introduce them to Jesus. Like the old adage, YOU CATCH THEM; HE'LL CLEAN THEM!

In 1904 a man named Ole took his girlfriend Bessie for a picnic on an island in Lake Michigan. Bessie told him that she had a craving for the ice cream. Ole jumped into his rowboat and rowed 2 ½ miles to shore. Unfortunately, in the summer heat, when he returned the ice cream was a gloppy mess. Embarrassed, he decided to do something. He invented and patented a one-cylinder engine which became the outboard motor. Ole's last name was Evinrude and the Evinrude Motor Company was formed. Bessie later married him and became the manager of the business. Ole saw a need and did something.

Do we see that need in our world today? Every day people are dying and going to hell because they never tasted the sweetness that is Jesus. They never heard that He loved them and died for them. They never heard of His forgiveness. They never heard that God is a God of second chances. No one ever threw a stick of dynamite their way. It's interesting that the Greek word for dynamite is dunamis. Dunamis mean power. In Romans 1:16 Paul writes that he is not ashamed of the Gospel for it is the dunamis, the power of God for the salvation of everyone. The message of Jesus is the dynamite of God.

So, God Is Good...All The Time and He tosses you the Good News of Jesus in the Bible, which is His Dynamite and asks, “Are you gonna fish or just sit there?” amen...pastor matthews

