

- I. So who can read my shirt?
 - A. It says --
Jesus said; Go Fishing
He said nothing about fixing the sink,
mowing the lawn walking the dog, painting
the trim, washing the car, cleaning the
garage, or weeding the garden.
 - B. How many of you like to fish?
 - C. Well, on my vacation I got to fish for 6 days.
 - D. When I mentioned that to someone, they
commented,
“Ah, so you’re a fisherman.”
To which my response was,
“No, I just fish.”
 - E. So you tell me if you think I should be called
a fisherman.
I fished for six day, had only 4 bites and
caught no fish.
I don’t think that gives me the right to be
called a fisherman – what do you think?

- F. I tried as best I could, I fished in the morning, I fished evening sun. I fished in the heat of day and when the sun went down; but I caught no fish. I fished with eggs and power bait and lures – but no flies. I had a new reel that could cast near or far and I tried different weights and bobbers and spinners; but I caught no fish.
- G. I tried my best but – I got no fish. Now it seems that to be called a fisherman you have to catch fish.
- H. I came back from vacation to hear that Earl Reuter caught 19 fish up in Estes Park; of course he threw them all back. And while I was suffering humiliation at the fins of the fish, Gary McKee sends me a picture of one of the 6 huge King Salmon that he caught. You can call them fishermen.
- I. But I tried, I tried really hard to do what Jesus told us to do – that is go fish.
- J. But there was something funny about what Jesus said.

What did Jesus tell his disciples fish for?
– People.

II. PEOPLE – who fishes for people?

- A. Why would you fish for people?
How would you fish for people?
Is it catch and release?
I mean do you have to throw them back?
What bait would you use?
- B. Speaking of bait, what bait do you think the disciples used to catch fish?
Do you think they used worms?
That's really a trick question, because they didn't use any bait.
Do you remember what James and John were doing when Jesus called them to join him?
They were fixing their nets.
They didn't use bait, they used these big nets that had weights around the edges and they'd throw 'em out and trap the fish in the nets and pull 'em up.
- C. Maybe that's what I should have tried, but that would have been illegal here.
- D. But let's get back to my questions.
Why would you fish for people and how would you do it?

III. Lot's of people followed Jesus, but his disciples he called to not just follow him, but to fish for people.

A. That's still the same today.

There are lots of followers, but what Jesus really needs are folks who are willing to fish – for people.

B. Yup, that's what Jesus needs, people who will either fish or cut bait – but do something – do something to fish for people.

C. Here's why I think Jesus wanted his disciples, and wants us, to fish for people.

1. Jesus wants us to lure people, to encourage people, to be part of his community of love; so that they know the good news that God loves everyone and wants everybody to love each other and Jesus especially wants us to catch the ones that might be a little hard to love.

2. Jesus wants us to catch their attention and let them know that God loves them and really wants us to love each other.

We love each other by treating each other with mercy, forgiveness, compassion and fairness.

D. So that's why Jesus wants us to fish for people; but what bait should we use.

1. Well, I think instead of bait, we should use a net. We create a net – or a network of love where we show people how to love each other by treating each other with mercy, forgiveness, compassion and fairness.
2. You know what I think we should call that net we use gather people into God's community of love?
THE CHURCH.
So on Sunday morning you can tell people,
you've gone fishing.

AMEN.