

“Go Fish: Fishing Buddies”  
1 Corinthians 3:5-9  
April 29, 2018  
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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zfs3BJZxKkc> (Cletus take the Reel)

A parody by Tim Hawkins on Carrie Underwood’s “Jesus Take the Wheel.” Oh, but in our Go Fish series each need a Cletus to take the reel! We all need our Fishing Buddies.

We are called by Jesus, “Come, follow me, and I will make you a fisher of men.” We are called to Come. We are called to Follow. We are called to be Fisher’s of men. Yes, each of have that calling.

Well some may say, “I’m not much of a fisherman. I’m shy. I’m an introvert. Most of my friends are already Christians.”

Some of the disciples that Jesus called were fishermen, that is fisher of fish and they literally were casting their nets and had to “get out of the boat” to follow Jesus. They had to get out of their comfort zone. Jesus is calling you to get out of the boat. Get out of the pew, go into the deep.

Last week we talked about not wanting any ‘fish’ to get away. We don’t want to talk about the “one that got away.” We want to keep trying until we catch those fish. Persistent. Some time it takes a long time. We don’t want any to be forgotten.

In the lobby when you came in today you may have seen our “Go Fish” board. You put first names up there of people you have relationship with that to the best of your knowledge does not know Jesus. I have prayed over those names. Rev. Cathy has prayed over those names. Our Executive Council has prayed over those names. Our Wednesday morning prayer group has prayed over those names. Our Men’s prayer group has prayed over those names.

We shared last week how you can personally tell others about Jesus. (By the way you can find the podcasts and video of this sermon series on our website. Also, the first draft manuscripts.) To tell others about Jesus people want don’t want to know theology, our Christian talk, they want to know Who you were before you knew Jesus? How you came to know Him? and What difference does Jesus make in your life today?

Yes, it’s scary to share. Be bold have courage. I also want to say that you have some fishing buddies ready to help. Like in the Cletus parody and the Carrie Underwood song, “I (We) can’t do this on my own.”

Be encouraged. You don’t have to. Look around!!! Meet your fishing buddies!!!! You see fishing for men is not a solo event.

Now I have mentioned I am not a fisher of fish. I would be like Cletus. I could help carry the cooler. I could carry the tackle box. I could help load the boat. I could even bait my hook. But I wouldn't know which lure to use, how far to cast, what weight to use, what test line was appropriate, but I suppose I would do my best if I had to take the reel. You see it is a partnership.

Jesus Himself didn't do it by Himself. He called 12 to be fisher of men. And not all of them were actual fishermen. One was a tax collector and was a Zealot---oh my possibly a politician!!! It's amazing what God can work with!!!! Several of the disciples it doesn't even indicate what they did before they were called.

Now let me double double check to make sure you are with me. Who is called be a fisher of men?  
XXXXX

There's an old story told about what happened in heaven when Jesus returned from his earthly ministry. The archangel Gabriel asked, "So what happens next? What's the plan?"

Jesus explained, "My disciples take over now. They'll tell everyone the Good News that God loves them and wants a relationship with them."

Then Gabriel asked with a worried note in his voice, "Are you talking about those fisherman, tax collectors, women, you've been traveling around with?"

"Yes, those are the ones," Jesus answered. "They'll take over now. The Holy Spirit is with them. They'll do great."

There was a long pause. Then Gabriel asked tentatively, "So what's the backup plan?"

In the book of Acts, he outlines his plan to his disciples: "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witness in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." Who are to be witnesses---you.

But here's the great part if each of us has been called then that makes us all fishers of men, which means all of us are fishing buddies.

In our scripture Apollos and Paul are mentioned. **<sup>5</sup> What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe—as the Lord has assigned to each his task.**

Here is who Apollos is. He is a Jew from Alexandria. He was eloquent in speech and knew the scripture. He was stirred up by the Sprit. (Acts 18:24-25) He greatly helped those who believed.

Martin Luther even proposed that Apollos was the author of the Book of Hebrews in the Bible.

And then there is Paul. Before he knew Jesus, he was a persecutor of Christians. He came to know Jesus on the Damascus Road. What difference did Jesus make in Paul's life? He literally turned his life around. Paul wrote 13 books of the New Testament!

However, both Apollos and Paul were "only servants." Notice the phrase, "the Lord has assigned to each his task."

Who does Jesus call to be a fisherman? XXXX And again I say, "Are you called to be a fisher of men?" xxxxxx

**<sup>6</sup>I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow.** Notice the partnership of these "fishing buddies." Paul says, "I planted. Apollos watered." You see we each have our task/we each have our role.

To me it is kind of like a chain (**image**) and the links of a chain.

1 plants, 1 waters, 1 fertilizes, another gives tender care, another bears fruit. Or maybe we should continue to use the fishing analogy.

1 carries the tackle box, 1 carries the rod and reels, 1 got the bait, 1 baits the hooks, 1 casts it, 1 pulls it in, 1 cleans it! Let's see now---which link are you?

You see it's a partnership. God is the one who causes the action. We just have to do our part and our task.

**<sup>7</sup>So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow.**

I can't save anyone. I can water, I can plant seeds, but it is God who acts and the person must respond to God's call. We just need to be faithful and consistent in doing what God has called us to do.

Oh, we can't do this on our own. Today at our 9:30 service we have our 2018 Confirmation Class joining the church. These students have taken classes and will now publicly profess their faith and they take the United Methodist Church vows and we lay hands on them and Confirm them in their faith. We will confirm 6 at 9:30 and tonight at the beach we will have a Beach baptism and confirm another youth.

In the vows that they take, which are the same vows that adults take they are asked, "Will you faithfully participate in the church's ministry by your prayers, your presence, your gifts, your serve and your witness."

As a Christian and as a Christ following Methodist we have taken a vow to witness. Participate through your witness. To witness is who we are not only as Christians, but who we are as Methodists.

Each confirmation student professed their own faith and they also had prayer partners and parents. Faith is not to be lived out alone. Witnessing is not necessarily a completely solo event. We have fishing buddies.

In John chapter 4 Jesus is sharing with a Samaritan woman he met at a well. Jesus knows all about her (just as he knows all about us). Jesus tells her that even though she has come to the well to draw water that He is the Living Water.

Who was this woman before she met Jesus...she was a woman who had had 5 husbands and the one she is currently living with is not her husband. How did she meet Jesus? She met Jesus at a very common place...a well. What difference does Jesus make in her life? Such a difference that she cannot wait to tell others about this one she has met.

**John 4:28 New Living Translation (NLT) <sup>28</sup> The woman left her water jar beside the well and ran back to the village, telling everyone,**

Today she would have emailed, texted, Facebooked, instagrammed and tweeted the news. She wanted to tell everyone. She had gone to the well to draw water and she was so excited after meeting Jesus that she left her water jar beside the well and moseyed back, no---slowly walked back---no, sauntered back---no, she ran back to the village telling everyone.

**John 4:29 New Living Translation (NLT) <sup>29</sup> “Come and see a man who told me everything I ever did! Could he possibly be the Messiah?”**

How powerful are those first 3 words. Come. And. See. Those 3 words are great for us today as we are fishers of men. Come to church and see Jesus.

Andy Stanley says, “The church is the most powerful persuasive environment on the planet.” The reason is Biblical. Check out this verse in Matthew. Jesus is speaking and He says, **Matthew 18:20 Common English Bible (CEB) <sup>20</sup> For where two or three are gathered in my name, I’m there with them.”**

Friends we have more than 2 or 3 gathered here today. So, you know what.... Jesus is here. Jesus is here. Here to love, here to forgive, here to comfort, here to challenge, here to save, Jesus is here.

We the church are your fishing buddies. Tell people to come and see. Come to church and see Jesus. Jesus is here in this place.

Back to our scripture text: **1 Corinthians 3:9 <sup>9</sup> For we are co-workers in God’s service; you are God’s field, God’s building.**

We are co-workers together in the fishing for men business. PHUMC wants to partner with you as you are fishers of men.

What part of the link are you? Planter, waterer, gatherer of fruit.

In the lobby is the Go Fish board with the first names of people that may not know Jesus. Just as we put them out there last week, this week we are going to ask you to take them down. One link in the chain that all of us can do is to pray.

As you feel called I would like for you on your way out to simply take 1 post-it-note (only 1) and to pray for that person by name on a regular basis. Also pray for the unknown person who put that note on the board. Pray that God through the Holy Spirit will speak. Pray for boldness and courage for the person who wrote the name. Pray for an openness for the person whose name is on the post-it. Pray that they might "Come and see."

You see there is big news. There is Good News. This news comes in the name of Jesus.

Jesus take the---Reel.