

“Go Fish: Lures and Live Bait”

John 21:1-14 (ESV)

May 6, 2018

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---Ad lib-extemp. Playing children’s Card Game “Go Fish” with Rev. Cathy.---- **(Image)**

If you do not have what you need---you need to GO FISH!

Friends we need as many people as possible to hear the Good News of Jesus. Is everybody that you know that is not a follower of Jesus here today? XXX (No) GO FISH!

In this last sermon in this series we look at yet another passage of the disciples who were actually and literally fishermen.

This passage that was read is post-resurrection. It is after Jesus has been crucified, dead, and buried. He rose on the third day and was alive on earth for 40 days before He ascended into heaven.

Simon Peter, Thomas, Nathaniel, James and John (the sons of Zebedee) and 2 others were all together fishing. They were fishing buddies.

Scripture says they went fishing at night. This makes sense as they would sell it in the morning--literally the fresh catch of the day. Indeed, fresh fish. Fish so fresh it asked me to go out on a date!!!!

Imagine fishing, fishing, and fishing and not catching anything. That happen to anybody here? Can I get a witness???? XXXXX

They have been out at night, not caught anything, dawn is breaking and Jesus is standing on the shore---yet they didn’t know yet that it was Jesus.

**<sup>5</sup> Jesus said to them, “Children, do you have any fish?” They answered him, “No.”**

**<sup>6</sup> He said to them, “Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some.” So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in, because of the quantity of fish.**

They did as Jesus told them and they were not able to haul all the fish in.

Imagine so many people that our sanctuary were full!!! Oh, for the net to be full.

These fishermen were doing what they were use to doing---they went fishing. Sometimes we just need to keep on doing what we are doing. Catching “fish” can be a long slow process.

**<sup>7</sup> That disciple whom Jesus loved therefore said to Peter, “It is the Lord!” When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment, for he was stripped for work, and threw himself into the sea.**

The disciple whom Jesus loved is the disciple John. Now excitable Peter hears that it is the Lord and he literally gets out of the boat and throws himself into the sea.

Are we so excited about Jesus that we are willing to get out of the boat? Huh, huh, huh????

**<sup>8</sup> The other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, but about a hundred yards off.**

Maybe it looked like this (**image**). A net full of large fish. Not just the itty-bitty nibblers. No, the whole net was filled with large fish---and yet the net did not break.

Beloved this church sanctuary will not break if we fill the net/fill the sanctuary every Sunday. We have a seating capacity of 1700. We have 3 worship services. Simple multiplication says we can worship over 5000 each Sunday and still have room in the sanctuary. Woo-hoo!!! We fill the sanctuary up then will start a live video feed and then.... oh my!!!! Let's Go Fish!

Now I know there have been some concern about parking...and we are working on that. But, let me pause and ask a question. When you go to the mall, if you can't get find an immediate parking place do you leave? If you go to Raymond James Stadium or Tropicana Field how close do you park to your seat? By the way...of course, I'm asking for a friend!!!!

Oh, but we are like these first disciples with our attitude. We have been fishing all night and now you want us to simply cast our net on the right side of the boat. I guess the other side is the wrong side????

Well Long John Silvers, Red Lobster and Rusty Bellies ain't seen a catch of fish like this!!!!

Beloved our world, our nation, our state, our county, our neighborhoods need Jesus. Go Fish!

What about bait? Well the website [Mentalfloss.com](http://Mentalfloss.com) says the following are actually weird bait, but actually have been tested and tried: soap, canned meat, raisins, chewing gum, mini-marshmallows, hot dogs, cheese, and bacon. Bacon. Bacon, bacon, bacon---I guess for the dog fish!!

A legitimate question is “Do I use lures or live bait?” Well now, I'm not a fisher man, but live bait could be anything from minnows, worms, nightcrawlers, shad or shrimp. You bait that hook and say, “Here fishy, fishy, fishy.”

In fishing for men what do we mean by live bait? Live bait is how you live your life. Do you live your life in a way that has others saying, “Hey there is something different about them? How does he handle the stress like he does? Why does she have such a positive attitude? Why does he always want to serve and help others? How is she able to get through these tough times?”

**Romans 12:1 New International Version (NIV) 12 Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.**

Offer yourselves...your bodies, your lives as a living sacrifice---that is what is true and proper worship. It doesn’t matter if you worship on Sunday morning and live a life that is not pleasing to God all the rest of the week. It is the example you are showing by the way you live. That’s LIVE bait.

If a fisherman doesn’t use live bait they use a lure (**image**). In one sense I don’t like to use the term “lure” because it kind of seems, well like we’re tricking people. I’m using the term in keeping with the fishing theme. Also, the definition of lure is simply to “attract.” Attract/entice the fish to bite. What can we do, how should we lie to attract/lure people to Jesus and the church?

Now I noticed something about most lures (**image**)---they have more than one hooks on them. We need to have multiple ways to catch a fish---be a fisher of men so they may hear the Good News of Jesus.

So, do we use live bait or lures when we are a fisher of men? Yes. Both. Live bait is how we live our life. Live bait is telling someone about Who you were before you met Jesus, how you came to know Jesus and What difference Jesus makes in your life today. Live bait meets telling someone “Come and see.”

Some people really struggle with “live bait.” Okay use a lure. How are you going to attract people to Jesus and the church?

Well we have Invite Cards available at the Welcome Center. (**image**) These business card size invites says “Love to Have you worship with us!” The church info and all 3 worship service times at the bottom of the card.

We also just had some new invite cards made that arrived on Thursday. (**image**) The front of this post card size invite has our website, our logo and our Vision of All Ages! All In! Loving God! Loving All! (and reminding people to follow us on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

The back of the invite (**image**) lets people know that we are saving a seat just for them. It briefly explains our 3 worship services. 8:05: A blending of musical styles, including a hymn with piano and organ. Children with their families.

9:30: a variety of musical styles, children are in until Children's Moments and then go to small groups. Our youth have their small groups at this time as well.

11:05: "modern.worship.experience." Church feel with a modern presentation. Children with their families.

Children's Moments at all 3. Same message given at all 3.

Each of these "lures" if you will can help you explain how others might be able to "come and see." You might give an invite card to someone who may prefer a different time and service than you do. Does it really matter....as long as we are trying to get the message out about Jesus? Multiple hooks, so to speak.

Now before I show you the next invite example I need to tell a story that I have told before. I used it in April of last year. It's a classic, and it applies here. The light turned yellow, just in front of him. He did the right thing, stopping at the crosswalk, even though he could have beaten the red light by accelerating through the intersection.

The tailgating woman was furious and honked her horn, screaming in frustration, as she missed her chance to get through the intersection, dropping her cell phone and makeup. As she was still in mid-rant, she heard a tap on her window and looked up into the face of a very serious police officer. The officer ordered her to exit her car with her hands up. He took her to the police station where she was searched, fingerprinted, photographed, and placed in a holding cell.

After a couple of hours, a policeman approached the cell and opened the door. She was escorted back to the booking desk where the arresting officer was waiting with her personal effects. He said, "I'm very sorry for this mistake. You see, I pulled up behind your car while you were blowing your horn, flipping off the guy in front of you and cussing a blue streak at him. I noticed the 'What Would Jesus Do' bumper sticker, "Honk if you love Jesus," the 'Follow Me to Church' bumper sticker, and the chrome-plated Christian fish emblem on the trunk, so naturally....I assumed you had *stolen* the car."

You see I say that to say we have a free magnet for your car. **(image)** So if you get one today...remember you have it stuck to the back of your car. Are you with me? You can pick these up in the Multi-Purpose Room, where the coffee and donuts are. We want everyone here with a car to have one. If you want to help there is a donation basket. Donation or not...we want you to have one.

This magnet has our logo---a circle reminding us of the unending love...Loving God! Loving All! In the circle are different size people representing, "All Ages! All In!" (the circle). The cross in the center of the circle----all of this is about Jesus. We want to get the news out about the Good News!

When a new person comes because of an invite it becomes all of our responsibility...remember we are fishing buddies and we need to "take up the slack in the line."

Cathy and I began by playing the game Go Fish. Friends fishing for people, fishing for men is not a game. We need to be a live bait and sacrificially give ourselves to tell people about Jesus. Come and see. Invite them to church.

In our scripture that was read Jesus said, "Come and have breakfast." "And He took the bread and gave it to them."

Today come and have supper---the Lord's Supper. And the Bread of life will be given to you.