

life groups' sermon guide **gone fishin' :: fishin' buddies**



Life Groups exist at Kingsway to provide authentic relationships for spiritual growth, caring for one another, and reaching out to others.

In Preparation: whiteboard/marker or paper/pen, Bibles

Get Started:

What if I told you that today we get to learn some juicy information about each of you! Did you get nervous? Don't worry. ☺ All of us have had something happen in our lives, at one time or another that was so amazing, we just had to tell someone else about it, right? Maybe it was your engagement, your job promotion, first child, Christ-decision, relationship victory, etc.

Q: When's the last time something happened to you that you couldn't wait to tell someone about? Quickly share a bit about that experience with your group (or divide into smaller groups to share. About 6-8 minutes.)

Q: Now, let's look at this at a different level. How many of you get excited about a great sale, a good deal, a new restaurant, your child's homerun, your new puppy? What do you usually do when something good like that happens?

Q: When is the last time you remember sharing with someone else about something exciting that happened in your spiritual walk?

Q: Do you find yourself more hesitant to share about your spiritual life than general-life things? Why/why not?

Get the Scoop:

Let's take a look at what happened when the first disciples met Jesus. Look for their initial reactions and chosen next steps.

Read John 1:35-49

Q: What did you find interesting about Andrew's experience? What did he immediately do? What did he do with Simon after telling him about Jesus?

Q: Now, notice Philip's experience. What did he immediately do after Jesus called him to follow Him? How did Philip respond to Nathanael's question?

I am totally blown away by these accounts; first, that these men dropped their very livelihood to follow Jesus. Secondly, that they were confident enough in Jesus (whom they had only just met) to invite their loved ones to follow, as well. In fact, they were so confident they knew that if they just got their loved ones in Jesus' presence, they'd understand. Wow!

Dig In:

Andrew and Philip were so overwhelmed by what they found, they couldn't wait to share it with someone! And, they shared with their loved ones before they had time to study, research, practice, and be mentored by someone who's done it before. They shared b/c their life was changed. Let's face it: we too often wait until we feel totally equipped before we are willing to risk sharing our faith with those around us.

We've been hearing a lot about "fishing for men" from the pulpit lately. A lot of people have grown up thinking it was the job of the church leaders and paid pastors to share the gospel – and, yes, it is. But, it's also a task given to us – all of us, as Believers – by Jesus, Himself. Let's read the following passages.

Q: What do you find in each one that encourages or commands you to share your faith?

*Matthew 28:19-20. (teach, make disciples of all nations, baptizing in His name)

*Acts 1:8. Be His witnesses all over the earth.

*Romans 10:14-17. People cannot know unless we tell them. Yes, it's obvious there is a creator (Romans 1:21), but the news of Jesus, His sacrifice, grace, mercy needs to be told.

*Acts 4:12. We have the only answer.

*2 Peter 3:9, 1 Timothy 2:1-4. He desires all to know Him

*1 Peter 3:13-16. Always be ready to give an answer for the hope that we have.

*Colossians 4:5-6. Make the most of every opportunity – especially with "outsiders" to the faith.

Take It Home:

We asked at the beginning of the lesson about something so fantastic that you had to share it with other people. Let's make a list some of the amazing gifts you've been given because of your relationship with Jesus. (make list on board, paper, etc.)

Q: Who comes to mind that's missing out on a lot of these gifts?

It's been my experience that God brings those people to mind for a reason. What if you went – without worrying about knowing all the answers – and shared what you'd found with that person?

You could start the conversation like this: “Hey...I know this may sound crazy, but there's something that's important to me that I'd like to share with you. And, well, it may not be for you right now, but I'd sure like the opportunity to tell you about it and see what you think...”

One of the easiest ways to get the conversation going in sharing your faith is to use these three categories:

- Here's where I was when Jesus found me (or I made a decision, etc.)
- This is what I've found since knowing Him (share some of the blessings, peace, joy.)
- This is what I'm excited about now...(what are you currently learning in your journey...)

For Further Study:

I'd challenge you to practice sharing your testimony with at least 3 people this week. Begin with someone you know and trust – maybe someone who's experienced in sharing their faith. Then move on to someone who may or may not know Jesus. Just tell them that you've been challenged to share your faith, and would they mind listening and letting you know what they think? Sometimes people will listen to share their opinion, when they wouldn't listen just to listen. I'm sure your teacher and/or Life Group Leader would love to hear how it goes. (and so would I!)