

Fishers of Men

“And as He walked by the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. Then Jesus said to them, ‘Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men’” (Mark 1:16). Jesus was walking by the Sea of Galilee. He spied a man and his brother. Their names were Simon and Andrew. They followed John the Baptist when he was preaching in Judea, and one of them, Andrew, was present the day following Jesus’ baptism when John declared, “Behold, the Lamb of God.” When Andrew heard John say this, he went and found his brother Simon and brought him to Jesus. They listened to Jesus teach, and they became obedient to that teaching.

That day Simon and Andrew were working with their father. Their current task was mending the nets for the fishing boat. Fishing was their livelihood. This was their occupation—their trade. Some men, it might be said, live to fish. Simon and Andrew fished to live. Jesus came to them and said, “Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men.” They immediately left their father’s nets behind and followed Him. There are many important lessons we can learn from this, but following are two.

When Jesus Calls, You Have to Choose. Jesus did not leave a third alternative. Simon and Andrew had to choose either to stay or to follow Him. They made the best choice. They chose their teacher. Their determination that souls were of greater value than fish was accurate. Their willingness to leave the safety of their trade for daily discipleship and teaching is an example to us that we should be willing to choose Christ.

Servants to Money, Cannot Freely Serve Christ. There is no specific text plainly stating this, but it can be reasoned to be true. Simon and Andrew did not live their lives burdened by debt or as slaves to the lender. When a man is in debt, he must pay those debts. He lives for someone else. He works for someone else. His life and his freedom do not belong to him. He owes a debt, and it takes priority. If Simon and Andrew were saddled with debt, as many young men in our day, they would have felt a necessity to stay with their nets. We need to encourage our young men to stay out of debt and stay free to serve God.

By Aaron Cozort