



Come, Follow Me

As Jesus walked alongside the Galilee Sea, he saw two brothers, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew, throwing fishing nets into the sea, because they were fishermen. "Come, follow me," he said, "and I'll show you how to fish for people." Right away, they left their nets and followed him.

Matthew 4:18-20

In New Testament times, it was common for promising young Jewish men to seek out a rabbi and become his student. The young men would follow their teacher for years and learn from him. However, in this passage from Matthew's Gospel, Jesus reversed this process by taking the initiative to seek out his disciples. Scripture tells us Jesus **saw** them, Jesus **went** to them and Jesus **spoke** to them. The teacher sought out the disciples instead of the other way around.

When Jesus called his disciples, he was asking them to participate in God's divine mission to humanity. Perhaps most impressive, maybe even miraculous, was that these men simply left their nets and followed Jesus. They left behind everything – family, friends, home and work.

I attended a meeting at Shreve United Methodist Church last week. Their evangelism team had identified a need for a singles group in their community and they wanted to know how to reach out and meet this need. We all met in a classroom at the church and written on the chalkboard was this phrase, "Jesus called us to be fishers of people, not keepers of the aquarium." I have not been able to get this sentence out of my mind.

The call of Christ is the same for us today as it was for Peter and Andrew – follow Jesus and go make disciples. Fortunately, most of us are not required to leave home and family, but there is still a call to go. Perhaps in the modern age the call to "go" is more about leaving the safety and comfort of our church buildings and the people who are like us to venture into our communities. Maybe Jesus is waiting for us to do as he did that day at the Galilee Sea; **see** the people, **go** to them and **speak** to them.

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