

Have you been fishing lately?

Last Spring I entered a pickerel contest. I saw a flyer in the Columbus General Store that offered a First, Second and Third place prize for the largest fish. It only cost me \$10 and, of course, a fishing license. Pickerel are a long, toothy fish and the waters at Prospertown Lake, near Great Adventure, are loaded with them. Piece of cake. I did a little reading up on-line, bought some cool lures and off I went in my 15 foot canoe.

After fishing all day and trying different lures from my tackle box, I only had caught a few scrawny pickerel and a largemouth bass. My biggest pickerel of the day measured about 16 inches. You had to catch a 24-inch fish just to qualify. Oh well. Like any good fisherman, I concluded that the big fish weren't biting. After all, when a fisherman doesn't catch fish, we blame the fish!

Listen to Jesus' words: "Come, follow me and I will make you fishers of men" (Matthew 4:19). These are very simple directions. A whole lot simpler than pickerel fishing. Or is it? Let me just say this: when I'm not catching souls I have a tendency to blame it on the souls. They just aren't biting! But maybe it's because I'm not connecting. You see, when I have the right bait and the right conditions I'm going to catch the big ones. If I have the right bait and conditions for souls I'm going to reap souls, too.

Jesus said, "Come, follow me..." There is something about Jesus that is very attractive to souls. Crowds followed Him. His ministry was life-giving. Jesus also said, "I will make you fishers of men." There is no such thing as a self-made soul-winner. Jesus makes a good soul fisherman (or should I say fisherperson).

In our generation you and I need to know how to connect with souls. We need to know what brings people into the true kingdom. An advertiser needs to connect to his buyers. How do we re-present Christ in such a way that it attracts pre-Christians? How do we connect with our neighbors, community, unsaved family members, co-workers or peers at school? What we say and do has to hit people where they are.

Take some time this week. Look through the Gospels. How did Jesus make the Gospel connect with souls? Talk to some unsaved people. Ask them what they need in a religion. E-mail me with some of your results. Let's follow Christ together and learn to be fishers of men.