

The Ministry Begins

Matthew 4: 19.



“Then He said
to them,
“Follow Me,
and I will make you
fishers of men.”
Matthew 4: 19.



I. Introduction: Importance of Evangelism

Love that is not shared is not love. This is why Christians enjoy spending time with others, uplifting Christ, the source of true, eternal love.



“The Church exists for nothing else but to draw men into Christ, to make them little Christs. If they are not doing that, all the cathedrals, clergy, missions, sermons, even the Bible itself, are simply a waste of time. God became Man for no other purpose.”

C. S. Lewis



“If your Gospel isn't
touching others, it
hasn't touched you!”
R. Blake



“The spirit of Christ is the spirit of missions. The nearer we get to Him, the more intensely missionary we become.”
Henry Martyn



“Missionary zeal does not grow out of intellectual beliefs, nor out of theological arguments, but out of love.”

Roland Allen



"To know the Word of God,
to live the Word of God,
to preach the Word, to teach
the Word, is the sum of all
wisdom, the heart of all
Christian service."

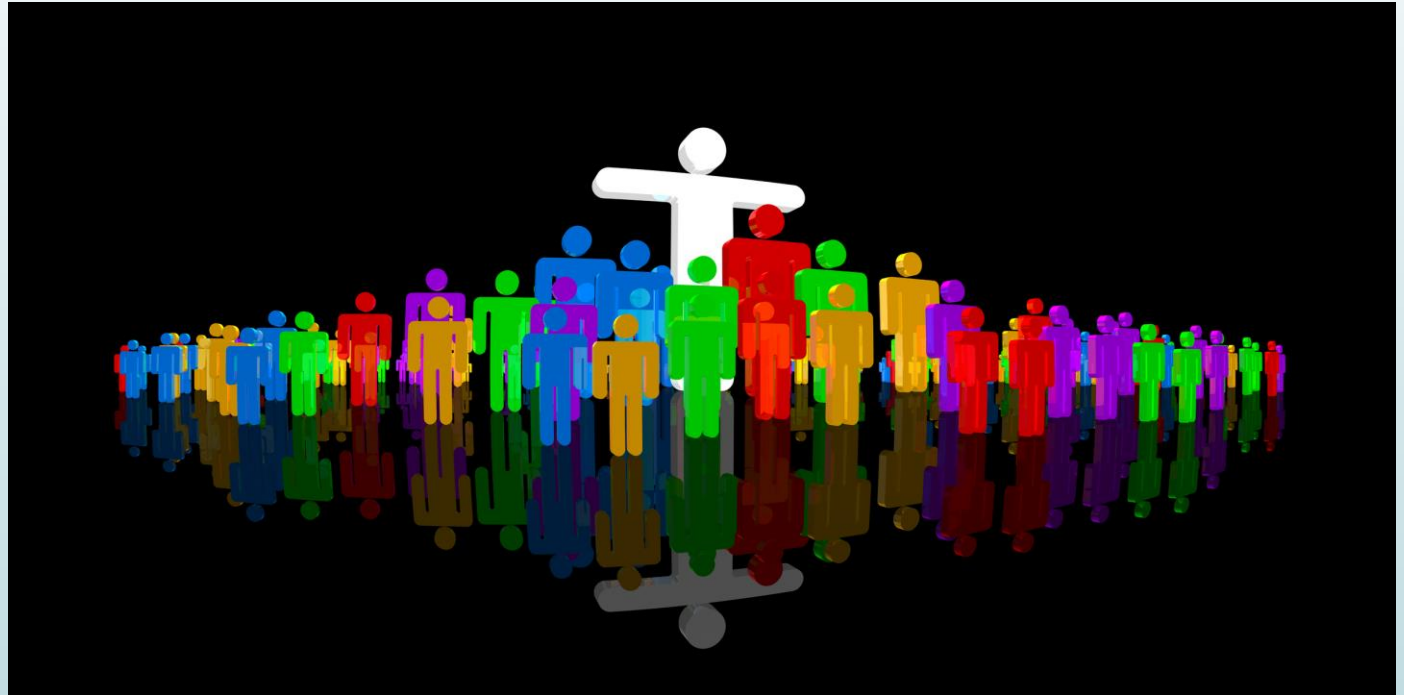
Charles E. Fuller



"Evangelism without social work is deficient;
social work without evangelism is impotent."
John R. Mott (1865-1955)



“Every church needs to grow warmer through fellowship, deeper through discipleship, stronger through worship, and larger through evangelism.”
Rick Warren



“We talk too much.
Too often we are way
too eager to launch
into our own script,
rather than asking
questions that
express a genuine
interest in another
person, regardless of
what they believe or
claim.”

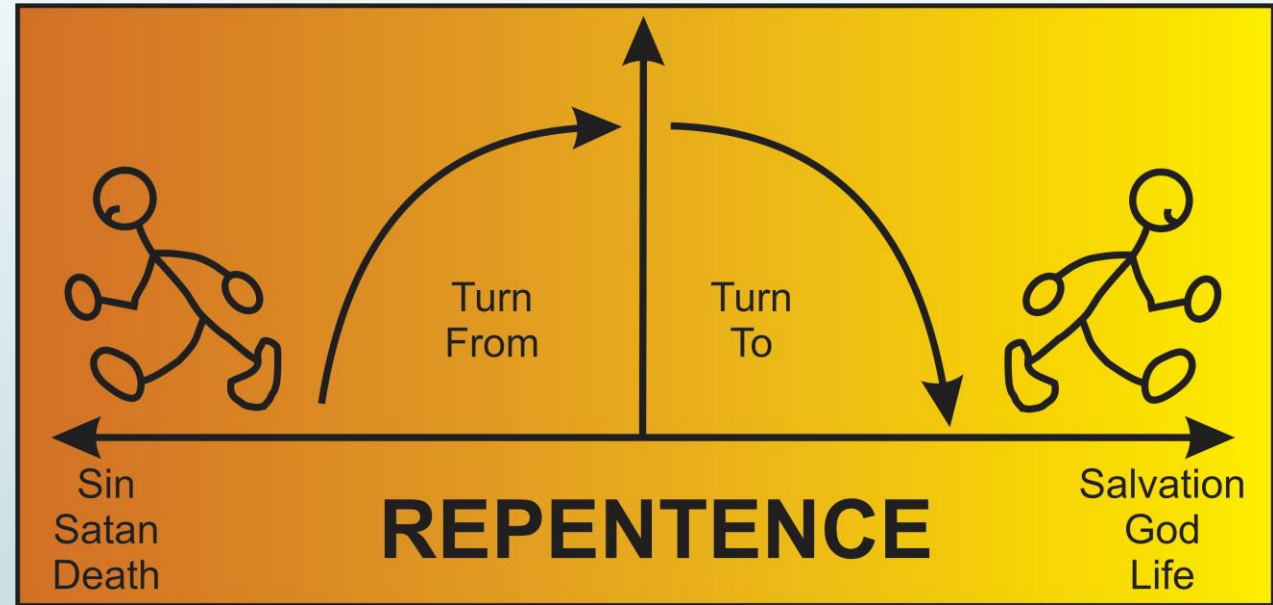
Christian Piatt



II. Context



Our text about the call of the disciples by Jesus is preceding the first major teaching in the book of Matthew (Sermon of the Mountain). Its structure is built around the essential message of Jesus: Repentance as the best preparation for God's kingdom



Matthew 4: 12 – 25. Structure

Growing Impact of the Ministry of Jesus: From Nazareth to the Entire Palestine

A	12 - 16	Jesus brings light to the people of Galilee	NAZARETH TO CAPERNAUM
B	17	HEART OF THE MISSION: Jesus preaches repentance	
A'	18 - 25	Jesus brings healing to the people of Palestine	CAPERNAUM TO DECAPOLIS JERUSALEM JUDEA AND BEYOND THE JORDAN
1	18 - 20	Peter and Andrew follow Jesus	
2	21 - 22	James and John follow Jesus	
3	23 - 25	Great multitude follows Jesus	

Four disciples called by Jesus in this chapter were fishermen. Jesus uses their skills and experience in order to make them effective for the accomplishment of their ministry: from fishermen they became fishers of men.



At the end of our text, and before His major speech, Jesus is followed by a great multitude. The impact of His ministry went well beyond Galilee. At that time, He was not only considered as a local teacher (rabbi). Everybody was able to see the impact of God's wonderful work among human beings.



The Gospel of Matthew, Structure

Jesus: God With Us	1: 1 – 1: 25	Genealogy of Jesus, son of David and of Abraham
	2: 1 – 2: 23	Mystery of Incarnation
Part I	3: 1 – 7: 25	The Meaning of the Law The New Deuteronomy Narrative: (Ch. 3 – 4; Teaching: Ch. 5 – 7)
Part II	8: 1 – 10: 42	The Discipleship The New Numbers Narrative: (Ch. 8: 1 – 9:34; Teaching: Ch. 9:35 – 10:42)
Part III	11: 1 – 13: 52	God's kingdom The New Leviticus Narrative: (Ch. 11: 1 – 12: 50; Teaching: Ch. 13: 1 – 52)
Part IV	13:53 – 18:35	The Church The New Exodus Narrative: (Ch. 14: 1 – 17: 27; Teaching: Ch. 18: 1 – 35)
Part V	19: 1 – 25: 46	The Judgment The New Genesis Narrative: (Ch. 19 – 22; Teaching: Ch. 23 – 25)
Jesus: God with Us Obtained Victory For Us	26: 1 – 27: 66	Crucifixion
	28: 1 – 28: 20	Resurrection

Five Speeches in the Gospel of Matthew and Five Books of Moses

The Meaning of the Law

The Torah Revisited

The Book of DEUTERONOMY

The New Meaning of the Law

The Spirit of the Law re-explained

The New DEUTERONOMY

Matthew
Ch. 5 – 7

Organization, Leadership

Moses sends 12 spies to explore the land

The Book of Numbers

Discipleship, Leadership

Jesus sends 12 disciples to transform the land

The New Numbers

Matthew
Ch. 10

The Great Controversy (GC)

The worship, the Atonement, GC (ch.16)

The Book of Leviticus

The Great Controversy (GC)

The Parable of the Tares and GC (36-52)

The New Leviticus

Matthew
Ch. 13

The Birth of God's People

Children of Israel coming out of Egypt

The Book of Exodus

The Church, new people of God

Children entering God's kingdom

The New Exodus

Matthew
Ch. 18

Creation, our Origins

Garden of Eden, God's plan for this Planet

The Book of Genesis

New Kingdom, Our Destiny

New Garden of Eden, God's plan for this Planet

The New Genesis

Matthew
Ch. 23-25

III. Jesus gives meaning to our life. By following Him, His power is transforming us in His likeness. This is how we achieve the maximum of our potential.



1. Jesus Christ
cannot do the work
of transformation in
our life if we don't
follow Him
"Follow Me"



“When we decide to follow Him, His resurrection life enters into our bodies, so that we are ‘in Christ’ and we become a new creation. The old has gone, the new has come! (2 Corinthians 5:17)”

Michael Gowen



“It is time to show in reality that when you have set yourself frankly to follow Jesus Christ, you have not done so without being resolved to hold fellowship with him at the cross, since he has done us that honor to be crucified in us, to glorify us with himself.”

John Calvin, To Monsieur de Falais:
Exhortations to glorify God amid poverty
and persecution



The follower of Jesus has a triple challenge:

1. He has to count the cost
Luke 14: 28 – 33.
2. He has to leave everything behind
Matthew 16: 24.
3. He has to look forward, and never to look back
Luke 9: 61. 62.



2. It is only Jesus
Christ who is able
to make us
missionaries
for His Kingdom
“And I will make you”



“Only by the power of the Holy Spirit can we be equipped to be fishers of men. Not by a program, or an organization, or a budget. Jesus makes us fishers of men. God's people are being equipped to be fishers of men when the Holy Spirit is received, in the overwhelming fullness of the presence of the risen Son.”
John Moerman



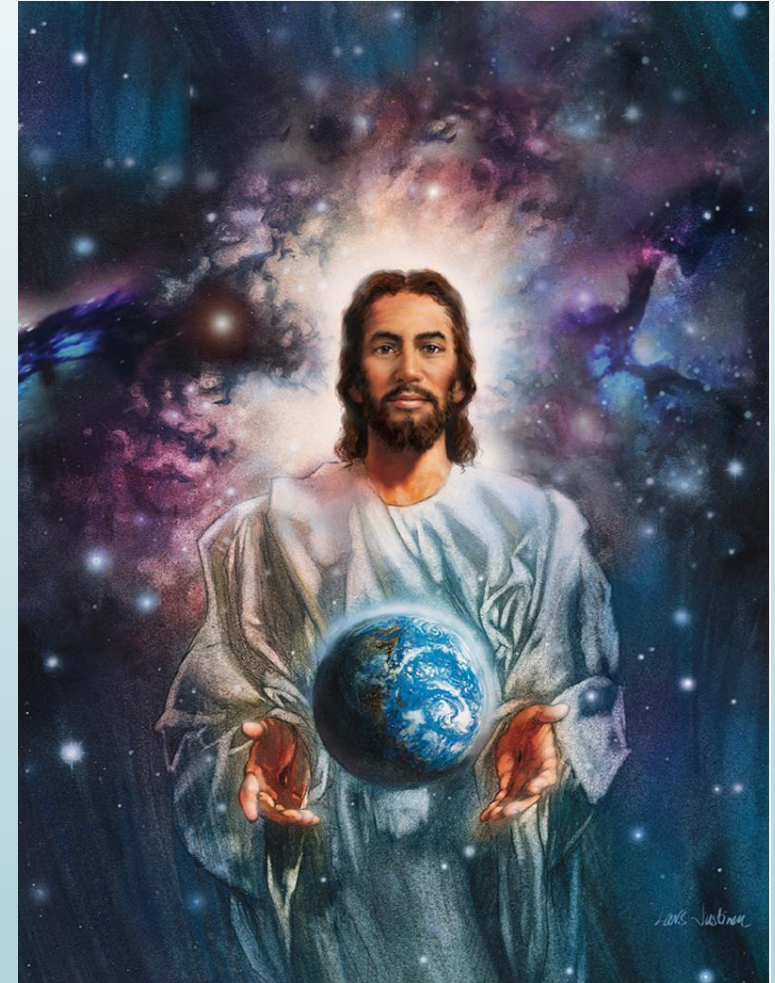
“None of us should be like the fisherman who thinks he has been fishing all day when in reality he has spent most of his time getting to and from the water, eating lunch, and fussing with his equipment. Fishing success is related to how long you have your line in the water, not to how long you are away from the apartment. Some fishermen are away from home for twelve hours and have their line in the water for ten hours. Other fishermen are away from home for twelve hours and have their line in the water for only two hours. This last type may wonder why they do not have the same success as others. The same principle applies to missionaries, whom the Master called ‘fishers of men.’ A missionary’s line should drop into the fishing water the moment he or she leaves the apartment.”

Dallin H. Oaks, June 20, 2000.

"Our Lord said, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." It is evident, then, that a true disciple is a soul-winner. It is possible to sit on the shore discussing the signs of the times when we ought to be driven by the signs of the times to launch out into the deep and let down our nets for a draught."
Vance Havner



3. Jesus will teach us how to deal
with human beings better than
anyone else. He is our Creator
“I will make you Fishers of Men.”



You will not grow into fishers by yourselves, but this is what Jesus will do for you if you will just follow him.

A young man asked, "What is the best way to become an effective preacher?" One person answers, "Go to seminary." "But Christ says, "Young man, follow me, and I will make you a fisher of men." How is a person to be useful? "Attend a training-class," one says. That's true, but there is a much better answer than that—"Follow Jesus, and he will make you fishers of men."

Charles Haddon Spurgeon (1834-1892)

To the unlearned, toiling fishermen of Galilee was the call addressed: "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men." Matthew 4:19. These disciples were humble and teachable. The less they had been influenced by the false teaching of their time, the more successfully could Christ instruct and train them for His service. So in the days of the Great Reformation. The leading Reformers were men from humble life—men who were most free of any of their time from pride of rank and from the influence of bigotry and priestcraft. It is God's plan to employ humble instruments to accomplish great results. Then the glory will not be given to men, but to Him who works through them to will and to do of His own good pleasure."

Ellen G. White, Great Controversy, p. 171.

“Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men,” He offered no stated sum as a reward for their services. They were to share with Him His self-denial and sacrifice.

Those who claim to be followers of the Master Worker, and who engage in His service as co-laborers with God, are to bring into their work the exactitude and skill, the tact and wisdom, that the God of perfection required in the building of the earthly tabernacle. And now, as in that time and as in the days of Christ’s earthly ministry, devotion to God and a spirit of sacrifice should be regarded as the first requisites of acceptable service. God designs that not one thread of selfishness shall be woven into His work.”

Ellen G. White, The Review and Herald, January 4, 1906.

Ellen G. White, Message to the Young People, p. 303.

V. Conclusion



"It is harder to reach the hearts of men today than it was twenty years ago. The most convincing arguments may be presented to sustain the truth, and yet sinners seem as far from repentance and conversion as ever. The work of saving souls is no child's play. It requires earnest, untiring labor to wrench the prey of Satan from his grasp. But God will sustain his servants in the work which he has himself committed to their hands. Said Christ to the first disciples, as they toiled upon the sea of Galilee, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." When the gospel net is cast, let there be a watching by the net, with tears and earnest prayer. Let the workers determine not to become discouraged; and not to let go the net until it is drawn ashore, with the fruit of their labor. Sometimes, indeed, we may say with Peter, "We have toiled all the night and have taken nothing," but still it is the Master's command, as of old, "Let down the net on the right side of the ship,"— work on in faith, and God will give success."

Ellen G. White, Signs of the Times, March 16, 1882, Art. A, par. 13.

“Jesus promised to make the disciples the fishermen by allowing them to transition from the work of fishermen to the ministry of apostles.”
(DS)



“Ministers are fishers of men, not to destroy them, but to save them, by bringing them into another element. They must fish, not for wrath, wealth, honour, and preferment, to gain them to themselves, but for souls, to gain them to Christ.”

Matthew Henry



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