

Reflect on this! Series 4

*The making
of*

Fishers of men



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DEDICATION

*This book is dedicated to the
Honor, glory and adoration
of*

GOD ALMIGHTY

*and to the beloved of the Lord
who are on divine assignment:
Your calling in the vine yard of God
will be fruitful in Jesus name, Amen*

TABLE OF CONTENT

Introduction	..	..	..	vi
1. A Pearle in the Rubble	..	..	..	1
2. Comparison of Fishermen and Fisher of Men	..	..	..	7
3. Look unto Me, I will Live up to My Name	..	..	..	11
4. The Journey with Master	..	..	..	17
5. Code of Salvation	..	..	..	23
6. Learning from the Greatest Teacher	..	..	..	31
7. Test and Testimony	..	..	..	47
8. Fishing at the Sea of Tiberias	..	..	..	57
9. Moment of Glory	..	..	..	67
10. Reflect on This	..	..	..	77
11. Prayer Points	..	..	..	81

Introduction

And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. Matthew 4:18-19

**I will make you Fishers of men,
Fishers of men, Fishers of men,
I will make you Fishers of men,
If you follow me . . .**

We all sang the song, and the teachers made us act out the calling of Peter and Andrew from their fishing boat. We did not know what it meant. We only felt excited while we were singing, clapping and jumping in the children class. The Sunday school activities kept us awake and at the same time kept us from bothering our parents in the Adult Sunday-School Class. Little did we know that God was using these blessed teachers to plant precious seed of the word of God in our hearts. The seed fell on good ground and over a period of time it germinated and bore abundance of fruit. In remembrance of our early days in the Sunday-School, and in appreciation of the commitment and dedication of the faithful Sunday School Teachers and Child Evangelists we are sharing the fruit of the precious seed in this book.

CHAPTER **A Pearl in the Rubble**

1

One day as Jesus was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret, with the people crowding around him and listening to the word of God, he saw at the water's edge two boats, left there by the fishermen, who were washing their nets. He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little from shore. Then he sat down and taught the people from the boat. When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch." Simon answered, "Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets." When they had done so, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break. So they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them, and they came and filled both boats so full that they began to sink. When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus' knees and said, "Go away from me Lord; I am a sinful man!" For he and his companions were astonished at the catch of fish they had taken, and so were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, Simon's partners. Then Jesus said to Simon, "Don't be afraid; from now on you will catch men." So they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed him. Luke 5:1-11

The Making of Fishers of Men

One really needs to understand the scenario by the lake of Gennesaret because of its great importance in this book. A great multitude were pressing and thronging upon Jesus Christ in His ministry as He was going about doing good. The people crowded around him for a purpose. Some were spiritually hungry and thirsty for the sincere milk of the word of life that proceeded out of the mouth of Jesus Christ. Some wanted to touch Him to receive divine healing. Some wanted to watch Jesus Christ of Nazareth at work. Some just wanted to witness the next miracle of our Lord Jesus Christ. Everyone wanted to maintain a close proximity with Jesus Christ so that they will not miss any of the miracles he would perform. They did not want miss any of His rich parables. The multitudes crowded round about Him.

Jesus Christ, the King of kings was the greatest spiritual celebrity that ever lived. His fame preceded His appearance on earth. The prophets of old were inspired to speak volume about His birth by the Virgin Mary. *“Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.”* (Isaiah 7:14) They prophesied about His ministry of mercy. His names were declared about 700 years before His birth in Bethlehem. *“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful,*

Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.” Isaiah 9:6-7) His fame transcended His life time on earth and His fame will outlive every generation on earth.

The awesome power of God was unfolding on earth. A new order that will usher in salvation of mankind was manifesting. The merciful Creator was in the mission of reconciliation of earth. His mission was to reconcile the sinners with the Creator.

It was not like our days when we can gather together in a well-organized and a large accommodative capacity stadium that can take a vast crowd of people at a time. It was not the days of microphones and loudspeakers that we are familiar with in the crusade ground that are loud enough to reach people at a reasonable distance. It was not like our own time when we can sit anywhere in the Christian gathering and watch the speaker or the performer on a closed-circuit television. It was not like our days of telecast when we can watch a vast revival program going on in a far away country in our sitting room. It was not the days of our civilization when we can create an elevated platform where the large crowd

The Making of Fishers of Men

of audience can watch the activities that were going on the elevated stage.

Two needs arose that needed to be met at the very moment. Jesus Christ was the center focus of the gathering of the great multitude. They wanted to watch Him speaking to them and they also wanted to hear His word. A device has to be made that will satisfy these two needs. The empty boat of Peter was the perfect device. Jesus Christ entered Peter's boat and requested that the boat be thrust a little away from the coast so that the position of Jesus Christ may provide a wide-view for the multitude that was yearning to hear His word. At the shore of the Sea of Galilee people gathered and they could behold the Master Jesus speaking in the wealth of the wisdom of God. The fishing boat of Peter became an improvised speaking stage for the gathering.

When the wooden fish canoe of Peter was made, no one ever realized that the Creator of heaven and earth will one day sit in it. Jesus Christ sat in the fishing boat of Peter to address the crowd. Perhaps you are wondering whether you possess anything that God can use. Of course, you do! The Lord is interested in your heart to dwell therein. The Lord is interested in your wisdom and intellect to glorify His holy name. He is interested in your skill and your resources if you can make them available to Him like Peter. He can use

your legs to reach out and save the people at the verge of hell-fire. He will surely appreciate it if you can stand in the gap to intercede for the nation and individual needs. The Lord can use your time if you can lay it before His altar.

Nobody knew how long Jesus spoke with the multitude. Actually, it was not the length of time that matter. What happened after His speech was of a great interest to us. At the end of His teaching, Jesus told Peter to launch out into the deep and let down his net for a draught. Peter who was a little hesitant said, *“Master, we have toiled all the night and have taken nothing, nevertheless at thy word, I will let down the net.”* Peter was a professional fisherman; he knew the fishing water very well and he knew characteristic of the fish. He knew the favorable time that fishes could be caught in the water. Thinking like Peter, we would say, under normal circumstances, multitude of fishes could not be caught in shallow water that is closed to the sea-shore at that time of the day. But Peter did not let his thought override the directive of Master Jesus Christ. Humility and obedience permeate in his mind and he yielded to the directive of Jesus Christ. As the Master directed, he let down his fishing net and miracle of God manifested.

When humility and obedience to the instruction of God mingle with faithful action, it produces a miracle.

The Making of Fishers of Men

Above all, the presence of the Creator overruled the circumstances and caused nature to obey His will. The anointed power in the word of God took effect and uncommon miracle manifested. The fullness of divine blessing of God came from absolutely nothing. A great multitude of fish was caught, up to the point that the fishing net began to break. Peter had to signal to other fishermen on the other boat for help. Their two boats were filled up with the great catch of fish and began to sink.

A brief analysis of this event reveals that the period that Jesus Christ spent in Peter's boat was adequately compensated for with the miraculous catch of fish. It is a clear indication that there is no amount of time we spent with God that will not be rewarded. No one can out-give God in terms of our resources and quality time. God is not a consumer, He is a multiplier. Every time we spend in the Lord's services positions us closer to Him and prepares us strategically to receive His divine blessing. You will not miss your blessing, in Jesus name, Amen.

Peter was overwhelmed by this miraculous blessing. He fell down at Jesus' feet and said, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." The miracle broke Peter down and allowed him to see his sinful nakedness. Perhaps this was the highest number of fishes he had ever caught at one throw of net. It was

like winning a jackpot lottery considering the number of fishes and their market value then. Peter possessed spiritual insight that revealed the personality and divinity of Jesus Christ to him. Peter saw this miracle as an eye-opener. The miracle led Peter to identify the awesomeness of God. He beheld the glorious Lord that condescended Himself lowly in order to reach Peter at his lowest estate. He witnessed the fruit of His divine power manifesting in miracles.

Jesus beheld rare qualities in Peter. He beheld a pearl among the rubble. He saw obedience, faith and humility in action and told him, "*Fear not, henceforth thou shalt catch men.*" Peter did not say, "I -- I will think about it." He accepted the calling out-rightly. Although Peter appreciated the divine blessing that the miracle brought, he placed greater value on the Giver. He completely surrendered all. In other words, he left the abundant provision of fish along with the fishing boat and followed the Provider. That was the smartest decision.

The impeccable characters of Simon Peter, his integrity, honesty and spiritual foresightedness influenced Peter's business partners. His decision to follow Jesus Christ influenced James and John. They also saw the situation from the point of view of Peter and left everything to follow Jesus Christ. "*So they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and*

The Making of Fishers of Men

followed him. (Luke 5:11) An important question we need to ask ourselves, “Do we know that our lives are points of reference to some people? Many people that we are not aware of are watching us. If you are righteous person and you are an individual with impeccable character, people will identify you with these unique attributes. They will deal with you in the understanding of your characters. “*Ye are the salt of the earth ...*” “*Ye are the light of the world.*” (Matthew 5:13-14) Many people are supposed to be seeing with the bright *light* of the gospel of Jesus Christ that manifests in our godly Christian conducts. Many lives are expected to be sweetened by the *salt* of the Lord in us. Peter led his companions to Christ obviously by his consistent sacrificial and selfless Christlike life.

Other Gospels of Jesus Christ reported the calling of Peter differently but the undeniable fact was that when Peter encountered the Savior, Jesus Christ said to him, “Follow me, I will make you fishers of men.” This statement is pregnant with meaning. It was like when a rich man comes across a poor man and tells him, “I will make you rich.” It was like Jesus Christ was saying to totally broken down; “I will gather your pieces together and use it for my glory.” Or on the other hand, it was like He was telling Peter, “You are a raw material in my hand, your past does not determine the value of your future in my hand, I will turn you around to a brand new and beautiful finished product.”

Peter was the number one pick in the list of apostles of Jesus Christ. He was a fisherman, a stark illiterate. According to human standards, he could be regarded as unteachable and perhaps be rejected for this type great calling. But Jesus understood better. He is the Creator. He is the Lord that does not think like men. He does not choose His elects by their physical appearance, neither did He call His servants because of their acquired wisdom called education. The word of God in Isaiah 55:8 confirms this, *“For my thoughts are not your thoughts neither are your ways my ways.”*

Jesus began the shaping and molding of Peter to become what He wanted him to be—a golden vessel for the master’s use. The laudable purpose of Jesus Christ concerning the life of Peter leads us to the comparison of Fisherman and Fisher of men.