

# **Fishers of Men**

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## **Introduction**

Fish are frequently mentioned in the Bible, being referenced 69 times in 64 verses in the NASB.

From the beginning, man was placed in a position of supremacy over the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, and the beasts of the field (Gen. 1:26-28; Psa. 8:3-9). In his many proverbs and songs, Solomon spoke of animals and birds and creeping things and fish (1 Kings 4:32-34). Divine judgment resulted in the removal of fish (Hos. 4:1-3), while God's blessings occasioned the multiplication of fish (Ezek. 47:3-12). Various miracles involved fish, including the plague of turning the water of the Nile into blood (Exod. 7:17-21), the judgment that befell Jonah (Jonah 1:17; 2:1, 10), and Jesus' feeding of the multitudes with a few loaves and fishes (Matt. 14:15-21; 15:32-38).

Calling Peter, Andrew, James and John, the Lord said, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men" (Matt. 4:18-22; Mark 1:16-20; Luke 5:1-11). What lessons can be learned from this analogy?

## **Characteristics**

- A successful fisherman knows his equipment, while a fisher of men accurately handles the word of truth (Ezra 7:10; John 8:31-32; 2 Tim. 2:14-15). A successful fisherman knows his prey, while a fisher of men evidences a knowledge of mankind (Prov. 1:1-6; 1 Cor. 1:18-31; 2:14-16).
- A successful fisherman is patient and persistent; a fisher of men manifests these same qualities (Rom. 16:12; 1 Tim. 5:17; 2 Tim. 4:1-2).

## **Contrasts**

- Catching physical fish requires stealth and deception; catching spiritual fish requires sincerity and truth (Eccles. 9:12; 2 Cor. 2:17; 12:14-18).
- Catching physical fish benefits the fisherman, not the fish; catching spiritual fish benefits both (1 Cor. 3:10-15; 9:19-23; 10:31-33).

## **Conclusion**

Endeavoring to become more effective fishers of men, let us recognize the need for preparation and persistence, sincerity of purpose, and a genuine concern for the souls of lost mankind.