

Cleaning Fish # 1

Pray: Ask the Lord to help you learn to disciple others.

Read: 1 Peter 2:1-3

Fishing is a popular and challenging pass-time. As well as perseverance it requires knowledge of fish, experience with equipment, and wise choice of bait. While all good fishermen enjoy the thrill of the catch, most don't enjoy cleaning fish. It is the same when it comes to fishing for men, it's the thrill of the catch that excites the soul-winner –cleaning them is a less glamorous but (also) necessary part.

When catching a fish you need to clean the fish within an hour or two of catching it. Fish spoil rapidly after they die so have to be cleaned as soon as they're off the boat. When fish are not cleaned, they rapidly deteriorate. It is the same with new believers, as Mark says in the Parable of the Sower, "Satan comes immediately". If this is the case, the soul winner must either learn to clean his own fish OR TAKE THEM TO SOMEONE WHO WILL DO IT FOR THEM.

This much neglected ministry is the work of disciple making. Disciple making is what we as Christians have been called to. Jesus made that very clear when He said, *"You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you."* John 15:16.

The Greek word for appointed is used of appointment to any form of service and emphasizes the sovereign will of God in that appointment. But it is better understood as "I set you" as in, "I set you a task". The task is to GO, BEAR FRUIT and, SEE TO IT THAT YOUR FRUIT REMAINS.

This then is a lesson in fish cleaning- the first "job" in the task of making disciples and the one most people detest. Christians are not born fully grown they are like new born babies who need to grow and mature and they need help to do so, regular feeding, loving encouragement, and personal assistance are essential for both physical and spiritual growth. Just as fishing must be followed by fish cleaning, giving birth to babies means nappies need to be changed 😊

1. What are the 5 habits or attitudes that must be dropped by a new believer (v.1)?

The Christian's new life can't grow unless sins are renounced. When these bad behaviours are "laid aside" as one would take off a garment the Word can do its work.

2. What is a new-born believer directed to do in this passage (v.2)?

Spiritual growth is always marked by a craving for and a delight in God's Word with the intensity with which a baby craves milk because their little bodies need nourishment to grow.

3. Why should a new Christian get into the Bible (v.2c)?

Once the Christian has "tasted" the goodness of God, then he will naturally desire to get into the Word, so that he may learn more about Him.

4. Notice that obedience to the truth (God's Word) produces new birth (1 Pet. 1:22-25), and continuation in the Word produces spiritual growth (Discuss)

Pray together; ask the Lord to teach you all the importance of fish cleaning (disciple making) in the lives of new believers.