

# What's in Your Net?

I remember the first time I heard our pastor, Dr. Lester Sumrall, refer to a television show. I was shocked! I thought, *Wow, he watches TV like real people.* Well, he rarely did, and I'm not sure someone didn't tell him about the show. Then again, he was Dr. Sumrall, and I am not. He was the most remarkable example of being totally sold out for the gospel of Jesus Christ. He used to say, "I spend 30 minutes a day on Lester Sumrall, and the rest belongs to Jesus." How many of us can honestly say that? Moreover, the question is, are we really **true disciples**?

However, that's not just the question. It's the challenge.

**Discipleship** is a word that has been tossed around so much that it's lost its true meaning. It's become such a part of our "Christian-ese" that it seems old and tired. But if we are to follow Jesus as we desire, then we have to follow the pattern given us in the Scriptures, which is specifically illustrated in the Gospels and the book of Acts. Why? Because that's where we find the disciples that Jesus called.

I have read and re-read Mark 1:16-20, NIV: "As Jesus walked beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake, for they were fisherman. 'Come, follow me,' Jesus said, 'and I will send you out to fish for people.' At once they left their nets and followed him. When he had gone a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John in a boat, preparing their nets. Without delay he called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men and followed him."

Imagine what a presence Jesus must've had! These men had never seen Him, yet He called them and they didn't hesitate. They dropped their nets and followed Him—not after a few days, few weeks or few months, but rather, the Scripture declares, "at

once they left their nets and followed him." They left their careers, their families and everything, and they did so without delay. Think of that!

Next question: Who among us could do that?

I'm a planner. I like schedules, lists and predictability, which also means I hate surprises. If that would've been me, I can hear it now. I would whine to Jesus, "Now, let's wait a minute! Can I have a trip itinerary first? Where are we going? What should I wear? What should I pack? What will I be doing? Is it going to be hard? How long 'til we get there, and when are we going to eat? Jesus, You're asking me to drop everything? Seriously?"

There's a commercial for a credit card company that has the slogan, "What's in your wallet?" When reading this Scripture passage, I was so astonished by the fact that these men dropped everything and did it without delay. *Without delay* means "immediately." As a result, I started asking myself a series of questions: What's in your net? What is keeping you from dropping everything, every single day, to follow Him? What are you unwilling to leave behind, either consciously or subconsciously?

Can we drop anything that's preventing our total surrender while also yielding to His direction as we follow Him? Can we drop past failures, guilty pleasures or unforgiveness? Can we drop self-centeredness, willfulness or an unbridled tongue? Can we drop a lack of discipline and just plain ol' sin? On and on goes the list of detractors that get caught in the net and therefore get us entangled in the affairs of life instead of following Him without delay. You cannot move if you're caught in something. I think *I* may be the thing in my net, to be honest!

The proof of desire is in pursuit. We cannot say we're disciples with lip service and nothing else to show for it. We

pursue our passions, and who better to pursue than the One who called us in the first place? To **pursue Jesus** is to pursue what He loves—people. He didn't say, "Follow Me, and I'll make you fishers of power, position and success while life is rainbows and butterflies." He said, "I'll make you fishers of men."

In the meantime, we follow Him, and we follow what He is and who He is. We follow peace, we follow victory, we follow healing, we follow grace and, most importantly, we follow love. Yet while we are following, He is with us with that same presence that caused the disciples to drop everything at once.

He is the sunrise to every sunset, the heaven to every hell, and the tranquility to every tempest—and He is without delay.

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