

A NOTE TO PARENTS

I once heard the Church described as “one beggar learning from another, where to find bread.” The Church happens—the Church is most itself—when its message is, “Guess what! We’ve found the Messiah! Come and see!”

“Guess what! Somebody cares about you: come and see!”

“Guess what! Your sins are forgiven: come and see!”

“Guess what! There is bread for your deepest, most secret hunger ... the hunger for God: come and see!”

Jesus called twelve disciples to share with him the work of proclaiming God’s Kingdom and giving flesh to that proclamation: “Guess what! The Kingdom is coming: come and see!” He told them to go out and catch people as if they were fish—to spread a net wide and haul them in in great numbers—to announce a message so joyous, so irresistible, that the whole world will want to come and see, and, seeing, will know that here at last is bread for the gnawing hunger, deep inside, that comes with being human.

Christ is the bread for our hunger; and those who have found him are charged with making him known—with spreading the word to the other beggars that here at last is bread. With the call to discipleship comes a call to *evangelism*, the work of spreading the Good News. We may criticize the street-corner preacher or the intrusive dropper of tracts; we may have grave reservations about the theology, as well as the personal dynamics, of accosting people with the question, “Are you saved?” But abuses of evangelism by some Christians do not remove God’s call to all Christians to make Christ known; to fish for God’s people; to go to other beggars like ourselves and tell them where we have found bread.

If we were brought up as Christians, our parents did the work of evangelism for us. Now that we are parents ourselves, that responsibility rests with us. We are our children’s evangelists: it is up to us to be sure that they hear the Good News. And we can encourage them, in turn, to be evangelists. They can invite a friend to come to Sunday School or church: “Come and see!”

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Jesus was starting to do God's work. He said, "God's Kingdom is near!"



Jesus needed helpers. He asked Simon and Andrew to help him.



Then he asked James and John.

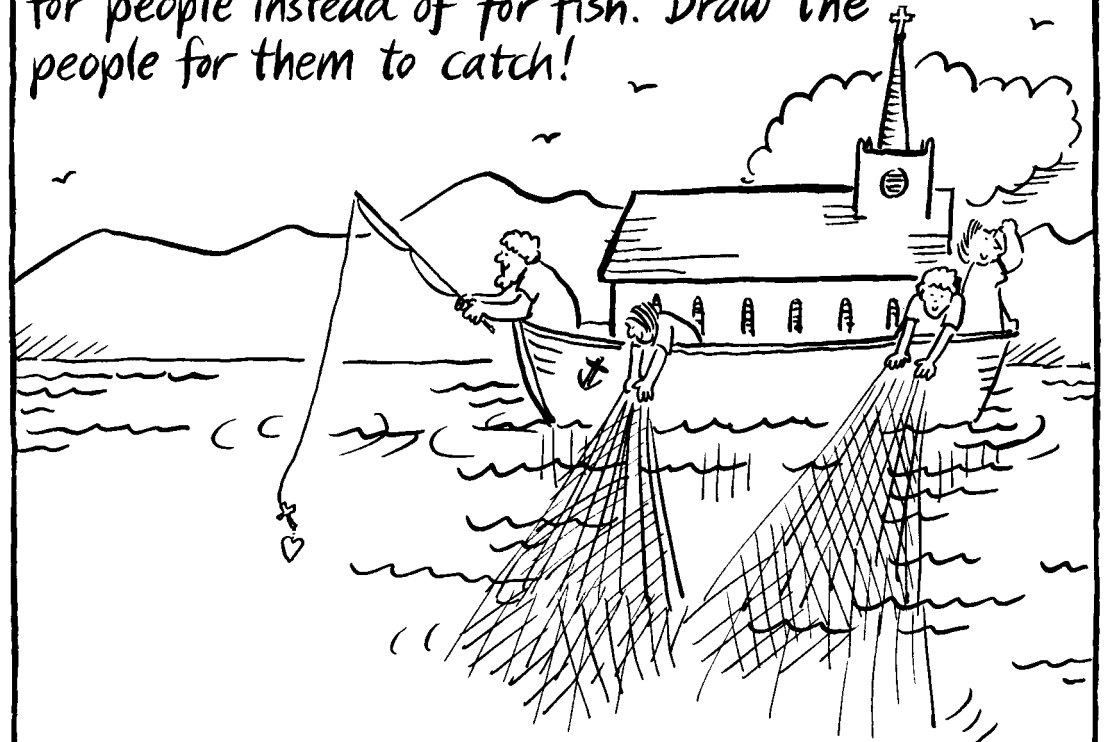


They stopped what they were doing, and came with Jesus!



Jesus wants people to belong to him. He wants us to know and love him, and help him do God's work. He wants us to help other people to belong to him.

Jesus told his friends that now they would fish for people instead of for fish. Draw the people for them to catch!



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