

Finding a career in today's world can be scary. Ask the high school senior who wonders about her future, or the college student who considers his major, or the worker who worries about job security.

- Years ago, the obvious place to look for a job was in the want ads of the newspaper.
- Today, the obvious place for a job search is a laptop or phone. The new want ads have names: LinkedIn, Indeed, ZipRecruiter.
- A not so obvious place to look for a job is in the Bible. That's right, God offers a job that requires no resume or interview. Here's the ad in today's Bible story: **Help Wanted: Fishermen for Jesus.** Jesus places the ad and provides the training.

Jesus began his ministry by looking for disciples, to assist in him in his ministry. Had there been a Galilean Gazette, you may have come across this in its want ads: **Help Wanted: Fishermen for Jesus.**

Why Jesus came has been well-documented in the Bible. He didn't come to make this world a better place, but, in his own words: *"to seek and to save the lost."*

To accomplish his purpose he'd have to give up his holy life for sinners and shed his innocent blood for their sins on the cross. That he would have to accomplish on his own. Where he needed assistance was in getting this Good News message of free forgiveness out. To do this important work, you'd think he'd search for the most powerful people and the smartest people to do that. The most powerful would have been the Romans. Their military controlled the world. The smartest would have been the Pharisees. They knew the Bible backwards and forwards. But Jesus didn't use either of them. Maybe Jesus would use his angels. They were very good at carrying messages from God. But Jesus didn't use them either.

Instead of holy angels, Jesus chose to use sinful people: **As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter**

and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen.

Jesus looked for everyday people living everyday lives to do his work. He found some brothers who were commercial fishermen. Peter and Andrew didn't have much money or any formal education.

Does Jesus know what he's doing? They were simple men living simple, but sinful lifestyles. Without a background check, Jesus still knew everything about everyone of them. He knew their imperfections and weaknesses. If a consulting firm had done an evaluation on his disciples, it would have gone something like this:

Dear Sir: It is our staff's opinion that most of your candidates lack the education, experience and skill-set for the type of work you are looking to do. The phrases "team work" and "team player" do not fit any of them. We would strongly recommend that you continue your search for persons with experience in this field.

- *Simon Peter is too emotional to be a leader. He's selfish and unstable. He has anger tendencies.*
- *Andrew, Peter's brother, lacks any experience or potential in a leadership role.*
- *James and John, the other set of brothers, place personal interest above team loyalty. They are grown men who still have mother issues.*
- *Thomas has trust issues that will likely undermine team morale.*
- *James, Alpheus' son, and Thaddeus both have radical political views.*
- *Matthew, while doing a background check on him, we found he has charges pending for fraud and falsifying tax records by the Greater Jerusalem Better Business Bureau.*

On a positive note, one of the candidates shows good potential. He's ambitious and resourceful and has contacts in high places. We recommend Judas Iscariot as the manager for your new venture. Sincerely, Jordan Area Management Consultants

And yet Jesus still offered these imperfect men a job as his disciple: **Come follow me.** Jesus loved them, not because they were so lovable, but because he is loving. He would do anything for them. He placed this ad before them: **Help Wanted: Fishermen for Jesus.**

Jesus places the same ad before us today. Since he still has the same important work of spreading the Gospel, you'd expect him to search for the most powerful and smartest people today. But he doesn't. Instead, he looks for everyday people living everyday lives in Cudahy, St. Francis and Milwaukee to do his work.

Without a background check, Jesus still knows everything about everyone of us. He knows how often we show our sinful weaknesses and imperfections. Just like his disciples then, we're selfish, we struggle with doubts, we place other loyalties like money and pleasure ahead of our loyalty to Jesus.

Still, Jesus offers us the job of disciple. Jesus loves us and has given his life for our sins. His love for us is what makes us respond to his ad: **Help Wanted: Fishermen for Jesus.**

Jesus placed the help wanted ad: **Come, follow me,** and promised them training: **I will make you fishers of men.** Over the next 3 years they would be constantly by his side ... watching him and soaking up his teachings. That would be training for a rather unique and strange job. Yes, they would be fishing. But not with nets for the kind that have fins and scales (something they knew plenty about). Instead, they'd be fishing for women and children and men using the Gospel as their net (something they knew nothing about).

When a new job offer comes along, most would ask for time to consider the change in their lives. Not Peter and Andrew. They knew this job was too important to pass up: **At once they left their nets and followed Jesus.** They knew there were oceans of people who were going to hell unless they heard the Good News about Jesus.

Jesus makes the same offer to us: **Come, follow me,** and promises: **I'll train you to fish for people, too.** Jesus won't physically be with us for on the job training, but we have something just as precious. We have God's Word. By listening and learning through personal Bible times and public worship times, we soak up his teachings. He's preparing us to fish for people.

Fishing for people for Jesus isn't only for teachers and preachers. God wants everyone who has heard the Good News of how Jesus saved us from our sins and experienced his forgiving love to fish for people.

- We're fishing for people, when we are a Christian example – being patient, honest and helpful to others as we live our lives.
- We're fishing for people when we support the work of his church with our prayers for those who share the good news publicly, and with our offerings so the good news continues to be spread both here and across the street, and across town at Wisconsin Lutheran High School and across the world with the Wisconsin Synod who trains pastors and teachers and sends them to places we can't go.
- We're all fishing for people, when we follow the FRAN plan and invite a Friend, Relative, Acquaintance or Neighbor to come and hear about Jesus with you.

Jesus' ad to fish for people is too good to pass up, and you know it. You know there are still oceans of people some in your FRAN Plan who need to hear they have a Savior from sin. May God give us the willingness and the strength to fish for people. And, instead of telling the story about *"the one that got away,"* we can tell the story of *"the one who came to take our sins away."*