

A mother says to her toddler...
Put that down! Put that down! Put that down!

A wife says to her husband
Pick that up! Pick that up! Pick that up!

A few weeks ago... my wife was repeating herself...

That's redundant!

She snapped back

You can say that again...

So I said

That's redundant!

And she said

You can say that again!

And I said...

That's redundant!

We went back and forth like that for a long time... Laughing...

Repetition... is important... because it creates ***emphasis***
Especially in biblical texts...

There are lots of fish stories in the new testament
John 21... Mark 1... Matthew 4... and today's gospel from Luke 5...

Reminds me of this slogan... printed on signs and bumper stickers...
A bad day of fishing... is better than a good day at the office!

That may be true for sport fishing... but ***not*** if fishing is your livelihood
We worked all night long... and caught nothing.

And Jesus... a carpenter... ***not*** a fisherman... said...
Go back out... into the ***deep*** water... ***not*** the best place to fish...

They caught so many fish that their nets were beginning to break. So they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both boats, so that they began to sink.

Years ago, severe drought dropped the water levels in the Sea of Galilee. Stuck in the muck... they discovered an ancient fishing boat. Scientist ran tests and discovered that was from the time of Jesus. What a remarkable discovery!

27 feet long... 7 and a half feet wide... more than 4 feet high...
It could hold 500 cubic feet of cargo...
And fish weighing 65 pounds per cubic foot...
is more than 32,500 pounds of fish...
But there was a second boat! And they were both sinking!
65,000 pounds of fish... at current wholesale price of \$3.50 per pound...
Their catch was worth... a quarter million dollars!

Poor fisherman... suddenly wealthy... reacted like no one expected.
There was no happy dance... no high fives... no whoop whoop...

Simon Peter fell down before Jesus... and cried...

Go away from me, Lord! I am a sinful man!

Playing a part in this astonishing miracle...

Realizing that only God could do such a thing

And knowing it was the work of Jesus...

Peter had an Epiphany!

And when he was face to face with the one true living God

All he could do was fall before him...

And confess...

Go away from me, Lord! I am a sinful man!

And Jesus... our beloved Jesus said...

Don't be afraid! from now on... you'll be catching people!

Those fishermen just walked away...
from all those fish... all that money...
and followed Jesus!

Fearlessly!

Fearlessly!

And in that moment...

In the midst of this divine display...

When Peter confessed his sin before Jesus...

These fishermen were no longer a few guys hanging out with Jesus.

It was the beginning of a community of faith...

It was the beginning of the church.

And the very first thing the master said to them...

Let's go fishing... for people...

But were fishermen the best choice for planting this new Church?

Wouldn't sales people... or politicians... or investors... be better suited?

What about scholars... teachers... public speakers...?

Apparently not... We're here!

In a church... that's been around for a very long time

Started by fishermen! Why fishermen?

Well... if you're fishing for people... fishing skills might be helpful

I found Adam Brown insights very interesting...

Here's what he wrote...

*A lot of people say catching a big fish has a lot to do with luck.
While luck can sometimes play a part,
there are many traits I have noticed over the years
that contribute to a good fisherman.*

This also applies to fishing for people...

Patience –

*Better anglers will always wait that little bit longer
when an inexperienced angler will get fed up and give up.*

The same is true when fishing for people... Patience is essential.

Local Knowledge –

Identifying the best spots... where fish might lie.

Fishing a lake or River for a while is one way to do that.

The other is to proactively go out and search for those spots.

When fishing for people... go where the people are.

Local Expertise –

*Fishing a lake in the English countryside is a far cry
from shark infested waters off the coast of South Africa.*

Focus on a type of fishing will help you get better in the chosen area.

How do *you* connect with people? Do what your good at!

Understanding the weather/environment –

Sometimes the fish just won't feed because of different factors.

I know fishermen that will cancel plans because of the weather.

If something's going on with them... be aware.

You can always come back at another time

Understanding the fish –

*Knowing what baits the fish will go for
depends on the fish you are after.*

No good fishing for predatory fish with bread for instance

What you have... is the love of God... and it takes many forms.

Listen carefully... and you'll know what they need.

Preparation –***Need to bait the area?******You need a lot more luck if you throw your hook bait in with no extra freebies to attract the fish.******Needle. Haystack.***

Seek a pleasant and welcoming environment.

It's hard to catch people when they're uncomfortable

Knowing your tackle and methods –***Presentation of bait is sometimes the most important part of fishing.******Throwing out your bait in a tangle of line and lead spooks the fish.******That will never work.***

Know your story. Know God's story. Know how to tell it.

Slapping people with a bible... spooks people too.

Not afraid to try something different –***An expert who, after fishing an area for several hours with no luck... will move on or try new baits, rigs, methods etc.***

If you're not getting through to people... try a different approach.

Perseverance –***There will be days that you will catch nothing at all.******This doesn't make you a bad fisherman.******The good fishermen learn from the experience.***

If you talking to people about God's love... and they don't respond

Don't despair. Learn from the experience...

Finally... I think what puts apart a good fisherman is the time and effort they put in to get the bait presentation just right depending on the conditions.***Patience and experience definitely come into play.***

This is great advice... for catching fish... and people...

But there's one very important thing left out...

Fr. Tom Gibson fished the ocean... from the beach... by surfcasting...
 He caught catfish and small stuff... but really wanted a ***pompano!***
 A couple years ago... during Epiphany he was casting off Cocoa Beach
 He caught nothing... but the sea was azure blue... with crisp white foam
 Warm sun... cool breeze... just before he made his last cast of the day
He looked up toward the heavens and thanked God for revealed glory.

As soon as he set the pole... he had a strike.
 The pole nearly snapped in two!
 It was... a huge fish! It was... a pompano!

***Even a bad day of fishing... is a great day...
 When we give all the glory... to God!***

***Even a bad day of fishing... is a great day...
 When we give all the glory... to God!***

Wait... That's redundant...

You can say that again!

***Even a bad day of fishing... is a great day...
 When we give all the glory... to God!***