



Take Heart as You Soul-Fish

by Pastor Paul

A couple of weeks ago as I prepared my *Soul-Fishing* message to you based on the Master Fisher's example to us from John 4, I was freshly encouraged by Jesus' words, "The harvesters are paid good wages, and the fruit they harvest is people brought to eternal life. What joy awaits both the planter and the harvester alike! You know the saying, 'One plants and another harvests.' And it's true. I sent you to harvest where you didn't plant; others had already done the work, and now you will get to gather the harvest."

Jesus earlier said that the greatest satisfaction for Him in soul-fishing was engaging in the work God called Him to do (vs. 34). That ought to be our prime satisfaction as well – just to know, with or without visible results, that we have honored God by serving Him through communicating the good news to others. But there's more!

Jesus also taught us that it is exhilarating to see God use us to guide another person across the line of faith into an eternal relationship with Jesus Christ. There are few greater spiritual highs than this. Unfortunately, for most of us, so much of the time, we don't see that kind of result, and so we become disheartened. We then tend to pull back from courageously investing in others. Again, there is even more for us to grasp that will give us heart!

Jesus informs us that there are times we will invest without seeing any immediate result. Yet that investment is NOT a wasted effort. In God's time, God will use someone else to move that person closer to Him, and then another and another, until someone else reels that person in. In eternity guess who is then rewarded by God and is full of rejoicing? It's both the initial "planter," the eventual "harvester."

Take heart to soul-fish! Fish with earnest *prayer*, loving *care*, and courageously *share*. Do so with love for others, yet your greatest love for God. Furthermore, do so knowing that God will always reward your fishing. And finally, do so knowing that whether you were the initial "planter" or the eventual "harvester," both of you, along with God Himself, will be celebrating throughout eternity!