



ingness to seek out the truth, sharing with them the Lord's promise: "...**seek and you will find**"! (Matt. 7:7)

25; 26:1-29). If the apostle was able to speak cordially and respectfully to men who were mocking and persecuting him, can we not also "**utter words of sober truth**" under less threatening circumstances? We may not have all the answers, but we know where to find them! (cf. 2 Tim. 3:16) We should feel no shame in admitting this to our friends, and express an open, objective will-

Brethren, we must be willing to set aside our insecurities and excuses so that fulfill the task at hand. Remember, brethren, the Lord has not left us ill-equipped, but has promised that He will never leave us, nor forsake us (cf. Heb. 13:5). He has given all things that pertain to life and godliness, but we must take the time to study and learn them so that we will be prepared to offer our defense for the faith that is in us (cf. 2 Pet. 1:3). Finally, we must remember that the Lord began His ministry with ordinary men whom he shaped into apostles tasked with delivering the Truth once and for all. The role of apostle will never be ours to fulfill, but if we allow Him, the Lord can shape us into fishers of men even today (cf. Rom. 12:2; 2 Cor. 5:17). Let us be sure, then, that we are casting our nets.



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Faithful Sayings Issue 14.17 April 22, 2012

## Welcome Visitors

We are so glad that you joined us today.  
Please come again.

● Let us know if you have any questions.

ISSUE

14.17

BULLETIN OF  
THE OLSEN  
PARK CHURCH  
OF CHRIST

# Faithful Sayings

April 22  
2012



## Services

Sunday: 9:30 AM  
10:20 AM  
6:00 PM

Wednesday: 7:00 PM

## Elders:

Pat Ledbetter  
Jeff Nunn  
Kyle Pope

## Deacons:

Dean Bowers  
Eddie Cook  
Bill Davis  
Steve Dixon  
Pat Goguen  
Jack Langley  
Neil Ledbetter  
Brady McAlister  
Walker McAnear  
Lance Purcell  
Rusty Scott

## Evangelists:

Kyle Pope  
Jason Garcia

## Cast Your Net

By Jason Garcia

Shortly after Satan tempted the Lord in the desert, Jesus sought out His first disciples: Peter and his brother, Andrew, as well as their business partners—the brothers James and John. These were ordinary fishermen with simple, honest dedication to their work (cf. Luke 5:5). However, they also recognized the tremendous importance of spiritual things, and soon these men would be trained in a similar (yet far more important) line of work. In the first glimpse we are given of these men, we find them accommodating Jesus to use their boat so that He might teach, most likely due to their previous exposure to Him as followers of John the Baptist (cf. Luke 5:1-3; Jn. 1:35-42). At least one of them, Andrew, was present at John's declaration that Jesus was the "**Lamb of God**", which Andrew understood to be synonymous with "Messiah", and informed his brother. Peter no doubt believed his brother, for he addresses Jesus as "**Master**" by the seashore and, subsequently, "**Lord**" after Jesus' instruction yields a large catch of fish. These men were not educated as scholars, they were not wealthy or refined, nor were they famous. Yet, it was to these four rough, ordinary men that Jesus said, "**Follow Me, and I will make you FISHERS OF MEN**" (Matt. 4:19

NASB emphasis mine). This new calling would present a new set of challenges, demand a new skill set, and require selfless dedication. Both Scripture and secular history bear witness that these men lived up to the challenge. There were times when each of them came up short, but ultimately they would persevere, and most would give their lives for the Lord. There may be times when we feel ill-equipped or too inadequate in knowledge to fulfill our



Olsen Park church of Christ

calling as disciples of Christ. We need only remember that the Lord was able to take honest, dedicated men and make them **“fishers of men”**. If one will simply hear the word of God with honesty and humility, and resolve to act upon the instruction he or she is given, then that person can be pleasing to the Lord. One does not need a college education, previous years experience, or to be an eloquent, articulate speaker before casting his net into the sea of men. Scripture teaches that example alone is a powerful testimony, and that a man “may be won without a word” when exposed to consistent, godly conduct (cf. 1 Pet. 3:1). Indeed, there are many ways for the Christian to cast his or her net. We needn’t worry about the size of our catch, for that is in God’s hands—we must cast the net. Or, as in another analogy, plant the seed of the Word regardless of the soil. One preacher said it well: “We should be seed planters, not soil inspectors.”

One of the many ways to cast our nets is by example. We cannot underestimate the power of this method as we’ve already noticed above. Paul instructs us to conduct ourselves **“with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity”** and to let our **“speech always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt,”** so that we will know how we **“should respond to each person”** (Col. 4:5-6). Notice he specifically names **“outsiders”** (i.e. unbelievers) to whom we should *conduct* ourselves wisely. The **“speech”** in this passage does not need to be understood as explicitly preaching and teaching as we would in a sermon or Bible class, rather in everything we say including casual conversation we are to be distinct. Those we come into contact with on a regular basis will notice if our speech is centered on spiritual matters rather than profanity, or sexual encounters, or drinking binges, etc.

They will notice that we consistently offer kind words when others may be needlessly ridiculing them. They will notice that we show a sincere interest in them, rather than merely placating or humoring them when they express something that **may be** bothering them. These kinds of things are not readily obvious ways of casting our nets, but Scripture teaches that they are effective in winning someone for the Lord.



Another way to cast our net is, admittedly, more overt and (for whatever reason) seems to make people more uncomfortable on both the sending and receiving sides. If, as children of God we ever find ourselves too timid to speak openly about our faith due to even the smallest amount of embarrassment, then this is something to which God will hold us accountable. The Lord has said, **“For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when He comes in His glory”** (Luke 9:26). However, if we feel uncomfortable and hesitant due to inadequate knowledge, we must ask ourselves, “By whose standard am I inadequate?” Many have shirked their responsibility as a disciple at crucial moments because they allowed their fear of “not having all the answers” to drive them away from those interested in the Truth. We have no excuses. The Lord has told us to be prepared to answer those who desire an explanation for our behavior and beliefs: **“...sanctify Christ as Lord**

**in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence”** (1 Pet. 3:15). Notice the character of this defense is **“with gentleness and reverence.”** This *apologia*, or answer for the curious isn’t combative, aggressive, or even insistent. Paul serves as a great example in modeling such a defense for us as he was routinely brought before men in authority and courts of law to defend his faith (cf. Acts 17:19-32; 21:37-22:22; 24:10-