Connect Study—Hook, Line and Sinker

In Matt 4:19, Jesus said to his disciples “"Come, follow me, and I will show you how to fish for people!

**There are 3 simple points to remember in Evangelism adopted from the book – “Just walk across the room” by Bill Hybels. 3Ds that will help us practically to be more effective fishers of men.**

1. Develop friendship
2. Discover stories
3. Discern the next step
4. Develop friendship

A fisherman prepares everything before he heads out to fish, he gets the bait, the fishing rods, tackle box and everything else and heads out to fish. A fisherman doesn’t go to a swimming pool to fish because there’s no fish in the pool. He goes to places where he knows there are fish there to catch. In the same way, we are called to fish for the lost therefore, we must go to places where there are lost people.

In Luke 15, Jesus shares about the lost sheep, the lost coin and the lost son. From these parables, we can see the heart of God for His lost children. Similarly, we as shepherds required to leave our comfort zone sometimes to reach out to that one friend. Many of us are just happy attending connect groups, church services, prayer meetings and having meals with connect members but these are not the places where we can fish for the lost. We need to develop friendships outside of our Christian circles because we never know which of them is that one lost sheep or lost coin.

When we develop friendships with people let it be genuine. It’s not like - I’m holier than thou and you need my help. The scripture is clear, **All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23)**.

We are no better than our non-Christian brothers and sisters. We must place our emphasis on building a friendship rather than "saving a soul". Only the power of God at work that can save someone. **Romans 1:16-17 - For I am not ashamed of this Good News about Christ.** It is the power of God at work saving everyone who believes - The Jews first but also the Gentiles. This Good News tells us how God makes us right in his sight. This is accomplished from start to the very end by faith. As the Scriptures say, "It is through faith that a righteous person has life."

When our friendship is genuine it’s easy to:

1. Discover stories

When you are fishing somewhere new, you should test out what lies beneath, find out the depth and temperature because it will determine the bite.

* Sometimes when you cast and when you realise the water is too shallow you reel it back in and cast again
* Sometimes when you cast and your line gets stuck you know you shouldn’t cast there again

The same situation may happen when it comes to discovering stories with your friends. You may talk about different topics and ask certain questions and sometimes when you a roadblock, don’t give up, just try casting another question or topic.

We can be part of someone’s conversion story. Remember the Engel scale that Ps. Faith showed us 2 weeks ago?

A major aspect of effective witnessing for our Lord comes through developing friendships and discovering a little part of people’s life stories; If we ask the Lord He will in time connect us with people with whom we can be friends with and discover their stories.

After discovering their stories you need to:

1. Discern the next steps

This is simply an opportunity to allow a friendship to develop further or even to risk telling your own personal story concerning issues your friend is facing in their life at that moment. It involves being open to the leading of the Holy Spirit as we interact with people in a range of social contexts.

Sometimes you may feel like the situation is very tricky and it’s hard to do or say the right thing. But you know what, Jesus faced the same problem. In Mk 3:1-6 *(You can pause here and read together)* Jesus’ enemies were waiting for Jesus to heal someone on the Sabbath so they could accuse Him of working on the Sabbath but Jesus did it anyway.

**EFFECTIVELY, relationally based evangelism can only happen when Christ-followers are truly engaged in the lives of people around them. This means they choose to DEVELOP friendships, DISCOVER life stories, and DISCERN appropriate next steps based on the Holy Spirit's promptings.**

*You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and be trampled underfoot. - Matthew 5:13*

Go and be the salt.

Discussion Questions:

1. Do you have fish around you that you can catch? Can you identify them?
2. What do you find most difficult when it comes to evangelism?
3. As a connect group, how can you support one another and how can you improve (as a group) in evangelism?