(A Special Lesson for Ministers and Servants of God)

As a preacher or servant of God, do not love the world, and do not run away from the voice of God.

1. The Call to Fish for People

The Lord Jesus said to Peter:

> *Luke 5:10 (ESV)* "And Jesus said to Simon, 'Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching men.'"

Here, the Lord Jesus compares "people" to "fish", and the "world" to the "sea."

This symbolic language is consistent throughout the Gospels, where the work of the Gospel is often compared to fishing.

He further confirms this idea in the parable of the net:

> *Matthew 13:47–49 (ESV)*
> “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and gathered fish of every kind. When it was full, men drew it ashore and sat down and sorted the good into containers but threw away the bad. So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous.”

If fish represent people living in the world (the sea), then the Gospel of the Lord Jesus is the net. Christ has called us to draw people out of the world through the message of salvation not to be drawn *into* the world ourselves.

The fish (representing worldly people or influences) are not supposed to pull us into the sea (the world). Rather, we are called to pull them out into the Kingdom of God.

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2. Can a Preacher Be “Caught” by the Fish?

You may ask: *Can a servant of God be caught by the fish?*
The answer is YES.

Remember the story of Jonah? When he ran from the voice of the Lord, what happened?

> *Jonah 1:17 (ESV)* "And the Lord appointed a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights."

Jonah's disobedience led him into captivity into the belly of the fish, a place of darkness, isolation, and distress.

Similarly, a preacher or servant of God who runs away from God's call, and instead chooses to follow worldly desires, will end up swallowed by the world caught up in its systems, distractions, or even its punishments.

The belly of the fish can represent:

- Spiritual dryness
- Loss of vision
- Worldly entanglements
- Oppression by worldly powers

Such a person may find themselves at the mercy of cruel, powerful forces of the world people or systems who have no concern for their calling or spiritual life.

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3. Do Not Take the Path of Jonah

Jonah went down to the sea not to preach, but to flee from God’s presence.

> *Jonah 1:3 (ESV)* “But Jonah rose to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord. He went down to Joppa and found a ship going to Tarshish.”

He ended up in a storm, and eventually inside a fish.

Dear preacher: Don’t go into the world unless God has sent you there. If you must enter worldly arenas, let it be for the sake of preaching the Gospel, not for personal gain, ambition, or escape.

The sea (the world) is dangerous. It has waves of temptation, storms of opposition, and depths that can drown your calling.

> *1 John 2:15 (ESV)* “Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.”

> *James 4:4 (ESV)* “...Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.”

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4. Preach the Word Stay Faithful

Are you a preacher? A servant of God?

Then hear His voice, stand firm, and preach the Word in season and out of season.

> *2 Timothy 4:2 (ESV)* “Preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching.”

Do not go the way of the sea unless the Lord sends you. If He sends you, go with His word, His message, and His authority. But if you go in your own way, you may face storms and find yourself in the belly of consequences.

Let us be fishers of men not men caught by fish.

Let us draw people out of darkness into His marvelous light, not be pulled into the darkness ourselves.

May the Lord help us all to remain faithful to His voice, to obey His call, and to walk in His path.

> *Romans 10:14–15 (ESV)* “How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent?”

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