

# **Sharing the Gospel of the Kingdom**

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## Introduction

This writing is designed as an instructional tool to help you become proficient at preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom. It is a companion to the other tools I have already published. I have produced a video presentation of the Gospel of the Kingdom presentation and published a diagram that helps you to present it. These are found on our website at [www.sunministries.org](http://www.sunministries.org) under Training – Video Training. I will not explain these here again. Please stop here and go to the site to make yourself familiar with these tools.

This material will be easier to understand if you have already gone through the basic DNA setting tools we offer our disciples. These include the following.

1. Gospel of the Kingdom Video
2. Basic DNA Setting class
3. Being on the Mission class
4. 50 Days to Spiritual Fruitfulness devotional.

Without these basic training sessions, you may have trouble understanding some of the references and context. This is not written as a stand-alone work but rather a tool for my disciples and their disciples and so on.

There is one very important concept to understand before proceeding. In the last 100 or so years another Gospel has taken hold in the institutional church in America. This Gospel focuses on sin and obtaining entrance into heaven. This is very different from the Gospel that Jesus and the early church preached. This writing will help you return to the Gospel of the kingdom as taught by Jesus.

## Chapter One What is the Gospel of the Kingdom?

When I refer to the Gospel of the Kingdom, I am referring to the Gospel that Jesus preached. It is the same Gospel that the apostles, early disciples and the early church preached. It is the Gospel that refers to the return of the Holy Spirit to man and the current presence of God's Kingdom on earth. It is not the current popular gospel that focuses only on sin and the future reward of heaven.

Repentance from your sin and a future in heaven are a part of the Gospel of the Kingdom. They are not the full Gospel of the Kingdom. The full Gospel of the Kingdom informs the hearer of the power of the Holy Spirit they receive and the responsibility to be a witness for Jesus that they accept when they repent and ask Christ to be their Lord and Savior. Heaven is the eternal result. Sin is washed away. The return of the Spirit is the Good News now!

The distinction that is being made here is between the Gospel that Jesus and the apostles preached as opposed to the Gospel that dominates the America Christian culture today. The Gospel of the Kingdom speaks of entering into the Kingdom now. The dominant Gospel today speaks of entering into heaven after you die. One is about the current work of Jesus in redeeming the world and your part in it. The other is about getting forgiven and waiting to go to heaven.

Jesus never once preached a Gospel that said repent and go to heaven later. When Jesus mentioned heaven, He often said the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand! Jesus preached a Gospel that announced the arrival of the Kingdom of God now. The promise of

the Gospel of the Kingdom is the return of the Holy Spirit. The promise of the Gospel that dominates the institution today is the forgiveness of sins and admission to heaven.

It is true that our sins are forgiven and we are assured to get into heaven if we repent and accept Jesus as our Lord and Savior. The trouble is that is only part of the truth. The Gospel of the Kingdom is designed to enter us into the redemptive plan and work of God by returning to us the Holy Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit that was lost by Adam in the garden when he sinned against God. The Gospel of the Kingdom makes us accept our responsibility to be a witness for Jesus and join Him in His sufferings. The Gospel of heaven asks us to fight against our sin and become a good church member until we get our future reward.

The focus of the Gospel of heaven is on where will you spend eternity. The Gospel of the Kingdom places the focus on what you will do now to redeem mankind. This distortion of the Gospel is a fairly modern invention. It has only been popularized in the last 100 or so years. It has also produced a misunderstanding in what eternal life really is according to Jesus. The Bible teaches that everyone lives forever. To promise someone that they will live forever is to promise something that is true for everyone. Jesus explains that eternal life is to know the Father and the Son (John 17:3). This is accomplished as the Holy Spirit is returned to us and restores our relationship with God. This is the Good News! The bad news is that because of Adam we were cut off from God. The Good News is that because of Jesus we can once again have relationship with God through His Holy Spirit.

The Gospel of the Kingdom is for now. The return of the Holy

Spirit to us makes us whole again. It does not just give us forgiveness of sin and a ticket to heaven. It provides healing for our pain, forgiveness for our sins, the ability to forgive others completely, the removal of our shame and guilt. This is what many are hungry for today. The Greek word translated as “Saved” in most English translations of the Bible is the word *Sozo*. It denotes wholeness. It is time to return to the whole Gospel that Jesus preached. Let's learn to tell people about the current, powerful and real effects of repenting of our sins and accepting Jesus as our Lord and Savior. Then let's follow that conversion with an obedience to discipleship as commanded by Jesus in Matthew 28:18-20.

The Gospel of the Kingdom makes us missionaries, empowered to sacrifice and serve the Lord in the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit. As the institution took hold of the church it slowly changed and distorted the gospel. The goal of the institution was to make good church members. As institutional churches began to dominate the landscape, they desired control over the congregations. Soon the institution claimed it was required for the forgiveness of sins and the distribution of sacraments.

The return of the Holy Spirit turned the world upside down during the time of the apostles. The institution wanted to tame the people so it could control them. This required a change in the gospel. It wasn't long before people were taught that obedience to and participation in the institution became essential for salvation.

From the moment Jesus was identified by John the Baptist there was a promise associated with Him. John said “Here comes one that will baptize you with fire and the Holy Spirit”. The Holy Spirit is the promise of the Father. Jesus came to return the Holy Spirit to us. The

disciples walked with Jesus for years before they received the promise. You can receive the promise immediately upon repenting of your sins and accepting Jesus as your Lord and Savior by faith. When Jesus preached about heaven, He preached about the Kingdom of Heaven and said it was at hand and not just a future promise.

## Chapter Two Becoming Fishers of Men

Jesus told Peter and Andrew that He would make them become fishers of men. The concept of becoming fishers of men has been greatly neglected. I was an avid fisherman for many years. So were Peter and Andrew. There is more to fishing than throwing bait or a net in the water. Let's once again explore the concept of becoming fishers of men.

The first thing to remember is that no one can come to the Father unless He draws them.

John 6:44 NASB95 - "No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day.

God is relentlessly pursuing His children. All of them. He pursues them with love and grace. He does not do this so He can judge their sins. He does this because His children are His creation and He loves them all. He made you and me to have intimate relationship with Him. We are the children of God that were taken captive by Satan and his schemes. Once we are set free, we must join the pursuit of God's other children and bring them the Good News of our restored relationship with God through His Holy Spirit.

Only God can draw men and women to himself. The goal of becoming fishers of men is to learn to see the signs of the Holy Spirit working in the lives of those we encounter and interact with on a daily basis. This requires us to learn to walk in an awareness of the Holy Spirit. Walking in the Spirit helps us to become great fishers of men. If we neglect this important aspect of our faith then



we will simply be tossing bait and nets everywhere we go. Jesus did not do this. At times He spoke only in parables. At other times he rebuked the religious leaders. At other times He preached the Gospel of the Kingdom. Why did He take so many different approaches?

I think Jesus answers this question in John 5:19.

John 5:19 NASB95 - Therefore Jesus answered and was saying to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless [it is] something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner."

To minister the Gospel of the Kingdom is to do what God is doing and to do it the same way He is doing it. In order to minister in this way we must first know what God is doing and how He is doing it. This requires us to know God and be living in harmony with His Word and His Spirit.

Many have been taught to preach the gospel in the context of our sin. When Jesus was brought face to face with someone's sin He responded in a couple of unique ways. When He confronted the religious people of His day He often rebuked their sin openly. With others He often showed great compassion for their pain or past suffering. When the religious leaders brought to Him the woman caught in adultery He first rebuked them (John 8). After this He did not preach at her about her sin. He asked her who remained to condemn her. She said no one Lord. He then said that He would not condemn her either. This sinful woman met the compassion of Jesus who defended her from the religious leaders.

In John 4 Jesus met the woman at the well. He spent no time

telling her how wrong her life had been. Instead He told her of the living water. Her life was transformed by the compassion of Jesus. There is a real need for repentance for the forgiveness of sins. The point I am making is that compassion can lead someone to repent. Compassion tears down the walls of defensiveness that can be found in people. Bait your hook with love and compassion if you want to be a good fisher of men.

## Chapter Three Sharing Your Testimony

Rev 12:11 NASB95 - "And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even when faced with death."

Our testimony is a very powerful tool for sharing the Gospel. What is our testimony? It is simply our story of the life changing encounter we have had with Jesus. When we share our experience with the Good News, we are sharing our testimony. Our testimony can take on many forms. We can share the testimony of our salvation experience. This is the most common way I see people teaching about testimonies. It goes something like this.

1. What was your life like before Jesus?
2. How did you come to know Jesus as your savior? Include enough specifics that those hearing the testimony can also accept Jesus.
3. What has changed in your life since accepting Christ as your Lord and Savior?

There are other ways to use your testimony. One of my favorite ways is to share my experience with the power of the Holy Spirit that I received when I was saved. Acts 1:8 says we receive power to be witnesses from the Holy Spirit. It stands to reason that the power we receive bears witness to the one who gave it to us. My wife and I often tell stories of our experiences with casting out demons. It is very common that someone who is listening to our stories is being plagued by demons. This has resulted in many demonic encounters. I have also found that sharing stories of miracles and healing open opportunity share the Gospel of the Kingdom. Jesus was a great

story teller. You should also learn to tell stories. Your testimony is your story.

I think we should be careful when we construct our testimony. Remember to focus on the Good News. Don't give sin or the devil too much credit in your story. Stories of miracles and power will overcome descriptions of sinfulness every time. People are hungry to experience the power of God.

## **Chapter Four** **Walking in the Spirit**

When I first took up the hobby of fishing I soon realized I was having difficulty discerning between the bite of a fish and other things. As my skill grew, I could ignore the other things and my fishing success grew. A similar thing can be said about fishing for men. Many times a person that is new to fishing for men has a hard time discerning real interest from other things. In the sport of fishing, I needed to learn the physical factors influencing my line and bait. I needed to understand how different fish approached the bait at different times. When we are fishing for men, we must develop our spiritual discernment in order to detect genuine interest in Jesus.

I cannot over emphasize the importance of developing our spiritual awareness. The Bible speaks often of spiritual awareness and discernment. It also instructs us on how to grow in our spiritual awareness and abilities. I call this walking in the Spirit. I think walking in the Spirit is required in order to become proficient at fishing for men. Maybe this is why Jesus told the disciples that He would make them fishers of men. Because it is through His Spirit that we gain the ability to fish for men.

So let's recap some basics. God designed us to operate in both the physical and spiritual realm. Without the Holy Spirit we can only operate in the physical realm. One reason God gave us the Holy Spirit is so we can be witnesses (Acts 1:8). Accepting Jesus as our Lord and Savior is a spiritual act. So it stands to reason that the Holy Spirit is required in order to become fishers of men. It is also clear that God commands us to go and make disciples of all the nations

(Matthew 28:18-20).

With the above paragraph in mind, why is it that so few Christians are engaged in fishing for men? We are designed, equipped and commanded to do it. I think there are many reasons for this. One reason that we will address is that many Christians are spiritually weak. They do not engage in three necessary things to grow their spiritual strength and awareness. These are spiritual disciplines, consecration and spiritual warfare prayer.

I have published The Disciple Makers Handbook to help people learn to make disciples. These topics are covered in that work. It is available free on [www.sunministries.org](http://www.sunministries.org) website. Fishing for men is a spiritual work. It must be approached with the seriousness it deserves. A consecrated, disciplined prayer warrior will find many more opportunities to lead people to Christ. If much of what God did in designing, empowering and saving us was to give us the ability to be witnesses, shouldn't we take it very seriously?

## Chapter Five Opening Opportunities

Once we are consecrated, disciplined and praying, we can enter into the spiritual moments that God puts into our path. That is what we are looking for, spiritual opportunities. Walking in the Spirit is about looking past the current physical reality to see what God is doing in the Spirit. Walking in the Spirit is to ask and answer the question “Why is this interaction happening God?”. Our goal is to see what God is doing and join Him in it. Many people have no trouble seeing these moments. Others see them right after they are past. Still others don't know how to enter into the moment and take advantage of the opportunities that are presented to share the Good News.

For those that need help entering in, here are some suggestions. Be prepared to preach the Good News. Practice with friends. Get comfortable with communicating the Gospel of the Kingdom. Nothing builds confidence better than practice. Memorize a favorite Bible verse that leads to the Good News. I use John 3:36 because I often find myself facing people with serious issues who proclaim a good relationship with God. This verse usually shocks them and opens an opportunity to explain how to be sure the wrath of God is not on you. Prayerfully consider which verse is right for you and commit it to memory.

Have your testimony memorized. The power of the testimony is amazing. As mentioned earlier there is more than one kind of testimony. Another great way to enter into a spiritual moment is by asking to pray for the person. This will of course require you to pray for them. Pay close attention to what they ask you to pray for. If they

ask you to pray for something that is in their power to remedy you will now have an opportunity to preach the Gospel. One example that comes to mind is a man that asked someone to pray he would stop drinking. The response could be to ask that man if He has repented of his drinking and asked Jesus to free him from it.

Some people have trouble finding people to connect with in order to share the Gospel. Remember the model that Jesus gave us. Become a servant to others. A person that is consecrated, spiritually disciplined, engaged in warfare prayer and dedicated to serving others will find many opportunities to preach the Good News. If they are also equipped to multiply disciples then they will be a dynamic force in the Kingdom of God.



## Chapter Six Signs of the Spirit

What are the signs of the Holy Spirit that we should look for when we are walking in the Spirit? As I preach, I am looking for either the signs of the Holy Spirit on the individual or demonic reactions to the Gospel. We see both of these outlined in the Bible. Demonic response is usually very clear. When my disciples ask me “How will I know?” I simply respond with “Trust me, you will know.”. After their first encounter I ask them how they knew and they all say it was clear to them in the moment. Some refer to these moments as power encounters. Power encounters require a strong reliance on the Holy Spirit and great discernment of what God is doing in the moment.

The other reaction we are looking for is the reaction of the individual who is being presented with the Gospel. I suggest you learn to look for three things. These are remorse, repentance and conviction. If you see these present in the interaction, you can know that God is at work and the individual is being moved by the Spirit. If you do not see these things or a demonic manifestation then you should end your encounter with affirmation of the individual. It may not be time for them. They may not be ready. We are commanded in these situations to show them love and compassion.

As you enter into ministering the Gospel of the kingdom you must remember a few things. We must love people unconditionally. We should not change our love for them based on their reaction to the Gospel. Remember that we are fishing. You won't catch every fish every time you go fishing. Jesus uses many agricultural parables to describe the Kingdom. We are sowing seed. Some sprout quickly

and other seed gets snatched. If you show love and compassion to others, I firmly believe you will get another chance to present the Good News. It may not be tomorrow, next week or even next year. Love and compassion leave a mark on a person. That mark will connect you to them in a real way that will bring future interactions.

## Chapter Seven

### Discipleship

It has been a long time since I caught my first fish. I know it was a mixed bag of feelings when I did. I reeled in that line and pulled that fish from the water. I was so excited. Then it struck me. Now what? Here I was with a fish on the line and I wasn't quite sure what to do. I guess I hadn't thought it through completely. Catching it was the first of many steps. The same holds true when fishing for men.

One of the commands of Jesus is to go and make disciples. It is found in Matthew 28:18-20. The idea of fishing for men is not meant to make us catchers of men. It is meant to make us disciple makers. The command instructs us to baptize and teach to obey. To become fishers of men is to become multipliers of disciples of Jesus. We do this by preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom in the power of the Holy Spirit, baptizing those who profess Christ as their Lord and Savior and then teaching them to obey everything Christ commanded.

Making disciples has always been what Jesus is doing. He started His ministry by calling disciples and He ended His ministry by commanding His disciples to make disciples. He expects us to carry on this work by making disciples and teaching them to make disciples. Making disciples requires some intentionality. What will you teach and how? What will you do with your new disciples? Modern institutional Christianity has taught us to bring new converts to church and that is the end of our responsibility. Jesus puts the responsibility to baptize and teach directly on you as His disciple.

Baptism can be a confusing subject for some. There are many schools of thought on the hows and whens of baptism. I can't address all of them, so here is my opinion. Jesus commanded disciples to baptize, not professional clergy. So I have a rule in my ministry. If you lead them to the Lord then you will lead them into the water of baptism. This is the only teaching I can fully support from Scripture. Another thing I notice in Matthew 28:18-20 is the order in which baptism appears. It says – Go – Make Disciples – Baptize – Teach to Obey. So there you have it. Go. Go where? Go to all the nations. Make disciples. How do we do that? We preach the Gospel of the Kingdom. When a new disciple says they repent and believe, you must take them into the water of baptism. In other words if you say you believe then get in the water and prove it. Baptism is the first act of obedience by the new disciple. It is the first in a long line of obedient acts that are required of them as disciples of Jesus.

Many people will squabble over the method of baptism and even produce formulas. Some denominations only count baptism in their organization. Some will only allow full submersion. Others only sprinkle. Baptism was designed by God to symbolize our death to self and joining with Christ through His death, burial and resurrection. I think full body immersion is the best representation of this symbolism. However it is not always possible to do this. I once had a man with a shunt in his heart that had severe medical issues. He was not allowed to get it wet. Bacteria getting through it could quickly cause him to die. I had no problem sprinkling water over his head as an act of baptism. Another had a large cast. You may find yourself in similar situations. Don't let someone's legalism keep a disciple from trying to obey Jesus.

We have many tools available to you so you can become

proficient at multiplying disciples. They are offered free of charge at [www.sunministries.org](http://www.sunministries.org). When Jesus commands us to go and make disciples of all the nations, He is commanding us to join Him in what He is doing. I hope you take that privilege seriously.

## Chapter Eight

### Summary

Here is a quick summary of what we have covered. Use it as a to do list to prepare yourself to become a fisher of men.

1. Learn to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom.
2. Understand your part in this completely spiritual work.
3. Prepare to share your testimony in more than one way.
4. Get consecrated, spiritually disciplined and praying. Walk in the Spirit.
5. Learn to enter into the opportunities that God puts before you.
6. Learn to watch for the signs of the Spirit working.
7. Prepare to make disciples and teach them to make disciples. Go – Preach – Baptize – Teach to Obey – All Nations.

I have dedicated my life and ministry to help people learn to return to the basic instructions of Scripture for the Christian life and church. Centuries of institutional Christianity have caused us to become passive participants in other people's ministries. God's design is to place His Spirit in you and allow you to join with Him in redeeming the world. Don't settle for anything less. Happy and successful fishing my friend!