

Catching Fish This Christmas

Life Group Agenda for the week of December 11th through December 17th.

WELCOME (5 min) – Welcome everyone. This is a time for us to focus outward on our relationships with one another. Share the Goals and 1 Guideline. This week, we are continuing our series titled, “*A Cajun Christmas.*” Let’s **stop and pray** for our church at this time.

WORSHIP (15 min) – This is a time for us to focus upward on our relationship with the Lord. Prepare a creative worship time that can be enjoyed by Children as well as adults/teens (*you will be releasing the Children to their Kids Slot time after the worship*).

WORD (45 min) – This is a time for us to focus inward and discover what the Lord is saying to us individually and collectively through His Word. **This week’s truth to be shared: We must focus our efforts on reaching out to others this Christmas.**

INTRODUCTION: What’s the greatest present you’ve ever received?

Allow 5 – 7 minutes for this question.

OBSERVATION: Read Matthew 4:18-25. What did Jesus promise to do for His new disciples? What experiences followed their decision to follow Jesus?

Jesus invited His disciples to follow Him, promising to make them fishers of men. Following Jesus, they saw Him teach the Word of God, preach the Good News of the Kingdom, and heal sicknesses. After observing Jesus for the duration of His ministry, the disciples carried on the same works as they became *fishers of men*.

Spend about 3 – 5 minutes on this question.

UNDERSTANDING: Why might Jesus’ disciples have hesitated to follow Him? Why might we hesitate to follow Jesus?

Certainly, Jesus’ disciples had the same concerns we would have. Following an itinerant preacher across the countryside certainly jeopardizes one’s financial and relational standing among the community. It’s important to realize that, whether it’s the 1st Century or the 21st Century, there are plenty of reasons to hesitate.

Spend about 12 minutes on this question.

UNDERSTANDING: How did the disciples’ experiences of following Jesus prepare them for ministry? How have your experiences prepared you to share your faith with others? How does Christmas present a unique opportunity to do this?

It's easy to rationalize why we *hesitate* to follow Jesus' call to share our faith. Maybe we don't feel like we know enough, or that our faith isn't strong enough, or we're just plain intimidated. Likewise, Jesus' disciples were fearful and hesitant. We must recognize though that our experiences with Jesus have prepared us for ministry. Furthermore, Christmas is a special time to do this, since people are generally more open to the story of Jesus during the holidays.

Spend about 12 minutes on this question.

APPLICATION: Who in your life is God calling you to tell about Jesus this Christmas? How can you steer general conversation about Jesus towards an invitation to follow Jesus?

Consider adding these names to your group's FRAN list. Commit to pray for these individuals and invite them to church leading up to Christmas. It may be that one of these persons receives the free gift of salvation for Christmas. Also, as a group, share some different ways you would steer a conversation about Christmas towards a presentation of the Gospel, or your testimony, or some means of inviting a person to follow Jesus.

Spend about 12 minutes on this question.

WITNESS (15 min) – This is a time for us to focus outward on our ministry to the world.

- ❖ Share any praise reports from your FRAN list that you've been praying for.
- ❖ Haiti Mission Trip: April 23rd – 30th. Total cost: \$1,350. Deadline for application, references, and \$200 deposit is January 8th. Ministry opportunities include: medical, orphanage, evangelism, and more.
- ❖ Don't stop... SERVE LIKE CRAZY, plan your Life Groups next serve event.
- ❖ Make Shared Ministry Assignments and then Fellowship together.

(Now is the time to welcome the children back into the group and let them share something about what they've learned. Have a brief time of prayer with the whole group before fellowship).