



Good Fishing

Jesus said to His first disciples, "Follow Me and I will make you fishers of men." (Matthew 4:19)

I had a good friend who was an excellent fisherman, and made a decent living as a fishing guide. If there was one fish in a lake, my friend would catch it. Why was he such a good fisherman? He understood fish. He knew the time of day that fish were most active. He knew the best bait or lure to attract the fish that he was seeking. He knew how deep to drop the line. He knew the habitat of fish. He had an effective fishing strategy. Because he knew fish so well, they were attracted to his hook. My friend rarely came home empty handed.

In order to catch fish, it helps to understand their habitat, preferences, routines, and most likely time to feed. **In order to reach people, we need to share during times when they are most receptive to the Gospel. We need to share strategically.**

Studies demonstrate that people are receptive to life-changing truth during times of major change and extreme stress. People are more receptive during transitions like having a new baby, moving to a new home, or starting a new job. They are also more receptive during stressful periods such as divorce, financial problems, or loss in a disaster.

As a disaster relief leader, let me share 10 strategic tips in reaching people during times of crisis:

- 1. Listen to their story before seeking to share your story.**
- 2. Demonstrate genuine concern.**
- 3. Offer real help in any capacity that you are capable of.**
- 4. Be cautious in making promises and fulfill promises made.**
- 5. Avoid using manipulative actions and words. We are not salesmen, but we are trusting in God's Holy Spirit to open and change hearts.**
- 6. Realize that unbelievers may not act or behave like followers of Christ. Avoid seeming judgmental and condemning. If they enter a relationship with Christ, He will change them into a new creation and help them to make needed changes by His power.**
- 7. Be prepared to share your faith story. Your story in Christ is a powerful tool in God's hands.**
- 8. Be prepared to help them understand how they can experience salvation. Share what it means to accept Christ, repent of sin, believe in Christ, and confess Him as Savior and Lord.**
- 9. Allow time for questions, conversation, and the possibility of follow-up.**
- 10. Pray with them. This is appropriate even if they are not ready to make a life-changing decision.**