

Sermon Title

Evangelism: Follow Me, and I Will Make You Fish

Chris Barrans

Sunday, June 28, 2026

Primary Text

Matthew 28:16–20

Series

Spiritual Practices / Summer Series

Sermon Big Idea

Evangelism is not an optional practice for a certain kind of Christian; it is part of ordinary discipleship because Jesus has all authority, every disciple is called to witness, and the Holy Spirit empowers the next faithful step.

Opening / Introduction

Welcome everyone in the room, online, first-time guests, longtime members, the men and women joining from correctional facilities, and the Deaf community.

Connect the message to the summer spiritual practices series and introduce evangelism as a practice many people would not naturally choose first.

Name common fears around evangelism: not feeling bold enough, not knowing enough, not wanting to be weird, and being afraid of messing it up.

Frame the message as an invitation for the person far from God to come home, the follower of Jesus to take a faithful step, and the tired or suffering person to discover that Jesus can witness through weakness.

Opening Illustration: Multiplication Picture

Use the live adult count and ask how long it would take to reach Greensboro if every adult helped lead one person to Jesus each year and those new disciples did the same.

Zoom out briefly to Greensboro, the United States, and the world.

Use the illustration to show that the mission requires ordinary disciples taking ordinary steps of obedience with extraordinary dependence on the Holy Spirit.

Name the cultural moment and the danger of outsourcing evangelism to pastors, missionaries, and unusually bold people.

Evangelism Definition

Evangelism is the Spirit-empowered witness of every disciple, using whatever gifts, abilities, opportunities, influence, and relationships God has given them, to help people respond to the good news of Jesus.

Emphasize that witness belongs to every disciple who has received mercy through Jesus Christ.

Point 1 – The Authority Belongs to Jesus

Scriptures

Matthew 28:16-18

Daniel 7:13-14

Philippians 2:9-11

Main Idea

The Great Commission begins with the authority of Jesus, not the adequacy of the disciple.

Notes

Share the incomplete evangelism framework learned growing up: the congregation brings people to church, and the pastor leads them to Christ.

Clarify that inviting people to church and pastors preaching the gospel are good, but the Great Commission belongs to every disciple.

Remind the sinner, saint, and suffering that Jesus' authority is good news because He saves, sends, and is not threatened by weakness.

2. The Command Belongs to Every Disciple

Scriptures

Matthew 28:19–20

Matthew 4:19

John 15:5

Ephesians 4:11–16

Main Idea

Because Jesus has all authority, every disciple is called to make disciples.

Notes

Show that Matthew begins with “Follow me, and I will make you fish for people,” and ends with “Go make disciples.”

Ask the practical question: “**How is your following and fishing?**”

Use the Don at Starbucks story, the AirPods attentiveness illustration, and the encouragement that even limited seasons do not silence witness.

Use the biblical building arc to show that when God's people build according to His Word, He fills what He builds.

Point 3 — The Way Is the Pattern of Jesus

Scriptures

Matthew 9:36

Mark 1:15

Mark 5:19

1 Corinthians 15:3–4

Main Idea

Evangelism follows the pattern of Jesus: see people, love people, point them to Jesus, invite them into family, and walk with them into maturity.

Notes

Guard against treating people like projects by beginning with the compassion of Jesus in Matthew 9.

Clarify that kindness matters, but good news must eventually be announced.

Use Psalm 66 and Mark 5 to show that testimony matters, while 1 Corinthians 15 clarifies that the gospel is the objective good news of Jesus' death and resurrection.

Point 4 — The Power Comes from the Spirit

Scriptures

Matthew 28:20

Acts 1:8

Colossians 4:2-6

Main Idea

Jesus sends His people with His presence, and the Holy Spirit empowers ordinary disciples to be witnesses.

Notes

Emphasize the Great Comfort attached to the Great Commission: "I am with you always."

Use Acts 1:8 to show that believers are witnesses, not salespeople, performers, or professional arguers.

Use Colossians 4 to pray: **Lord, open a door; open my mouth; make Jesus clear; season my words with grace.**

Church Plant Announcement

Place the church plant announcement **after Point 4** and **before the closing call**. Present the church plant as one living expression of the sermon's call to Spirit-empowered witness.

Summary

Share that the Lord began stirring a call to plant in Winston-Salem, that Definition's leadership discerned and affirmed this call, and that Definition is sending and supporting Church at the Threshing Floor over the first three years.

Emphasis

Church at the Threshing Floor will be a church in Winston-Salem formed by the presence of God, rooted in the Word of God, sent for the Kingdom of God, and committed to helping people encounter Jesus, belong to family, become mature disciples, and live as witnesses.

Clarifying Language

This is not a split, not a coup, and not quietly slipping out the back door; this is what healthy churches do as they make disciples, raise leaders, send people, plant churches, bless cities, and release sons and daughters.

Interest Meeting Call

Direct people to scan the NFC tag on the back of their seat and click "**Send me info about an interest meeting for Church at the Threshing Floor.**"

Explain that they will receive information about the three interest meetings Definition Church will host.

Final Clarifying Line

“Whether you ever come to an interest meeting or not, this sermon is not ultimately about a church plant. This sermon is about a commission that belongs to every disciple in this room.”

Closing Response

Summary

The authority belongs to Jesus; the command belongs to every disciple; the way is the pattern of Jesus; and the power comes from the Spirit.

Three Groups

To the person far from God: come to Jesus, repent, and believe the good news.

To the follower of Jesus: ask Him for people to intentionally evangelize to.

To the suffering person: you are not disqualified because Jesus is with you and His strength is made perfect in weakness.

Response Invitation

Invite people to stand if they are ready to take their next step in evangelism.

Keys Cue

Keys begin softly as people are invited to stand.

Cue line:

“If today you are saying, ‘Jesus, I am available. Open a door. Open my mouth. Make Jesus clear. Season my words with grace,’ would you stand?”

Prayer Over People

Invite the church to stretch out a hand toward those standing and pray for names, courage, compassion, open doors, clear words, gracious speech, love, boldness, and patience.