

Fishing with the Light of the World

“You string many more lights around the boat and we’ll end up shooin’ away helicopters all night,” I joked.

My friend Gerry looked up from the tangle of cords at his feet, “You want to catch big crappie don’t you?”

Who was I too argue? I’d never done any night fishing. Gerry had enough crappie in his freezer at any given time to feed the multitudes.

“Yeah well,” I murmured, “Whatever you say. You’re the Crappie Kid.”

He nodded.

“They call me the Bream Reaper,” I boasted, not to be outdone.

“Yeah, yeah...” he said throwing out another string of bulbs.

Soon the boat was glowing like a Griswald’s family Christmas. We baited up and let down our corks for a draught.

“Other’n the low hum of that nuclear reactor powering our force field, it looks like we might have a quiet night,” I commented. Gerry shrugged, acknowledging we were the only boat on the lake.

“I wish I had some sun block...”

“Will you shut up a minute and stop scaring the fish!” Gerry bristled.

I sulked a few seconds before adding, “It ain’t like they can’t see us.”

Soon, just as Gerry had advertised, the water around the boat came alive with activity. Baitfish, drawn to the lights, began circling us. They drew a variety of other larger fish; each darting about working their selves up into a wild feeding frenzy. Within minutes we were wrestling some nice crappie into the boat. That’s when we heard the growl of big motor.

I looked up to see two tiny lights flickering like a pair of small candles coming across the black lake. It was a boat, a big boat. It zoomed up on us and almost flushed our smaller craft. I hit the deck and came up ready for a fight.

“What in the world?” I started. Then I realized it was a Game Warden.

“I noticed you two fellows don’t have your running lights on,” he said working his thumbs under his gun belt, “I could give you a ticket for that.” Gerry and I lowered our welding goggles and shot each other a puzzled look.

“You don’t want to have some boat run up on you out here in the dark now do ya?” he asked.

“Ahh... no sir,” I managed, still surfing his wake, “If you don’t mind me asking, how’d you catch us?”

He eyed me careful, “Son, don’t nothing get past me. I spotted you boys from way down at the other end of the lake.”

There’ve been other times in my Christian walk when I’ve been left just as speechless. Like the time I was running myself ragged trying to shine for the Lord and some fellow I barely knew, who usually managed to shadow our church stoop about two or three times a year, threw a humungous guilt trip on me for not offering to help him rebuild his transmission.

“Well, I guess I could squeeze you in a week from next Saturday if I cancel my nursing home visit,” I conceded, looking up from the altar and the person I was praying for.

“Naw... just never mind,” He said, “I wouldn’t want you to go out of your way for a brother.”

As he stomped off grumbling something about hypocrites I spent the next twenty minutes wishing I would have mentioned, “I DON’T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT CARS!”

If you've struggled with this too, I hope what I'm about to say will set you free. "We are not called to please everybody. We are called to please God." The moochers of this world, and the self proclaimed fruit inspectors who patrol the body of Christ should not be dictating our calendars. We should not be led by condemnation, or even our own good intentions. Frankly, we are called to be led by the Holy Spirit.

Yes, Jesus washed the disciple's feet, but He didn't cancel the Sermon on the Mount to do it. Everything He did was decently and in order, according to His Father's plan. Somehow I can't picture Jesus missing the Last Supper because He was pressured into helping some Pharisee change the oil on his camel.

We simply can't please everybody. Jesus lived an absolutely perfect life, and He couldn't! (*Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me?* **John 10:32** KJV)

Let me say it again, "We are not called to please everybody. We are called to please God!"

But anyway- There's only one person you'll have to stand before on Judgment day, and His light will draw all the fish you're supposed to catch. (*Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.* **John 8:12** KJV)

-Guy Sheffield 5-23-06