

From an interview with
Elder James J. Hamula
of the Seventy;
by Erica Wolfe



MY FISHING LESSONS



*Follow me,
and I will make
you fishers of men* (Matthew 4:19).

When I was a young boy, I often went fishing with my family. We stayed in a cabin just north of Sun Valley, Idaho, right next to the Big Wood River. That's where my grandpa and my dad first taught me to fish. But I learned more than how to fish on those trips.

Sometimes the fish wouldn't bite right away and I had to be very patient. Other days the fish wouldn't bite at all. I had to learn to work through disappointment when I didn't catch any fish. But it was always worth it when after a long wait I saw a fish on my line and reeled it in.

When I was 12 years old, I received my patriarchal blessing. I remember sitting in the patriarch's home as he gave me my blessing. I felt Heavenly Father's love for and His

knowledge of me. I learned that my life had a purpose and that I wanted to go the direction the Lord wanted me to go.

Following the Lord's directions, I went on a mission. Later, I served as a bishop, a stake president, and a mission president. Little did I know when I was a young boy that I would spend my life fishing not only for fish in the

stream, but for men too. Fishing on the river helped prepare me for the patience I would need, the disappointments I would experience, and the joy I would find in bringing people to the gospel of Christ.

Now I go with my own boys to teach them to fish. It's fun to help them learn about patience and working through disappointment. And I love seeing their joy when a fish is on the line and they can reel it in. ♦

