

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

JULY 29TH-30TH, 2023 // GOSPEL OF JOHN

AN ODD BREAKFAST (JOHN 21:1-14) "JESUS REVEALED HIMSELF AGAIN..."

John records three times that Jesus appeared to the disciples after His resurrection. On this visit, seven of the disciples were hanging out fishing on the Sea of Tiberias (or Galilee). Though the guys fished all night, they caught nothing.

- It seems at this point that Peter has emerged as the dominant personality.

WE ONLY PRODUCE THROUGH HIS GUIDANCE

John's focus on the futile fishing was to highlight the miracle. An unrecognized Jesus stood on the shore, told the men to cast to the "right side of the boat," and they pulled in 300 lbs of fish.

- Whether Jesus planted the fish or just used His omniscience, we learn that **only by His direction can we truly succeed.**

"IT IS THE LORD!"

After it clicks that it was Jesus on the shore, the disciples respond in character: John with a word to Peter and Peter leaping into the water.

- We would think it odd that Peter tied his "outer clothing" around him, but this was a sign of **respect and consideration** because greetings were very religious.

JUST EATING FISH WITH THE RESURRECTED SAVIOR

The peace and loving casualness of Jesus on the beach should not go unnoticed. **Jesus is the Lord and God of the universe, but He is also a caring and loving friend.**

- **We must live in this balance: Jesus is approachable, loving, and gracious, but He is also the righteous Creator God.**

AFTER THE STORM, IT WAS CALM AND BEAUTIFUL

After going through the crucifixion and the time leading up to it, it must have been amazing to just relax and eat with Jesus.

- We must also remember that **there will be turbulent times, but if we cling to the resurrected Jesus, we can also have peace and comfort.**

RESTORATION (JOHN 21:15-17)

"...DO YOU LOVE ME MORE THAN THESE?"

This question could mean different things. Does Peter love Jesus more than fish (livelihood), friends, and family? Or, does Peter love Jesus more than the other disciples loved Jesus?

- **We must ask if we truly value Jesus over everything else and if we're willing to accept the responsibility of leading.**

RESTORING A FLAWED FOLLOWER

This conversation with Peter must have been a little embarrassing, but it was key in Peter's restoration process. Though Peter had made other mistakes, the three denials of Jesus needed to be addressed and repented for.

- **If we are to be reconciled to God we must address and repent for sin.**

THE CALL TO MINISTER

Jesus asks Peter virtually the same question three times to give him the opportunity to rectify his sin. This had to happen, not only to reconcile with Jesus but to be used by Him.

- **Not only does unrepented sin compromise our walk with God, but it also prohibits us from answering our unique call.**

SIMON VS. PETER

Notice, Jesus uses Simon rather than Peter in His questions. This refers to Peter as a pebble vs. a rock. This shows our call to lead also requires **service rather than primacy.**

- Also notice Peter was to **serve both lambs (spiritual and literal youth) and sheep (spiritual and literal adults).**

"YOU KNOW EVERYTHING..."

Though Peter was frustrated/grieved by Jesus' persistence, he relented to His wisdom and said, **"Lord, You know everything..."**

- **"I am persuaded" (Romans 8:38) may be the most important three words in the Bible. We must reach a point where we trust Jesus regardless of the circumstances.**

CALCULATING THE COST (JOHN 21:18-25)

THIS IS NOT GOING TO BE EASY

After reconciling Peter and commanding Him to "feed [His] sheep," Jesus proceeds to tell Peter that his life was going to dramatically change and he would suffer like Jesus.

- V18-19 are fascinating. After hearing the cost from the One who "know[s] everything," Peter is **invited to follow Him.**

THE CHOICE AND THE COST

Peter, like us, had a choice to either take the "easy" and "safe" path through life, or the costly, impactful, and meaningful path.

- **We must be honest about what we desire and are willing to live for: the temporary, shallow comfort of the world, or the eternal peace and fulfillment of God's Kingdom.**

SALVATION IS FREE, DISCIPLESHIP IS NOT

Though salvation is free, **to follow Jesus takes sacrifice (Matthew 16) and action (James 2).** To be true and effective followers of Jesus it will cost us.

- **We must live convinced that the sacrifice is worth it! We should want to honor God and be set apart for Him. Also, following Jesus makes life better now and for eternity.**

- **1 Peter 4:13-14**

"LORD, WHAT ABOUT HIM?"

After learning of both his high call and the price he would have to pay, Peter then asked what would happen to John. Though Peter was being restored, he still had some fear and jealousy in his heart.

- Jesus essentially told him other people's circumstances are not his business.

AND NOW WE HIT A REALLY SORE SUBJECT

We see in Peter something many of us struggle with as well, **envy.** We have a tendency to compare our lives with others, and in this, sin and division slip in.

- **We will all be held accountable for what we've been given (Luke 12:48), and what is given is determined by God.**

JOHN DID DIE BUT IN A DIFFERENT WAY

One of the last things John does in his gospel is to dispel a rumor that John wouldn't die before Jesus returned.

- John was the only one of the 12 at the cross, and oddly the only one to die a natural death, though he was boiled alive and exiled.

THE EPILOGUE

John concludes by essentially swearing that the record we have just read is true. He also ends with a hyperbole about the works of Jesus letting us know that **Jesus' work was immense and still continues today.**

- Notice the ascension is not mentioned at the end, maybe because it is in John 20:17.

BELIEVING IS SEEING

- The main theme of John is that we must want to see God in order to see Him.
- This means **we must actively pursue truth with humility and an open heart and mind.** If we genuinely seek truth, we will find it (Matthew 7:7). The question then becomes will we truly believe and live it out?

TRUE BELIEF IS WORK AND SACRIFICE

- There is a difference between saving faith and intellectual assent. **Saving belief is more than knowing who Jesus is, it is actively living in His will and truth at any cost.**
- True belief is a **denial of self, a desire to live out Jesus' mission despite the cost, and to apply His teachings to our lives (Matthew 16:24).**

TRUE BELIEF BEARS FRUIT (MATTHEW 12:33)

- **If we truly believe, there will be evidence. The Fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5), a desire to be made more in His image in word and deed, a love of righteousness and truth, and a love for people** are hallmarks of a true believer.
- We must also be **praying, reading, listening,** and willingly being held **accountable.**
- Saving faith in Jesus will also change your life in a dramatically good way.
- By **living out the truths of God's Word** and by **listening to the guidance of the Spirit** of God in us when we trust in Jesus, **we have the power and wisdom to live fulfilling, peaceful, and loving lives.**

AN INVENTORY

- Are we looking for the truth about God and how we are to live?
- **What will we do when the truth (Bible) disagrees with us and instructs us to change the way we think and act?**
- Are we willing to "deny ourselves" in order to experience a relationship with God?
- **Do we truly believe that the sacrifice is worth it?** Do we understand that this life is like smoke and all of this will pass away?
- Are we seeing the evidence of the Spirit of God in our lives? Do we want to? If so, **we must be willing to live in relationship with Jesus.**