

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

JULY 30TH, 2023 // GOSPEL OF JOHN

COME AND EAT (JOHN 21:1-14) THE THIRD APPEARANCE OF JESUS

The resurrected Jesus reveals himself to Mary and a group of disciples, then to Thomas and a group of disciples. Jesus will now reveal himself to a group of disciples in Galilee by the Sea of Tiberias.

- Simon Peter tells the other disciples, **"I'm going fishing,"** and the other six disciples follow him.

DOING WHAT FISHERMEN DO

Did Peter lead the group **back to the "old life" and the "old way"** of doing things, were they **simply trying to provide** the only way they knew how, or possibly **just passing time?**

- John doesn't tell us why Peter went fishing, but other gospel accounts show that **Jesus told the disciples He would meet them in Galilee** (Matthew 26:32; 28:7-10; Mark 16:7).

THE FISHERMEN WERE UNSUCCESSFUL

We do not know the heart behind their reason for going fishing, but **we do know that their attempts were futile**, as they fished through the night and caught nothing.

- They did not know it was Jesus (possibly because it was just now daybreak) who called out from the shore saying, **"You don't have any fish, do you?"**

HIDDEN MEANING?

Jesus instructs the men to cast their net on the **right side of the boat**, and they would find some fish. So, they did, and **they caught 153 fish**.

- What is the significance of the right side of the boat and them catching 153 fish? **The right side was simply the side Jesus chose, and the men could count to 153!**

WE NEED GUIDANCE TO BE SUCCESSFUL

The only thing implied here is **Divine guidance**. It was Jesus that guided the success of their "fishing." **Jesus would guide them as they went from "fishermen" to "fishers of men."**

- We may be sincere and work hard, but **if we attempt to do anything without the Lord, our attempts are in vain.**

"IT IS THE LORD!"

John recognizes that it is Jesus, and Peter ties his outer garment around himself, jumps in the water, and swims to Jesus.

- Perhaps the words of Jesus resonated with John, **"I am the vine; you are the branches. The one who remains in me and I in him produces much fruit, because you can do nothing without me"** (John 15:5).

INVITATION

We see the third invitation from Jesus in the Gospel of John: **"Come and see"** (John 1:39); **"Come... and drink"** (John 7:37); and **Come and eat** (John 21:12).

- Jesus **set the example for us to follow as we care for His people**. He invited Peter to dry off, warm up, and **enjoy a meal and fellowship before dealing with his spiritual needs.**

RESTORATION OF PETER (JOHN 21:15-19)

"...MORE THAN THESE?"

After the men had eaten breakfast, Jesus asks Peter, **"Do you love me more than these?"** Is Jesus asking if Peter loves Him more than He loves the other disciples or more than fishing?

- It's more likely that Jesus meant **do you love me the way you have boastfully claimed to love me more than others?**

PETER THOUGHT HE LOVED JESUS MORE

Peter contrasted his love for Jesus against the others by saying, **"I will lay down my life for you"** (John 13:37) and **"Even if everyone falls away because of you, I will never fall away"** (Matthew 26:33).

- Peter responds to Jesus, **"Yes, Lord, you know that I love you,"** but **Jesus would ask Peter two additional times if he loved Him.**

WHY THE REPETITION?

Many commentaries point out that two different words are used for **"love"**: **Jesus uses agape** in His questions and **Peter always uses phileo** in his response. Yet in John 21:17, they both use *phileo*.

- These **two variations are used interchangeably** in the Gospel of John when describing God's love for man, the Father's love for the Son, and our love for one another.
- It's possible that Jesus repeated His question to Peter three times because He had been denied three times.
- One thing is clear: Peter has been completely **restored back to his position of leadership**. He denied Jesus three times. He affirmed his love for Him three times, and now **he has been commissioned to care for the flock.**

SHEEP NEED A SHEPHERD

Jesus would transform Peter from a fisherman into a shepherd. He was instructed to **"feed my lambs," "shepherd my sheep,"** and **"feed my sheep."** Though **differing commands were given, they are not to be divided.**

- A spiritual under-shepherd is to **lead and feed both the "lambs" and the more mature "sheep" of God's flock.**

HE IS LORD OF OUR FUTURES

Only the Lord could commission someone to lead His flock, tell them that following Him would lead to their death, then immediately say, **"Follow me."**

- Tradition tells us that Peter was crucified and that he asked to be crucified upside down. Whether Jesus prophesied what type of death Peter died is unknown. What is known, is that **his death would glorify God.**

A MESSAGE WITHOUT END (JOHN 21:20-25)

"WHAT ABOUT HIM?"

Peter is commissioned to feed God's flock and is told that following Jesus would lead to his own death, then foolishly looks back at John and asks, **"What about him?"**

- Essentially, Peter asks Jesus, "Lord, you've told me what will happen to me, but what about John? **If following you means my death, is he going to die too?"**

A FINE LINE

Jesus tells Peter that what He does with His followers is not Peter's concern. Peter is not to be concerned with how Christ works in others, but instead with following Christ as He leads.

- We have a responsibility of caring for one another (Philippians 2:1-4), but **we cannot let curiosity, meddling, comparing, or envy distract us from following the Lord.**

TWISTED WORDS

Jesus did not say that John would not die before He returned, but, **"If I want him to remain until I come, what is that to you?"**

- We see that not much has changed in two thousand years. **Jesus' words are twisted into something that He did not say, and the rumor mill begins amongst the brothers and sisters.**

TRUSTWORTHY WITNESS

John ends by ensuring his readers of the reliability of the events he wrote about.

- Everything he wrote, he saw and heard firsthand. **John probably had the early church in mind as he affirmed the credibility of his witness, but two thousand years later, we can trust what has been recorded.**

A MESSAGE WITHOUT END

John says, **there are not enough books in the world to contain everything that Jesus said and did.**

- We can be confident that John recorded what he was inspired by the Holy Spirit to record. All the books in the world couldn't contain what Jesus did because **it continues through His disciples today.**

FISHERS OF MEN

- Calls us friends (v.5) and makes us "fishers of men." **We must allow God to transform us into tools for ministry. Without transformation and obedience, our work will be in vain.**
- **As disciples, we are all "fishers of men." There are fish all around us, but only if we obey Jesus' instructions will we be successful at catching fish.**