

Jesus With The Disciples In Galilee

John 21

Outline

- 1-3 | The disciples go fishing but catch nothing
- 4-8 | Jesus instructs the disciples to cast their net on the other side of the boat
- 9-11 | Jesus prepares breakfast; the disciples catch 153 fish
- 12-14 | Jesus blesses the meal
- 15-17 | Jesus restores Peter
- 18-19 | Jesus foretells the future and calls the disciples, saying, "Follow Me!"
- 20-23 | Peter asks Jesus about John
- 24 | The author of the gospel
- 25 | Jesus' many unrecorded life events

Reflections

Have you ever written a letter to a friend or loved one that you haven't spoke to in quite some time? In the not so distant past, letter writing was a highly regarded means of communication in which two people shared their struggles, insights, and good wishes. Sometimes a letter's author would think of something they wanted to include in the letter but didn't think of it until they had already closed the letter and signed their name. They would then add something called a postscript or P.S. for short.

This chapter seems almost like a postscript to a letter. John had basically closed the book at the end of chapter 20, although he doesn't "sign" his name but he all but tells us who he is by the description he gives for himself, the disciple whom Jesus loved. In the closing, he also explains why he wrote the gospel in the first place, so that people might come to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.

Now he adds this postscript as it were. In it he relates one last account of Jesus appearing to His disciples, especially to Peter and the other fishermen disciples, of whom we know that Andrew, James and John would have been included.

Peter announces to the group that he is going back to fishing and six other went with him to Galilee and that is where Jesus finds them, after having an unsuccessful night of fishing. Jesus tells them to cast the net on the other side of the boat, to which Peter remarks that they had been fishing all night and had caught nothing.

Eventually they do as Jesus said and they catch a large number of fish, 153 to be exact. Why did John include this precise number. Couldn't he have just said that it was a large number of fish. I think because he wanted to give some credibility to the event. It would be very difficult to haul in that many fish into just one boat, thus the necessity of calling for the other to come to their aid.

Almost immediately the disciples realized that this wasn't just any ordinary man on the sea shore, it was Jesus! As always, He provided for their needs and had even prepared a breakfast for them on the shore.

Once the disciples return to the shore, without Peter who had jumped out of the boat and made it to shore first upon recognizing Jesus, they spent some time together. It was at this time that Jesus restores Peter, asking three times if Peter loves him, to which Peter responded in the affirmative and Jesus instructed Peter to "Tend My lambs", "Feed My sheep", and "Tend My sheep."

There has been much written about this encounter between Jesus and Peter, so I won't make any additional comments here other than this. Jesus needed to help Peter understand that he was forgiven and Jesus wanted him to take over the leadership of the group.

It is a reminder for us that Jesus always seeks to restore those who are his.

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Heavenly Father, thank You for sending Your Son, Jesus, whose death made it possible to for us to approach You and ask for forgiveness. Help us to never lose our sense of purpose, to tell others about You and Your Son Jesus. Renew us again with Your Spirit and give us courage in the times of testing and discipline. may Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven, in Jesus' name. Amen.

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