

A WALK TO THE CROSS (and Beyond)
Restoring Faith And Ministry
John 21:1-17, 22

After revealing Himself to the disciples in the upper room, the disciples *proceeded to Galilee, to the mountain* which Jesus *had designated* where He would meet them *after He had been raised* (**Matthew 26:32; Matthew 28:7, 10, 16; Mark 16:7**). Even though they waited, they still *didn't understand* the events that had taken place.

For the first time in more than *three years*, the disciples found themselves having to fend for themselves...since Jesus had provided for all their needs while He was with them. As a result, *the disciples choose to return to fishing* and pick up on the life that they had left before Jesus called them.

I. THE CALL:

Whether you are called to *full-time vocational ministry* or to *your personal ministry*...**be certain of your call!** There will be a time in your calling that the only thing that you will have to hang on to is your calling.

*“Now as Jesus was walking by the Sea of Galilee, He saw two brothers, **Simon** who was called **Peter**, and **Andrew** his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. And He said to them, ‘Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.’ Immediately they left their nets and followed Him. Going on from there He saw two other brothers, **James** the son of Zebedee, and **John** his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and He called them. Immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed Him.”*

~Matthew 4:18-22

*“Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: The first, **Simon**, who is called **Peter**, and **Andrew** his*

*brother; and **James** the son of Zebedee, and **John** his brother; **Philip** and **Bartholomew**; **Thomas** and **Matthew** the tax collector; **James** the son of Alphaeus, and **Thaddaeus**; **Simon the Zealot**, and **Judas Iscariot**, the one who betrayed Him.”*

~Matthew 10:2-4

II. THE COLLASPE:

The disciples had *experienced a tumultuous series of events* over the past few weeks.

- *The Triumphal Entry.*
- *The expectation of a new kingdom.*
- *The betrayal by a trusted friend.*
- *Near arrest, themselves.*
- *Denial of Jesus by their leader, Peter.*
- *The agonizing crucifixion of Jesus.*
- *The Resurrection.*
- *The manifestations of the risen Jesus.*

Understandably, they were *confused* and *unsure* of the future.

After these things Jesus manifested Himself again to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias, and He manifested Himself in this way (**vs. 1**)...The disciples had left Jerusalem and made their way north to Galilee.

Sea of Tiberias...Better known as **The Sea of Galilee**. The Bible also refers to it as the **Sea of Chinneroth** or **Lake Gennesaret**. By the time **John** wrote his gospel, it had become commonly known as the **Sea of Tiberias**... named for the city of **Tiberias**...a city on its *western shore* founded by **Herod Antipas** in honor of **Emperor Tiberias** (**Luke 3:1**).

Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, and two others of His disciples were together (vs. 2)... *Seven* of the Apostles are listed as being involved in this incident. The **two others** are most likely **Andrew** and **Philip**...who had close ties with **Peter**...and *fishing*. There is no mention of the *remaining four* at this time.

Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing" (vs. 3)... The first thing that's wrong is the location where the disciples were. They are *going fishing* on the **Sea of Tiberias** instead of *waiting on the mountain* where Jesus *had instructed them* to wait for Him.

Simon Peter evidently had *grown impatient* in waiting for Jesus...and *as was his custom*, impulsively said that he was *going fishing*. **Peter** wasn't suggesting that they do some recreational fishing...but was *declaring that he was returning to his former livelihood*.

They said to him, "We will also come with you" (vs. 3) ...This continues to show that they *did not understand the events* that Jesus had taught them over the *previous three years*. They all were returning to what they knew...and what they thought that they could be successful at.

They went out and got into the boat; and that night they caught nothing (vs. 3)...

Boat...suggests a specific boat...probably one belonging to **Peter**...a *Galilean* fishing boat that was about *15 ft. long*.

This is very similar to an event previously witnessed by **Peter**...

"Now it happened that while the crowd was pressing around Him and listening to the word of God, He was standing by the lake of Gennesaret; and He saw two boats lying at the edge of the lake; but the fishermen had

gotten out of them and were washing their nets. And He got into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little way from the land. And He sat down and began teaching the people from the boat. When He had finished speaking, He said to Simon, 'Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch.' Simon answered and said, 'Master, we worked hard all night and caught nothing, but I will do as You say and let down the nets.' When they had done this, they enclosed a great quantity of fish, and their nets began to break; so they signaled to their partners in the other boat for them to come and help them. And they came and filled both of the boats, so that they began to sink."

~Luke 5:1-7

There is *nothing wrong with fishing*...it was *a respectable profession*. But it was *not what the Lord had called them to do*. They were chosen to be *fishers of men* (**Matthew 4:19**). Having *left their nets and followed Him* (**Matthew 4:20**)...they were now *trying to go back*...and were unsuccessful! They had a useless night of fishing!

The difference between fishing for fish and fishing for men...

When you fish for fish...you catch what is alive and it dies. When you fish for men...you catch what is dead...so that it may become alive. They are spiritually dead...so that they may become spiritually alive!

"...I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly."

~John 10:10

But when the day was now breaking, Jesus stood on the beach; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus (vs. 4)...Heading back to shore, Jesus was *waiting for them*...yet as the verse states...they did not recognize Him.

When one *returns to their previous way of life*, even when Jesus is present...you *will not recognize Him*. A warning to everyone.

So Jesus said to them, "Children, you do not have any fish, do you?" They answered Him, "No" (vs. 5)...

Notice *they didn't seek Jesus...Jesus sought them...*and knows everything about them. It's as if Jesus was saying to them, **"Do anything other than what I have called you to do...you will fail!...But I will be waiting for you!"**

Children...Gk. *paidia*, literally means *little children* or *lads*. Even though the NIV translates it *friends*...it's not a good descriptive translation. They were *acting* and *responding like little children* who have been disappointed.

But what a beautiful picture of **GRACE**...Jesus seeking His own.

III. THE CHOICE:

And He said to them, "Cast the net on the right-hand side of the boat and you will find a catch" (vs. 6)...The disciples were no doubt *exhausted, tired, sleepy, and frustrated* after their *failed fishing expedition*. And remember, they still didn't know who this stranger was giving them this instruction. They must have been tempted to tell this stranger to mind his own business.

Yet they obeyed...even if they didn't feel like it...or even know that it was Jesus giving them the instructions. There must have been something authoritative in the voice speaking to them that compelled them to act without hesitation.

So they cast, and then they were not able to haul it in because of the great number of fish (vs. 6)...It was as if

Jesus had redirected all the fish to that one side of the boat. A picture of *God's sovereignty*.

Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord" (vs. 7)...John recognizes that it is Jesus!

So when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put his outer garment on (for he was stripped for work), and threw himself into the sea (vs. 7)...Peter was as *impulsive as ever*. But the words here express an *intense desire*. Peter had such an *intense desire* to be with Jesus that he couldn't even wait for the boat to make it to shore.

Characteristically...**John** was quicker to *perceive*...**Peter** was quicker to *act*. It was true at the *tomb*...it's true *here*.

But the other disciples came in the little boat, for they were not far from the land, but about one hundred yards away, dragging the net full of fish (vs. 8)...Here we have a continued narrative of the event with *specific details*...giving credibility to an *eye witness*.

So when they got out on the land, they saw a charcoal fire already laid and fish placed on it, and bread (vs. 9)...A picture of *compassion* and *care*. Jesus had prepared breakfast for them. A continued picture of Jesus *servicing* them!

"For who is greater, the one who reclines at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at the table? But I am among you as *the one who serves*."

~Luke 22:27

Just as He had *served them by washing their feet* (**John 13:1-15**).

Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish which you have now caught" (vs. 10)...An *invitation* for the

disciples *to join Him* in His activity. The same invitation to those who follow Him even today.

Simon Peter went up and drew the net to land, full of large fish (vs. 11)...Peter must have been *a very strong man*...a physical presence. Puts more meaning to the times that Peter said that he would be there protecting Jesus.

A hundred and fifty-three (vs. 11)...Continues to show that John was an *eyewitness* to the events.

Although there were so many, the net was not torn (vs.11)...This again is the type of detail that only an *eyewitness* would note...especially a fisherman like John.

Also, a picture of God's *strength* and *provision*...when obedient to His instruction.

Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast" (vs. 12) ...A call to *fellowship*.

"What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life...and the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us...what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. These things we write, so that our joy may be made complete."

~I John 1:1-4

None of the disciples ventured to question Him, "Who are You?" knowing that it was the Lord (vs. 12)...The wording here describes *one as being stunned...speechless*.

Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and the fish likewise (vs. 13)...Continued to *serve* His disciples.

This is now the third time that Jesus was manifested to the disciples, after He was raised from the dead (vs. 14) ...(John 20:19-23, 26-29...and *here*).

Just as their *disobedience* had *resulted in failure*...the disciples' *obedience* brought overwhelming *success*.

IV. THE CONFRONTING:

Three times Jesus asks Peter...Do you love Me?

Love:

- **Storge...Family**...a closeness that bonds.
- **Phileo...Friends**...to have a fondness for another...the love of a brother.
- **Eros...Physical**...sexual love.
- **Agape...Sacrificial**...reference to God's love, sacrificial love, an act of one's will. A love that requires a choice.

The question isn't really **IF** we love Jesus...but **HOW** do we love Him?

Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these? (vs. 15)...

The response by Peter...Yes, Lord; You know that I love You (vs. 15).

Jesus...*agapao*

Peter...*phileo*

Know...Gk. *oida*, to know absolutely, factually. A revealed knowledge...an intuitive knowledge...knowing without exception.

Simon, son of John, do you love Me? (vs. 16)...

Again, the response by Peter...Yes, Lord; You know that I love You (vs. 16).

Jesus...*agapao*

Peter...*phileo*

Notice the response from **Peter** when Jesus asked him a *third time* as to whether he loves Him...

Simon, son of John, do you love Me? (vs. 17)...

Now, the response by **Peter** is much more intense...

Peter was **grieved (vs. 17)**.

Grieved...Gk. *lupeo*, literally means *distressed, afflicted, anguished, deep sadness, or sorrow*. It's the picture of one beating one's breast.

Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You (vs. 17).

Jesus...*phileo*

Peter...*phileo*

V. THE CHALLENGE:

Tend My lambs (vs. 15)...

Tend...Gk. *boskeso*, means *to care for one-on-one*...to *meet the most intimate needs* of an individual.

Lambs...Gk. *arniou*, literally means *new born...new believer*...new in the faith. This isn't the word used to refer to an *animal*. It's the same word used to designate the **exalted Christ**. I.e. **Lamb of God**. Only used by **John**... both in his *Gospel* and in *Revelation*...*29 times*.

Shepherd My sheep (vs. 16)...

Shepherd...Gk. *poimaine*, means *pastor, overseer*...oversee the ministry needs of the *mature ones*...*guide, direct, oversee, challenge, equip, disciple*...over see their total care.

Sheep...means *mature one*...ones that are *mature in the faith*.

Tend My sheep (vs. 17)...*care for one-on-one*...to the *most intimate needs* of the *mature ones*. There will be

times even when those who are *mature* in their *faith* will need *intimate, personal care* and *ministry*.

“Brethren, if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ.”

~Galatians 6:1-2

Restoring a fellow believer...**Matthew 18:15-20**

VI. THE CHARGE:

You follow Me! (vs. 22)...The top priority of any and all believers.

Peter's attention was not to be on anyone or anything else ...but on his *devotion* and *obedience* to Jesus Christ. As Jesus *followed* and was *obedient* to the Father's will...so His disciples should **follow** the Lord...whether the path *leads to a cross* or to some other *difficult experience*.

It's the difference between...

Experiencing God and *Observing God!*

LESSONS WE CAN LEARN:

- When God doesn't work in the way that we expect Him to...or even the way that we have asked Him to...**BE PATIENT** and **WAIT ON** God.
- Even when we fail and/or fall...God is **PRESENT** and calling us to Himself to be **RESTORED**.
- In order to live the victorious Christian life...in order to experience God, personally...the believer must **HEAR** Him ...**OBEY** Him...and **FOLLOW** Him.

JOHN 21:1-17

1 After these things Jesus manifested Himself again to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias, and He manifested Himself in this way. **2** Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, and two others of His disciples were together. **3** Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We will also come with you." They went out and got into the boat; and that night they caught nothing.

4 But when the day was now breaking, Jesus stood on the beach; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. **5** So Jesus said to them, "Children, you do not have any fish, do you?" They answered Him, "No." **6** And He said to them, "Cast the net on the right-hand side of the boat and you will find a catch." So they cast, and then they were not able to haul it in because of the great number of fish. **7** Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord." So when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put his outer garment on (for he was stripped for work), and threw himself into the sea. **8** But the other disciples came in the little boat, for they were not far from the land, but about one hundred yards away, dragging the net full of fish.

9 So when they got out on the land, they saw a charcoal fire already laid and fish placed on it, and bread. **10** Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the

fish which you have now caught." **11** Simon Peter went up and drew the net to land, full of large fish, a hundred and fifty-three; and although there were so many, the net was not torn.

12 Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast." None of the disciples ventured to question Him, "Who are You?" knowing that it was the Lord. **13** Jesus came and *took the bread and gave it to them, and the fish likewise. **14** This is now the third time that Jesus was manifested to the disciples, after He was raised from the dead.

15 So when they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Tend My lambs." **16** He said to him again a second time, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Shepherd My sheep." **17** He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You." Jesus said to him, "Tend My sheep.