

Jesus Appears to The Fishermen at the Sea of Galilee

May 3, 2020



Today's devotional reading is from John chapter 21, verses 1-14. It's the first half of the chapter where Jesus reaffirms Peter. In the second half of the chapter, Jesus asks, "Peter, do you love me?", and Peter responds, "Lord, you know that I do". Three times Jesus asks. Three times Peter responds. Not coincidentally, three is the same number of times that Peter denied any association with Jesus after his arrest. In the second half of John 21 Jesus is demonstrating to Peter that he is forgiven, and that he is still a disciple of Jesus – no hard feelings.

For the last several weeks we've been focused on the resurrection, and Jesus' appearances to his disciples. First, he appears to Mary and the women, offering comfort to the grieving Mary. Then he appears to Peter. Next, he approaches two men on the road to Emmaus and explains to them what the scriptures said about the Messiah. And later in the evening he surprises a group of disciples who have gathered for supper.

After Jesus' crucifixion, we imagine his disciples were confused, heart-broken, even devastated. But these same disciples were surprised, amazed and enlightened when they saw him face to face again.

Our faith rests as much on Jesus' resurrection as it does his crucifixion. We have been redeemed, restored through his sacrifice. And we are united with God, heirs of a heavenly kingdom because of his victory over death.

There have been theories made about why people found Jesus' tomb empty. Maybe in their distress Mary and the women went to the wrong tomb? Perhaps someone stole his body, hoping to elicit claims of his resurrection? Maybe stories of a risen Jesus were just visions, apparitions seen by those who were distraught over his death and wished to see him again?

John 21:1-14 is one of my favorite stories about the risen Jesus, and testifies to the resurrection of a physical, human body.

Respond to the following questions after reading this story:

- 1) Where are these seven disciples now? How far away (in miles and time) from the place of Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection?

2) In fishing all night using nets, do you think Peter just wants something to do, or has he decided to return to his old business?

3) Compare this story with Luke 5:1-11. Why do you think Jesus might repeat this type of miracle now? What effect do you think it would have on Peter?

4) How does his preparation of breakfast relate to what he did for them in John 13:1-17?

5) Where do you go to get away from it all? How does God meet you there?

Say a prayer of thankfulness for your redemption and anticipation of Jesus' return.