

153. Jesus Appears to the Disciples (John 21:1-25)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, we thank You for Your love and mercy. When we fall and sin, You gently bring us back to You. Please help us continue faithful to You and always follow Jesus. We pray in Jesus' name, Amen.

John 21:1-3. Later, Jesus appeared again to His disciples. He came to the Sea of Galilee. This is what happened. Peter, Thomas, Nathanael from Cana, James and John, and two other disciples were together. Peter said, "I'm going fishing." The other disciples said, "We'll go with you." They went out in the boat and fished all night, but caught nothing.

- Earlier, Jesus told them to go to Galilee and wait for Him. Were the disciples patient while waiting? What did they do?

John 21:4-6. Early in the morning, Jesus came and stood on the shore. But the disciples didn't recognize Jesus. Jesus shouted, "Friends, catch any fish?" They answered, "No." Jesus said, "Throw your net on the right side of the boat. You will find some fish." The disciples did that. So many fish came in the net, the disciples couldn't pull the net into the boat.

- Why do you think the disciples didn't recognize Jesus?
- What did Jesus tell the disciples to do? What happened?

John 21:7-9. The disciple Jesus loved (John) told Peter, "That is the Lord!" When Peter heard John say that, Peter put on his coat again and jumped in the water. The other disciples stayed in the boat and followed Peter. They towed the net with the fish, because they were about 100 yards from land. They arrived on shore and saw a fire there with baked fish and bread.

- How did the disciples recognize Jesus? How did they react? What did they do?
- What did Jesus have already waiting for them?

John 21:10-14. Jesus told the disciples, “Bring some of the fish you caught.” Peter dragged the net onto land. The net was full with 153 large fish. Even with that many fish, the net didn’t tear. Jesus said, “Come and eat breakfast.” No disciple wanted to ask Jesus, “Who are You?” They knew He was the Lord. Jesus gave them the bread and the fish. This was the third time Jesus appeared to His disciples after He rose alive from the dead.

- Jesus already baked fish and bread for breakfast. Then why make the disciples catch so many fish and bring some? (Think about what God does for us and why we bring offerings.)
- The Jewish chief priests and the disciples all knew Jesus rose from the dead. But the disciples also knew Jesus was the Lord. What does that mean?

John 21:15-19. After breakfast, Jesus asked Peter, “Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these other disciples?” Peter said, “Yes, Lord, You know I love You.” Jesus told Peter, “Feed My lambs.” Jesus asked again, “Simon, son of John, do you love Me?” Peter answered, “Yes, Lord, You know I love You.” Jesus said, “Take care of My sheep.” A third time, Jesus asked, “Simon, son of John, do you love Me?” Peter felt hurt because Jesus asked a third time, “Do you love Me?” Peter said, “Lord, You know everything. You know I love you.” Jesus said, “Feed My sheep. I tell you the truth, when you were younger, you dressed yourself and did what you wanted. But when you are old, you will spread your arms out. Another person will lead you to a place you don’t want to go.” Jesus said that to show how Peter will die and glorify God. Then Jesus told Peter, “Follow Me!”

- Why did Jesus ask Peter, “Do you love Me?” How many times did Jesus ask? (Remember what Peter did after Jesus got arrested, during His trial?)
- Peter answered that he loved Jesus. What did Jesus tell Peter to do? What does that mean? Who are the lambs and sheep?
- Peter said he loved Jesus. How did Jesus say Peter would die? Can you really love Jesus and belong to Him without total commitment?

John 21:20-25. Peter turned and saw another disciple following them. That was the disciple Jesus loved (John). During the last supper, John was close to Jesus and asked, "Lord, who will betray You?" When Peter saw John, he asked Jesus, "Lord, what about him?" Jesus asked Peter, "Suppose I want him to live until I come again? Why should you care? You follow Me." So some Christians said John would not die. But Jesus didn't say, "He will not die." Jesus said, "Suppose I want him to live until I come again. Why should you care?" That is the disciple who witnessed these things and wrote this. We know his witness is true. Jesus did many other things. If someone wrote down all the things Jesus did, I think the world would not have enough room for all the books.

- Why do you think Peter was concerned about John? What did Jesus tell Peter?
- Jesus calls us to follow Him. What happens if we think too much about what other people are doing?