

JESUS SERVES BREAKFAST TO THE DISCIPLES

BIBLE BASIS: John 21:1-14

BIBLE TRUTH: When the disciples followed guidance given by a man on the shore, they recognized that man was Jesus.

MEMORY VERSE: "Jesus saith unto them, Come and dine. And none of the disciples durst ask him, Who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord" (John 21:12, KJV).

LESSON AIM: By the end of this lesson, we will: SUMMARIZE the account of the risen Christ's

appearance to seven disciples on the shore of the Sea of Galilee; AFFIRM the symbolic and real presence of Christ in our communal meal; and PRACTICE the presence of Christ by eating together often.

BACKGROUND SCRIPTURES: John 21:1-14 - Read and incorporate your insights that you gained from reading the Background Scriptures into your study of the lesson.

LESSON SCRIPTURE

JOHN 21:1-14, KJV

1 After these things Jesus shewed himself again to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias; and on this wise shewed he himself.

2 There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, and two other of his disciples.

3 Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing. They say unto him, We also go with thee. They went forth, and entered into a ship immediately; and that night they caught nothing.

4 But when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore: but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus.

5 Then Jesus saith unto them, Children, have ye any meat? They answered him, No.

6 And he said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes.

7 Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord. Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his fisher's coat unto him, (for he was naked,) and did cast himself into the sea.

8 And the other disciples came in a little ship; (for they were not far from land, but as it were two hundred cubits,) dragging the net with fishes.

9 As soon then as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread.

10 Jesus saith unto them, Bring of the fish which ye have now caught.

11 Simon Peter went up, and drew the net to land full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty and three: and for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken.

12 Jesus saith unto them, Come and dine. And none of the disciples durst ask him, Who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord.

13 Jesus then cometh, and taketh bread, and giveth them, and fish likewise.

14 This is now the third time that Jesus shewed himself to his disciples, after that he was risen from the dead.

LIFE NEED FOR TODAY'S LESSON

AIM: Students will accept life sometimes seems humdrum and unproductive.

INTRODUCTION

His Words, His Actions

After His resurrection, Jesus appeared numerous times to His disciples and followers, providing them with convincing proof that He was risen indeed. Several of these appearances happened in Jerusalem (John 20:10-17, 19-23, 26-29; Matthew 28:9-10; Luke 24:13-27, 33-34, 50-51) and two occurred in Galilee—meeting the disciples at the Sea of Galilee (John 21) and gathering with followers on a mountain (Matthew 28:16). Scripture also records that Jesus appeared to James (1 Corinthians 15:7) and to Paul on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:1-9). Often Jesus was not recognized immediately by His disciples when He appeared to them. His words and actions caused them to know Him.

BIBLE LEARNING

AIM: Students will evaluate how John confirms Jesus' resurrection to the disciples after He prepared and served them breakfast.

I. DOING WHAT YOU

KNOW (John 21:1-2)

The women who went to Jesus' tomb met an angel who told them to go and report to Jesus' disciples that He has risen and they should meet Him in Galilee (Matthew 28:5). Galilee was in the northern part of Israel, and several of Jesus' disciples lived and worked there. Though they had followed the instructions to go to Galilee,

they didn't know what to do next. Peter decided to go fishing and the others joined him. A long night on the waters went unrewarded—often the result in an occupation like fishing. Waiting for Jesus to show up is a challenging spiritual discipline for many people; it goes against the natural inclination to make things happen.

1 After these things Jesus shewed himself again to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias; and on this wise shewed he himself. 2 There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, and two other of his disciples.

Prior to His crucifixion, Jesus had told His disciples that after He was risen, He would proceed to Galilee, where they were to meet him (Matthew 26:32; Mark 14:28). Although the other Gospel accounts also refer to Christ's post-resurrection appearance there, only John provides the details of the scene at the Sea of Tiberias, also known as the Sea of Galilee, where Jesus showed (Gk. *phaneroo*, *fah-neh-ROH-oh*, "made manifest, revealed") Himself to the disciples. A fishing scene provides the occasion for Jesus to reveal Himself. Here we have the longest account of a post-Resurrection appearance in Galilee. "After these things" (John 21:1) refers not only to 20:30-31 but also to the preceding accounts of Jesus' appearances. John introduces the scene by the expression, "and on this wise shewed he himself" (21:1), which literally translated is "he revealed or manifested himself in this manner." The expression implies that Jesus certainly was alive, even if His disciples or followers had not seen Him. For John, Christ's revelation is a concrete reality of heaven upon Earth.

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

QUESTION 1

Why was it easier for the women to choose to believe Jesus' body was stolen instead of resurrected?.

QUESTION 2

Waiting on Jesus can be difficult. How do you wait for Him to act on something in your life?

II. DOING WHAT JESUS SAYS (vv. 3-7)

Jesus showed up on the shore and inquired whether the disciples had caught any food. They responded no, and Jesus told them to cast their nets to the right side of the boat. After their night at sea, it would have been reasonable for the disciples to be too tired to try again, or question the direction of a stranger on shore, but they followed Jesus' words and were rewarded with a large quantity of fish. When we stay open to instruction and the wisdom of God, we often experience the blessing that follows obedience.

3 *Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing. They say unto him, We also go with thee. They went forth, and entered into a ship immediately; and that night they caught nothing.* **4** *But when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore: but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus.*

In spite of the fact that these disciples had seen and talked with their risen Lord on two different occasions, they were still sheep without a shepherd. The disciples were still in an uncertain mood between the Resurrection and Ascension. Although the gloom of Good Friday had given way to the joy of Easter morning, it was still not clear to them what they were to do. Were they to remain idle? It was only natural for the disciples to go back to what they knew how to do—their previous occupation. So Peter's announcement of a fishing expedition, "I go a fishing" (v. 3), was received with much enthusiasm. The disciples labored all night, the best time for fishing, but caught nothing. Their best efforts with the nets throughout the peak fishing hours of the night brought them no success, no doubt baffling these experienced fishermen. If night was a time of failure when nothing could be done, the antidote must be

light. Hence it is probably not just a matter of style for John to note that in the morning, when there was light, Jesus stood on the shore. He was unrecognizable. The word John uses is *eido* (Gk. AY-doe), which is more literally "to see" and also means "to know." Therefore, the disciples' lack of recognition might have been due either to the dimness of the morning or the extraordinary nature of His appearance. What is important to note is that Jesus always revealed Himself only as He willed in keeping with the needs of His followers.

How can we convince others to develop a greater trust in the promises of God?

5 *Then Jesus saith unto them, Children, have ye any meat? They answered him, No.* **6** *And he said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes.* **7** *Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord. Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his fisher's coat unto him, (for he was naked,) and did cast himself into the sea.*

In verse 5, Jesus initiates a conversation with the disciples with a question: "Children, have ye any meat?" They answered with a monosyllable "No" (Gk. *ou*, *oo*), something that shows their disappointment. The disciples appear to not be inclined to delve into the details of their unproductive night. Jesus then gave the unsuspecting disciples a specific instruction on where to cast the net. His sovereignty and supernatural knowledge, which have been seen frequently in the earlier chapters of John's Gospel, reappear in His command to them to cast the net to the right side of the ship. Their compliance brings about the miraculous haul of a huge number of fish. This might well be meant to recall scriptural prophecy. In other words, strange as the advice from this "stranger" might have been, these experienced fishermen obeyed. In obedience to Jesus' command, they

caught a big haul of fish. Obedience to God often yields positive results even when His command seems not to make sense.

In verse 7, John continues to use his regular manner of designating himself: "that disciple whom Jesus loved." John recognizes Jesus more quickly than the rest, and his first thought is to tell Peter. Using the mass of fish, Jesus had made His presence known, and Peter abandons everything, boat as well as fish, and runs straight to Jesus in his familiar impetuosity. John remains in the boat with the rest.

Only an eyewitness could mention the detail about Peter not wearing the coat. The disciples had worked "naked," which, however, does not mean stripped of all clothing, as some suppose. Peter was only without a coat, not without clothes altogether.

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

QUESTION 3

Peter was willing to abandon everything to go to Jesus (v. 7). Are you? Explain.

QUESTION 4

The disciples' obedience yielded them great rewards. What are the benefits that you can point to in your life of knowing Jesus for yourself? Let others know.

III. EXPERIENCING UNIMAGINABLE RESULTS (vv. 8-14)

This miraculous catch caused John to remember another time a man had told them to cast down their nets. John exclaimed to the other disciples that the man on shore was Jesus (Luke 5:1-11). Upon hearing this news, Peter couldn't wait for the boat to return to shore; he grabbed his clothes, jumped in the water, and swam to meet Jesus. As the others came to shore, they saw that Jesus had prepared bread and fish for them to eat. Often considered an impetuous person,

Peter got to Jesus as quickly as he could. He realized that Jesus was now waiting on them, and Peter didn't want to miss this opportunity to be in His transforming presence.

8 And the other disciples came in a little ship; (for they were not far from land, but as it were two hundred cubits,) dragging the net with fishes. 9 As soon then as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread.

The rest of the crew came ashore with the boat. Evidently the disciples still found the net full of fish to be too heavy to haul on board, so they simply dragged it along. Even with Peter in the boat, these seven men did not have the strength to haul up the net; with Peter removed, they were less able to do so. They thus simply dragged the net to shore. The weight hinted at the size of the fish. The disciples came to the shore with their enormous bounty. The astounding manifestations of this early morning hour by no means ended with the catch of fish. As soon as they came to land, they saw a fire of coals there, with a fish laid on top of them and bread nearby. The same word for "fish" is used in John 6:9 and 6:11. Everything is ready for a meal!

Why would Jesus come to His disciples and prepare a meal and fellowship with them?

10 Jesus saith unto them, Bring of the fish which ye have now caught. 11 Simon Peter went up, and drew the net to land full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty and three: and for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken.

Peter at once—again first to act—enters the boat, and then draws the net up after him onto the land. Whether the number of fish caught has some significance is unclear; it might be just a detail of how carefully the disciples counted their haul. We should take care not to create or force some hidden meaning in the biblical text.

This miraculous catch has some significant differences from the circumstances of the draw of fishes at the beginning of the Lord's ministry (Luke 5:1-10). Augustine, an early church father, draws them out very well; he says the one was the symbol of the church at present, the other of the church perfected. In the one we have good and bad, in the other good only; there Christ also is on the water, here He is on the land; there the draw is left in the boats, here it is landed on the beach; there the nets are let down as it might be, here in a special part; there the nets are rending, here they are not broken; there the boats are at the point of sinking with their load, here they are not laden; there the fish are not numbered, here the number is exactly given. It seems impossible not to acknowledge that there is a spiritual meaning in these variations of the two narratives which consistently converge to distinct ends.

What miracle has happened in your life in the last 24 hours?

12 Jesus saith unto them, Come and dine. And none of the disciples durst ask him, Who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord. **13** Jesus then cometh, and taketh bread, and giveth them, and fish likewise. **14** This is now the third time that Jesus shewed himself to his disciples, after that he was risen from the dead.

One curious feature of verse 12 is its statement that the disciples did not dare to ask the name of their host, because they knew it was the Lord. This is a characteristic feature of the Resurrection appearances in the Gospels. It is related to, yet different from, the experience of the Emmaus disciples, who did not know the identity of the Lord until He broke the bread; here the disciples know it is the Lord as He invites them, before participating in the meal, yet they have a peculiar uneasiness toward Him, which we presume must have disappeared during the meal. A feeling of respectful fear prevents the disciples from approaching their mysterious Lord. But Jesus breaks the ice as He now

distributes bread and fish among the disciples to eat. For even though He, as the risen Lord, does not Himself participate in the meal, the sense is that table fellowship between the risen Jesus and the disciples is now established. It is important to note that in 6:11, "Jesus took the loaves; and ... distributed ... them ...; and likewise of the fish"; here "Jesus ... took the bread and gave it to them, and likewise the fish" (from 21:13, AMP). Both scenes carry overtones of the church's eucharistic meal. Jesus has empowered the disciples for their mission of fishing, enabling them to make their catch, and He now provides nourishment for them in their task.

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

QUESTION 5

Why were the disciples afraid or hesitant to ask who Jesus was?

QUESTION 6

Compare the disciples' mission of spiritual fishing with their actual fishing job.

BIBLE APPLICATION

AIM: Students will affirm they have guidance and direction in their lives when they follow Jesus.

The region of Galilee is a cool, lush area of fertile plains and hills. Jesus was raised in Nazareth of Galilee, and most of His ministry occurred around the Sea of Galilee, including the Sermon on the Mount and His Transfiguration. Jesus walked on the waters of the Sea of Galilee and shared many parables near its shores. More than 20 of His miracles happened in Galilee. Nazareth, a small town in Galilee, was the hometown of Jesus' mother, Mary. During the time of Christ, Nazareth was held in disregard. The prevailing thought was no one of any worth could come from such an insignificant town.

Following Jesus reminds us that regardless of where we come from, He will direct us, and give us what we need to do God's will, and sometimes the desires of our hearts.

How has God blessed you to be a blessing to others today?

STUDENTS' RESPONSES

AIM: Students will appreciate experiencing God's presence while receiving wise counsel.

In the 1992 Olympics, Derek Redmond was favored to win the 400-meter semifinals until a pulled hamstring caused him to collapse on the Barcelona track. Determined to continue, Redmond started to limp his way to the finish line. His father, seeing his son's struggle, came out of the stands, broke through security, and helped him complete the race. Few people remember who won this race, but no one has forgotten the love of this father when his son experienced failure.

Many of us have a friend or relative who has experienced a setback or stumbled along the way. Believers can follow the example of Derek Redmond's father and come alongside those who experience injustice, navigate a new life stage, or are stuck in poverty. Coming alongside those who have had a setback is one way to help keep relationships, families, and communities intact.

PRAYER

Dear God, prepare a bountiful table in us and before us to share with those in need or who cannot help themselves. We are thankful that You give to each of us something that we can share with others. Allow us, like Peter, to give our all. We rejoice and celebrate that You gave Your all for all. You are a precious jewel whose brilliance shines in us and for us. In the Name of Jesus, we pray. Amen.

DIG A LITTLE DEEPER

This section provides an additional research article or other information to further your study of the lesson.

What a wonderful experience the disciples had with Jesus. Jesus cooked them breakfast. This was a time of spiritual and physical nourishment. Jesus highlights Peter's love for Jesus. Peter received a blessing from Jesus that he did not expect. How does Jesus remind us of His love for us? Evaluate this in your life and in the ministries within your church.