



Peace be with you: Comfort and Commission

If you have a pattern of having someone share their *Story of Faith* (life before Jesus, encountering Jesus, life since/lately with Jesus) and/or sharing *Evidences of God's grace*, begin with that, followed by a time of thankful prayer for Christ's work in the individual's life/the grace in your lives.

OPENING COMMENT

After reading the first 20 chapters of the Gospel of John it would be reasonable to ask "what happened to Peter?" This lively, and entirely relatable, character in the story seems to disappear after a colossal failure in the other Gospels, yet John uses the epilogue of his writing to show how the revelation of Jesus restores, even those who would believe they have fallen too far out of favour with the living Christ.

READ THE TEXT: John 20:19-23

After this Jesus revealed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias, and he revealed himself in this way. Simon Peter, Thomas (called the Twin), Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples were together. Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We will go with you." They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.

Just as day was breaking, Jesus stood on the shore; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to them, "Children, do you have any fish?" They answered him, "No." He said to them, "Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some." So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in, because of the quantity of fish. That disciple whom Jesus loved therefore said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment, for he was stripped for work, and threw himself into the sea. The other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, but about a hundred yards off.



When they got out on land, they saw a charcoal fire in place, with fish laid out on it, and bread. Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish that you have just caught." So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, 153 of them. And although there were so many, the net was not torn. Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast." Now none of the disciples dared ask him, "Who are you?" They knew it was the Lord. Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and so with the fish. This was now the third time that Jesus was revealed to the disciples after he was raised from the dead.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. One of the most powerful encouragements in times of struggle is the practice of remembering our first encounter with Jesus. When you think of that experience, what do you think about? How are you encouraged? What are you reminded of?
2. Do you fear (revere, respect, and realize the greatness of) the Lord? In what ways has this rightful fear reordered your life?
3. Obedience to the word of God is a life long challenge. What is God currently prompting you to lay down at His feet and follow His command in obedience?
4. What does it mean to have Christ as our first love? What tangible things are done when in love? How do you need to return to that first love with Christ?
5. To study the scriptures is to fellowship with the risen and reigning Christ. By the power of the Spirit we can learn of and know what Christ is doing in our lives, through the church, and to the world. Do you regularly spend time studying his word? How do you mine the truths of Scripture? How has your method of study been helpful? Where have you felt your study lacking?
6. Community is incredibly important. Christ designed the body to support each other and help understand what God is saying through His word? How have you experienced the benefits of community clarifying, correcting, or encouraging you toward the purposes of God in your life?

CONCLUSION

It is encouraging to know that even when we fail, sometimes miserably, Jesus stands on the shore and calls us back into intimate relationship with him. He gently reminds us of His sufficiency, His satisfaction, and His sustenance as he calls us back to relationship with Him. We worship a God who has not left us in our sins, but redeemed us to Himself at great cost. Let's continue to run towards our God who is slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.



SHARE & PRAY

- Share how you can pray for each other in light of this study.
- Conclude by spending some time praying for one another, for the areas of growth and grace you are seeking, and the needs among you.

