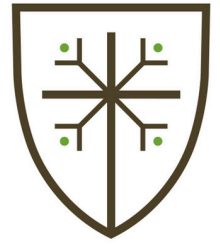


# SERMON NOTES



May 4, 2025

## SERMON INFO

### TITLE

"Looking in the Mirror"

### PREACHER

Rev. Tim Frickenschmidt

### TEXTS

Genesis 1:1-3

Revelation 5:11-14

John 21:1-14

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Do you have an example of a leader who, like Peter, God used to sow new life through failure? Who are the people that you lead?
2. Jesus' four-fold Word to the disciples can be remembered with four actions: Examine, Submit, Offer, and Delight. How do you see these words being spoken in your own life?

## SERMON IN SUMMARY

Tim began this week's sermon with the question, "What do you look into in order to see and know yourself?" Scripture is intended to act like a mirror, reflecting us and showing us what we look like. But it is not only a mirror that shows us our own reflection—it is meant to reveal both our true selves and the image of Jesus. Our passage in John 21 is all about this revelation. Jesus reveals himself to the disciples, and as we see ourselves reflected in them, he reveals himself to us.

### Where Jesus Meets Us

Chapter 21 is the epilogue to John's Gospel. In it, we find the disciples, after the resurrection, fishing on the sea at night. They are confused, not knowing what they're supposed to do now, so they go back to what is familiar. The sea in Scripture represents chaos, evil, death, and sin—even more so at night, in the darkness. The disciples are tossed around in this chaos all night and, as we see in verse three, come to the end with nothing. This word "nothing" is the same word Jesus uses earlier when he tells the disciples, "Apart from me you can do nothing." This nothingness is where Jesus meets Peter, and it is where he meets us.

By this point, Peter has been "sifted," just as Jesus told him he would be. He had failed miserably in his life, denying knowing Jesus. And behind this failure is a power far beyond himself—a power that is personal, intelligent, and strategic. Like Peter, we are each responsible for our moral and spiritual failings, but we are not alone in them. We are being led and manipulated by powers this world does not recognize as real, but that seek to rule us. And the more responsibility you have, the greater the impact your individual failures and sins will be, as well as the more Satan will seek to sift you as he did Peter.

But Peter's faith did not die. Satan's sifting backfires and produces a greater, renewed faith, strength, and courage. When Peter realizes that it is the Lord on the shore, he plunges into the water to get to him as fast as possible. God uses Peter's failure to sow new life.

### Where Jesus Leads Us

In the Gospel passage, Jesus speaks four times to the disciples—twice before he is revealed to them, and twice after. His first word to them is a question: "Have you caught any fish?" What is your life producing apart from me? Jesus wants his word to be the word that governs your life, that swallows up all the darkness and chaos of the sea. He wants you to examine your life.

Secondly, he gives the disciples instruction: try this instead. If you believe what I say and tell you to do, and you do it, your life won't be filled with nothingness anymore. The disciples don't recognize Jesus until after they follow his direction and throw the nets on the other side. Listening alone without acting is not faith. We are deceived if we think that hearing but remaining unchanged constitutes true faith.

After the fish are caught, Jesus' third word to the disciples is to bring the fish for breakfast. He wants to use whatever he puts in our hands. He wants us to give it to others for their life and their benefit. We are to listen to his Word, submit to it, and then open our hands and give of ourselves and our lives—just as Jesus did first on our behalf. His four-fold word to the disciples in John 21 is his life and his response to God the Father.

Finally, his fourth word is simply an invitation to join him and be with him. He doesn't just want to use you—he just wants you, to enjoy and delight in you as one of his followers.