

Turn in your Bibles today to the Gospel of John, Chapter 21, and we will be looking at verses 1 through 14. We have seen some amazing events over the past few weeks surrounding the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Primarily the fact that Jesus has appeared to his disciples, and they have seen him alive. Fear that once surrounded them now has turned into hope!

Even in the fact Jesus was appearing to the disciples he was kind of popping in and out of the upper room they were staying in. Literally! Doors locked! There's Jesus! Twice! Don't forget the time he appeared to two of his followers, Cleopas, and another man on the road to Emmaus as recorded in Luke 24. After Jesus revealed himself to them, he was gone again.

Cleopas and this other gentleman went back to the upper room and told the other disciples that they also just saw Jesus alive. Again, giving evidence of the truth that Jesus had risen from the dead.

At the time of Jesus' resurrection though we see in Matthew Chapter 28, Mark Chapter 16 that an angel, as well as Jesus in Matthew 28, told the women that came to the tomb to tell the Apostles and those that were followers of his, that he would eventually meet them in Galilee.

This is where we pick up today. The disciples have left Jerusalem and are now in Capernaum by the sea of Galilee. It is Capernaum that Jesus used as the hub of his ministry. Jesus did many miracles there; it was where Peter lived, and Jesus healed Peter's mother-in-law. Capernaum was a very important place when it came to the ministry of Jesus Christ.

Look at this map as we see the distance between Jerusalem and Capernaum.



You should be able to pick up Jerusalem pretty well as you can see it is located in the middle of the picture. Then go straight up about 12 o'clock at the top of that body of water, which is the Sea of Galilee, you can see Capernaum. There is approximately 120 miles between Jerusalem and Capernaum. So, the disciples and other followers of Jesus made that 120-mile journey up to Capernaum to meet with Jesus. Let's look at our verses in Chapter 21. Again, we will go through verse 14 but let's start with verses 1 and 2.

John 12:1-2

¹ After this Jesus revealed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias, and he revealed himself in this way. ² Simon Peter, Thomas (called the Twin), Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples were together.

After this! After what? What we learned last week. Jesus had appeared to the disciples again in the upper room where they were hiding out. The doors were locked, and Jesus entered into the room and stood among them. What was one of Jesus' reasons for being there? Thomas!

Thomas! You must see to believe, here I am! Look Thomas and touch my wounds. Thomas said to Jesus, "My Lord and my God!"

After that meeting with Jesus, time has now passed for them to go to Galilee. A place that was very familiar to the disciples. Jesus would soon be revealing himself to them once again. So, as they were waiting, seven of the disciples were together. Look at verses 1 and 2 again.

John 12:1-2

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Who do we have here? Peter, Thomas, Nathanael, James and John, the sons of Zebedee, the sons of Thunder as Jesus called them once, and two other disciples whose names are not mentioned. Seven of the now eleven Apostles, because Judas is dead. What were they doing? Waiting on Jesus!

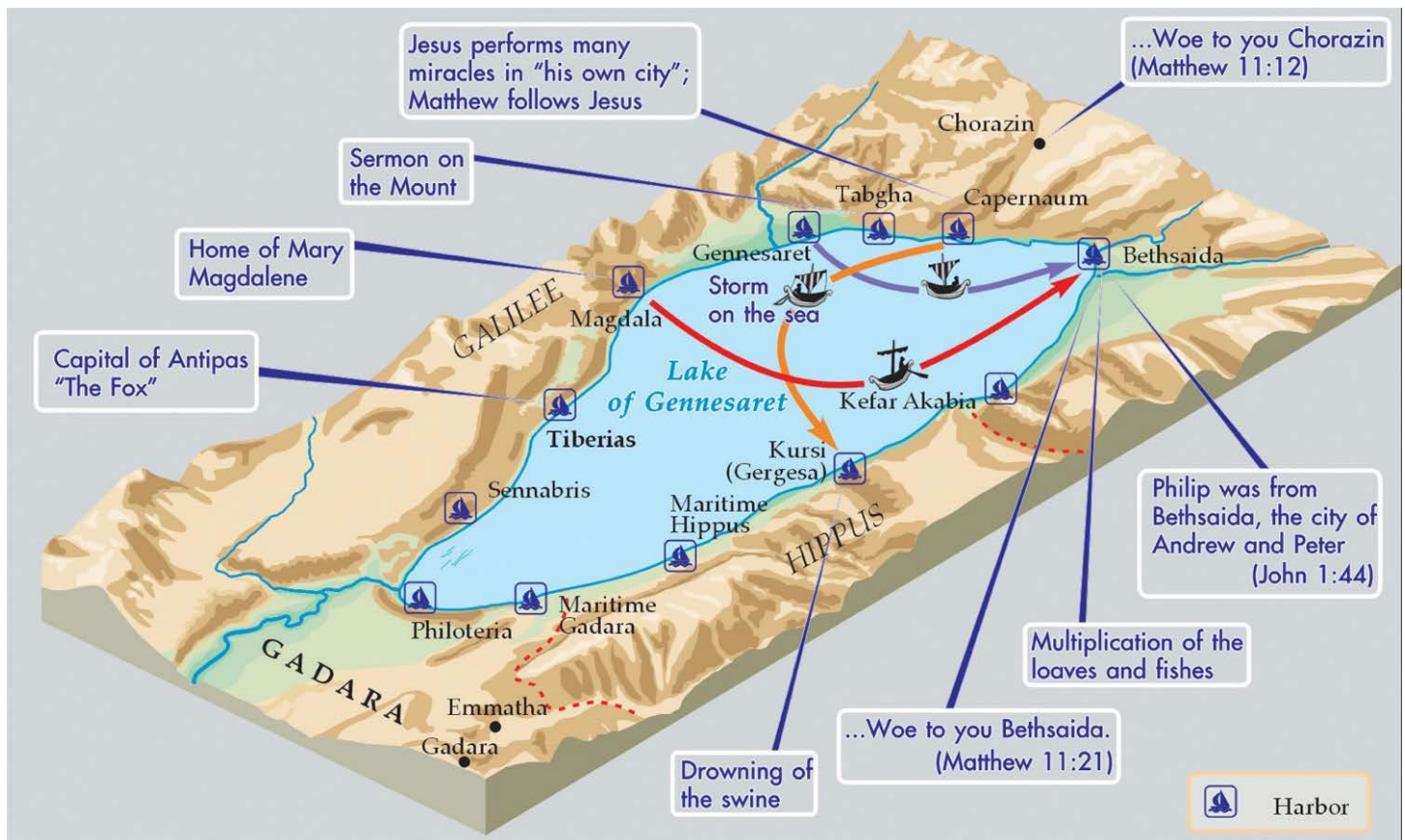
Now, remember this is the area the Apostles are from. They are home and as I mentioned, this is where a lot of Jesus' ministry happened as we can read as recorded by the Apostle Matthew in Chapter 4 of his Gospel.

Look at the Screens:

Matthew 4:23-25

²³ And he went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction among the people. ²⁴ So his fame spread throughout all Syria, and they brought him all the sick, those afflicted with various diseases and pains, those oppressed by demons, those having seizures, and paralytics, and he healed them. ²⁵ And great crowds followed him from Galilee and the Decapolis, and from Jerusalem and Judea, and from beyond the Jordan.

Look at this map:



This map gives us a good indication of approximately a 12-mile radius around the Sea of Galilee where Jesus performed a lot of miracles and proclaimed the message from the beginning of, ***“The time is fulfilled, the Kingdom of God is at hand, therefore, repent and believe the Gospel!”***

Here are some of the more memorable teachings and miracles:

1. Sermon on the Mount which included what we call the Beattitudes.
2. Feeding of the 5000 men plus women and children as Jesus multiplie five loaves and two small fish near Bethsaida.
3. Feeding of the 4000 men plus women and children as Jesus multiplied seven loaves and a few small fish in the area of the Gerasenes.
4. Calming a storm as Jesus was asleep in the boat and the disciples cried out, “Save us Lord, do you not care we are perishing?”
5. Walking on the water of the Sea of Galilee. The disciples once again were struggling against the wind and Jesus comes to them walking on the water and they think he is a ghost, but Jesus says, “Take heart, it is I, do not be afraid!”

What did Peter say and do? “If it is you Lord, let me come to you!” Peter gets out of the boat and begins walking on water. But he saw the wind and began to sink, and he cries out to Jesus, “Lord, save me!” Jesus reaches down and picks Peter up and says, “O you of little faith, why did you doubt?”

Why did I share all that? One, we will see another miracle performed by Jesus. Two, we will see Peter react to a situation in one of his usual manners. Let’s read verse 3.

John 21:3

³ 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.

There has been a lot said of why Peter chose to decide, what seemed like all of sudden, to get up and say, “I am going fishing!” And the other disciples jumped right in there, and said, “We are going too!”

Let’s think for a moment. What was Peter’s profession before Jesus called Peter to follow him? Fisherman!!! Also, what have been the recent events that have happened up to this time?

1. Jesus arrested, tried before Pilate, and convicted!
2. Jesus was beaten, flogged, nailed upon a cross and crucified and died on that cross.
3. Jesus was put into Joseph of Arimathea’s tomb.
4. Jesus three days later rose from the dead.
5. Jesus appeared alive to Mary Magdalene and the other women.
6. Mary Magdalene told the disciples she saw Jesus resurrected.

Then what happened? Peter and John ran to the tomb. Peter saw the empty tomb. Jesus appeared to Peter and the other disciples twice already. Peter had seen the nail prints, the scars from the crown of thorns, he saw the pierced side. Peter knew that Jesus was alive! Peter and the other disciples obeyed and went to Galilee to wait on Jesus as he commanded.

So, they were waiting for Jesus to come. What day was it since the resurrection? From verse 26 of Chapter 20 we know 8 days had passed when Jesus appeared to the disciples in the upper room for the second time. We know from Acts 1, that Luke documented that Jesus was on the earth 40 days after his resurrection.

What day was it now? Day 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35? We don't know! But they were having to wait! We are an impatient bunch of people aren't we! How many of you are impatient, raise your hands? The rest of you are lying, we can do counseling back at the Decision Room after the service.

It has been argued that Peter had enough of waiting and for him to go fishing was wrong. That he was quitting! If it was wrong for him, then it was wrong for the other six Apostles to go with him.

What was Peter considered among all the Apostles? He was considered the leader, wasn't he? Peter usually spoke up first, sometimes when he should have probably been silent. Peter is mentioned first in Scripture when the Apostles are listed out. Even here in verse 1 of this Chapter, Peter, is listed first.

If Peter is wrong, he was leading these other men into doing something wrong as well. It is a very serious thing for leaders within the church to lead anyone astray from the truth of God's Word. If anyone professes Jesus as their Lord for that matter, it is a sad thing when they lead anyone astray from the truth of God's Word.

The Word of God, the Bible, is the truth of Creation, what sin is, the salvation that is needed because we are all sinners, marriage, sexuality, gender, and may we always remember Jesus is coming back so we need to be proclaiming the Gospel to the lost world around us.

The reason this act can be looked upon as disobedience is where did Jesus tell the disciples to go? We get from Matthew 28:16 that Jesus told them to go to a specific mountain in Galilee. Where were they? They were at the sea. Doing what? Fishing! What had Jesus called them out of? From fishing to be fishers of men. To be preachers of the Gospel.

Disobedience to the Lord can only bring failure! Disobeying God does not show love for the Lord! Jesus can not bless us when we are living in known obstinate sin.

The other thought is Peter just wanted something to do as he waited. They might have needed money and were going to sell the fish. Peter said I am going fishing and the other Apostles said, "Great idea, we are going too!" I personally do not agree with this thought because of the original call. These disciples are going to see miracle and be taught an important lesson.

What did we see at the end of verse 3? They had fished all night! And what? Caught nothing! Now if you are an avid fisherman what do you think is going to happen with the next cast? You're going to catch something! Fishermen do not give up! This is the one!

I used to go fishing a lot with Lori's uncle Mike at Lake Cumberland in Kentucky. There would be nights, not many, but there were a few, where we would fish all night and not catch a thing. Whether we were live bait fishing, casting, spooning. We even had a depth finder or fish finder which ever you want to call it and we would see the fish on the screen. Drop down that live bait or drop that spoon. Nothing! The last question you want to hear that early morning after being out there all night is... "Catch anything?" You do not want to have to say, "Nope! Not a single fish!"

Well, guess what Peter and the Apostles are going to get asked? Verses 4 and 5.

John 21:4-5

⁴ Just as day was breaking, Jesus stood on the shore; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. ⁵ Jesus said to them, "Children, do you have any fish?" They answered him, "No."

I find this important to mention. I am in no way a Greek scholar. But this question by Jesus when it is parsed out in the Greek, Jesus' question would have been more like this. ***“Children, you do not have any fish, do you?”*** Jesus knew. How long had Jesus been on that seashore watching them? We don't know! Go ahead guys, keep trying this all by yourself. Your attempts are futile!

That is what Jesus allows us to do as well at times. We again try to fix everything ourselves! We try to understand things with our finite human mind. We even try to do ministry under our own power. We haven't prayed, we haven't sought the Lord and there is Jesus, standing on the seashore. Remember me? You may say, I am praying, I am seeking the Lord, and I still feel like I don't have an answer.

What were the disciples having to do in Galilee? Wait! Wait! The answer will come. But may we realize that healing in many of our circumstances are not always in a physical way. The healing is that we realize our dependency on the Lord more than ever and we continuously fall into his arms and say thank you Lord for being there today. Here is a verse that we saw a couple of weeks ago from Isaiah.

Isaiah 26:3-4

³ You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you. ⁴ Trust in the Lord forever, for the Lord God is an everlasting rock.

Well, these tough, never say quit fisherman, had to answer with that dreaded word of, “No!” I am sure the irritation of not catching anything, combined with how tired they were, they weren't really wanting to converse with anyone. But then Jesus tells them to do something!

John 21:6-8

⁶ 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. ⁷ 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. ⁸ 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.

Are you kidding me sir! Remember they have not recognized it was Jesus yet. Who are you? We have fished all night; the fish aren't there. None of that! Just obedience. There had to be something authoritative in Jesus' request, something assuring that if they did what he said they would have success.

Boy, did they! Victory! The nets became full and do you think that maybe something clicked in Peter's, John's, and James' mind. This kind of feels familiar!

In Luke 5, we read that at the beginning of Jesus' ministry he was teaching on the seashore and the crowds were pressing against him and there were two boats, one owned by Peter and Andrew, the other by James and John's dad Zebedee. He got in one to finish his teaching and then he asks Peter to push out into the deep. Peter says, we have toiled all night. But, at your word, I will let down the nets! What happened? The nets were so full they began breaking. Peter fell at Jesus' feet and said, “Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!”

Some of you today need to fall at Jesus' feet and not say, Depart from me, but say, ***“Save me Lord Jesus, for I am a sinful man, I am a sinful woman, I am a sinful young person, I repent of my sins and I want you to save my soul!”*** Jesus says in, ***“All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out.”*** John 6:37

This in Luke 5 is also where the call to come follow Jesus came for most of these men, where Jesus said, “Do not be afraid, from now on you will be catching men. In verse 11 it says, that they left everything and followed Jesus. Now they are going back.

Well, what was happening at least clicked in John’s mind, and he cried out, “It is the Lord!” When Peter heard this, off the side of the boat he went and swims to the shore, whether he it was the freestyle or the backstroke, Peter was on a mission, and he left the other disciples to this great catch to bring to shore. Go ahead Peter, we got this, you go on! We’ll be there when we can. They all finally get to the shore, so, lets look at verses 9 to 14.

John 21:9-14

⁹ When they got out on land, they saw a charcoal fire in place, with fish laid out on it, and bread. ¹⁰ Jesus said to them, “Bring some of the fish that you have just caught.” ¹¹ 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. ¹² 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. ¹³ Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and so with the fish. ¹⁴ This was now the third time that Jesus was revealed to the disciples after he was raised from the dead.

All the disciples are on the seashore now. There is Jesus with breakfast ready for them. A charcoal fire, with fish and bread. Could it have been two fish cooking and five loaves being toasted on the fire? Maybe? We don’t know. There is so much here that different memories should have been rushing through their minds of the times they spent with Jesus.

Jesus asks them to bring some of the fish that they had caught. Peter goes to the boat and brings the net of fish to the shore. I am sure the others helped as well, but it was important to list Peter here as going to the boat. We will see more of that next week.

But for now, here is this group of men around this fire. I am sure they did not count the fish right then, but they caught 153 fish. Why is that important? First of all, do you not think that a bunch of fishermen are going to go back and, “Let’s see how many we caught!” But this once again is to show this is an actual event that these 7 men encountered with Jesus. They were eyewitnesses to the risen Savior Jesus Christ! Jesus Christ is alive!

What do we see here? These men toiled and struggled all night in futility to catch some fish and at the point of giving up, Jesus steps in. Hey! Remember me! Fishermen are stubborn also, one more cast, okay, one more cast. They are just not biting! In this case, it would be throw the net one more time, okay, one more time! The fish were just not there!

We can be so stubborn ourselves that we try everything under our own power that we can think of. Okay, if I just do this, that didn’t work, okay let me try this! There is Jesus waiting patiently, I’m here, I’m here! Jesus is showing these Apostles that just as he had provided for them in so many ways those past few years that he is still the one that will provide.

Jesus will provide what you need as well! Though we see here that Jesus provided fish, I am not talking about materially. Jesus is the one to provide the healing to a hurting heart, the comfort to troubled mind, peace in a world of chaos, strength, and boldness in the face of persecution for your faith, salvation for the lost person here today!

Just as he did here with these Apostles, he bids you to Come! Here he bids the Apostles to come and dine, have a little breakfast, you must be tired and hungry after a night like that. Here take some fish and some bread, eat! Once again, Jesus serves these Apostles, these same men that he had washed their feet just a couple of weeks or so ago.

These same men that saw Jesus with those same hands, heal lepers, make the blind to see, the lame to walk. That same voice that cast out demons, raised the dead to life, calmed storms, chastised the hypocrites and the self-righteous. That same voice that prayed for them, that they would be one and be sanctified by the Word of God for they were not called to be fishermen anymore but were called to be fishers of men to go and proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ and what he has done to provide salvation to all that will call on him.

If you truly do know Jesus Christ as your Lord, then he has called us as well to be fishers of men and he will provide in that call as well. Jesus will give us boldness and he will give us words to say, primarily his Word! As they sat around that breakfast fire, they didn't ask Jesus who he was. They knew it was the Lord! I believe there wasn't much talking going on around that breakfast. I don't believe there was any for a while. They were in the presence of the Lord, and they were basking in his presence. The fish and bread, definitely nice to have but once again they were with Jesus.

This was the third time Jesus has revealed himself alive to the Apostles.

Once again, we see his gentleness with the Apostles. They came to the shore and evidently they paused a bit because Jesus had to prompt them to, "Come, Come and Dine, come have breakfast!"

That is a call that we see through out Jesus' ministry, Come! One of the main reasons Jesus left heaven and came to earth to bid whosoever will, Come! Jesus did this in various ways, not just using the word come!

1. In John Chapter 1, we saw two of John the Baptist's disciples start walking behind Jesus, Jesus pauses and says, "What are you seeking?" They said, "Where are you staying?" Jesus said, "Come and see!"
2. John Chapter 4, Jesus urged the woman at the well to, "Drink of this living water that does not satisfy the physical but satisfies the soul!"
3. John Chapter 6, After feeding the 5000 from 2 small fish and 5 small loaves of bread and many came after him seeking more bread. Jesus again gets to the heart of the matter, and he says, "To be his disciple you must eat of his flesh and drink of his blood!" Again, they were just seeking the things of this world to satisfy themselves and Jesus is telling them for true fulfillment you must surrender everything to him.

If you are saved today, the call to come is a daily call to know Jesus more and to make Jesus known as we are to disciple in our homes and to share the Gospel in the sphere of our daily lives.

1. John 11 – Jesus calls his good friend Lazarus who had died out of the tomb with the command of, "Lazarus, Come out!" As Jesus called him out of death to life.

Lost person, he is calling you, Jesus is bidding you to come out of the darkness of your sin and eternal death to the eternal life that is promised through Jesus Christ if you will repent of your sins and surrender your life to Jesus Christ.