

John Chapter 21

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Introduction:

1. In the first 20 chapters, John the Apostle has demonstrated that Jesus came to earth, established His identity and died for our sins. From the cross, He said, "It is finished." Now He could return to the Father and return to glory. He wanted to do this.

Now, Father, bring Me into the glory We shared before the world began. (John 17:5 NLT)

2. He *could* have ascended back to the Father promptly, but He didn't. There were some unfinished details.
3. Peter had been accepted by Jesus immediately after the resurrection. See what He told the women in the Mark account:
Now go and tell His disciples, including Peter, that Jesus is going ahead of you to Galilee. You will see Him there, just as He told you before He died. (Mark 16:7 NLT)
4. The total reconciliation between Jesus and Peter needed to be documented for future generations. That is accomplished in this supplemental chapter.
5. Jesus had told His men to go to Galilee and here they are.
Then Jesus said to them, "Don't be afraid! Go tell My brothers to leave for Galilee, and they will see Me there." (Matthew 28:10 NLT)

BREAKFAST WITH JESUS

(21:1.) Later, Jesus appeared again to the disciples beside the Sea of Galilee. This is how it happened.

- During the period following His resurrection, **Jesus** appeared to people who knew Him from before. This story is a sample case. **William Barclay** sees an added purpose:

It was to demonstrate once and for all the reality of the Resurrection. There were many who said that the appearances of the Risen Christ were nothing more than visions which the disciples had. Many would admit the reality of the visions but insist that they were still only visions. Some would go further and say that they were not visions but hallucinations. The gospels go far out of their way to insist that the Risen Christ was not a vision, not an hallucination, not even a spirit, but a real person. They insist that the tomb was empty and that the Risen Christ had a real body which still bore the marks of the nails and the spear thrust in his side.

(2.) Several of the disciples were there -- Simon Peter, Thomas (nicknamed the Twin.), Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two other disciples.

- John the apostle and writer was there as an eyewitness, naming those present. These men were mostly friends prior to following Jesus. The unnamed men may have been Andrew and Philip.

(3.) Simon Peter said, "I'm going fishing." "We'll come, too," they all said. So they went out in the boat, but they caught nothing all night.

- **Peter**, ever the leader, declared his intention to get some **fishing** time in. This was **night**-shift work and this had been an unsuccessful **night**.
- During the ministry of Jesus, the disciples had been supported by the group of women (Luke 8:1-3), but those finances were no longer available. It was necessary for the men to get back to their fishing business and wait for Jesus to appear as He had promised.

Then Jesus said to them, "Don't be afraid! Go tell My brothers to leave for Galilee, and they will see Me there." (Matthew 28:10 NLT)



(4.) At dawn Jesus was standing on the beach, but the disciples couldn't see who He was.

- It is already common in the story that **Jesus** was not readily identifiable following His resurrection. Mary Magdalene, the two on the road to Emmaus and the Twelve had the same experiences. Mark says of the two going to Emmaus:
Afterward He appeared in a different form to two of His followers who were walking from Jerusalem into the country. (Mark 16:12 NLT)

- **Burton Coffman** sees the hand of the Lord here:
 Can it be doubted that Jesus already knew exactly where to find the apostles, that he knew of their fruitless night's work, or that he had built a fire and prepared food at exactly the place where Peter would swim ashore, or that he already knew that they had nothing to eat?

(5.) He called out, "Fellows, have you caught any fish?" "No," they replied.

- **Jesus** inquired about their fishing success and they had failed. His voice was not recognized nor was His overall appearance. His inquiry was like that of a potential fish buyer. Their **"No"** answer served to heighten their embarrassment at failing. Jesus often moved a conversation forward by asking questions.

Still they stood there in disbelief, filled with joy and wonder. Then He asked them, "Do you have anything here to eat?" (Luke 24:41 NLT)

(6.) Then He said, "Throw out your net on the right-hand side of the boat, and you'll get some!" So they did, and they couldn't haul in the net because there were so many fish in it.

- This is a repeat of an earlier time: **Cast** in **the net** at the wrong time (daylight) and get more **fish** than they ever thought possible. The **haul** was beyond the capacity of their **net**. This little event of life reminded the fishermen of another event about three years before:

When He had finished speaking, He said to Simon, "Now go out where it is deeper, and let down your nets to catch some fish." "Master," Simon replied, "we worked hard all last night and didn't catch a thing. But if You say so, I'll let the nets down again." And this time their nets were so full of fish they began to tear! (Luke 5:4-6 NLT)

(7.) Then the disciple Jesus loved said to Peter, "It's the Lord!" When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his tunic (for he had stripped for work.), jumped into the water, and headed to shore.

- John didn't use his given name in all of the book of John. He preferred to be known as **the disciple whom Jesus loved**. John was the first to identify **the Lord**. Impetuous **Peter** jumped right in to go see **Jesus**. The pattern was a repeat of other times: John *caught on first*, but **Peter acted first**.
- **Jesus** had lingered on earth and met with His disciples again. There was no question about how to refer to Jesus: He is **the Lord**.

(8.) The others stayed with the boat and pulled the loaded net to the shore, for they were only about a hundred yards from shore.

- The **other** fishermen stayed with the job and brought the haul of fish to the **shore**. They handled their huge catch of fish responsibly.

(9.) When they got there, they found breakfast waiting for them -- fish cooking over a charcoal fire, and some bread.

- **Fish** and **bread** for breakfast. John says it was a **charcoal fire**, just like the one warming John and Peter while Jesus was being tried before Annas and Caiaphas. This smell of **charcoal** would have brought back more memories of failure to Peter.

Because it was cold, the household servants and the guards had made a charcoal fire. They stood around it, warming themselves, and Peter stood with them, warming himself. (John 18:18 NLT)

- **Paul Butler** says,
How the fish were obtained by Jesus we are not told. We are neither told that He obtained them in a supernatural way or a natural way. Most commentators believe He supplied them supernaturally.

(10.) "Bring some of the fish you've just caught," Jesus said.

- **Jesus** invited them to examine the haul of **fish** they had just made. He wasn't inviting them to supplement what He had provided.

(11.) So Simon Peter went aboard and dragged the net to the shore. There were 153 large fish, and yet the net hadn't torn.

- John was right there counting **fish**. It is a waste of time to try to make a mystical meaning for 153. He is telling us that he was there and counted and they were all **large fish**.

- He also noted that even though the **net** was overloaded, it did not **tear**. This was the observation of an experienced professional.

(12.) "Now come and have some breakfast!" Jesus said. None of the disciples dared to ask Him, "Who are You?" They knew it was the Lord.

- The fishermen knew the Chef who invited them to **breakfast**. They were all convinced. But they held back until **Jesus** made the invitation specific. **Jesus** made the first move toward them as seen in the next verse:

(13.) Then Jesus served them the bread and the fish. (14.) This was the third time Jesus had appeared to His disciples since He had been raised from the dead.

- **Jesus** is not an apparition. Not a ghost. He is now a chef, in keeping with the lesson of being a servant of others. This follows the earlier pattern of washing the disciples' feet.
- This is **the third time that** He met with the *group*. He had met others individually, but that is not what John is reporting. Actually, Jesus appeared 10 times.

THE TEN APPEARANCES

1. To Mary Magdalene (Mark 16:9; John 20:11-18).
2. To the women (Matthew 28:9,10).
3. To Cleopas and his companion (Luke 24:13-35).
4. To Simon Peter (Luke 24:34; 1 Corinthians 15:15).
5. To the Apostles, Thomas absent (John 20:19-23).
6. To the Apostles, Thomas present (John 20:24-29).
7. To the Apostles at the sea of Tiberius (John 21:1-14).
8. To above five hundred in Galilee (Matthew 28:16-20; 1 Corinthians 15:6).
9. To James the Lord's brother (1 Corinthians 15:7).

10. To the Apostles on Olivet (Acts 1:4-11; Luke 24:50,51).

JESUS AND PETER

(15.) After breakfast Jesus asked Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love Me more than these? " "Yes, Lord," Peter replied, "You know I love You." "Then feed My lambs," Jesus told him.

- Is the rule "finish the meal before bringing up the heavy matters?"
- Now **Jesus** addresses **Peter** by his older name **Simon**, a reminder that he had acted like he had before Jesus renamed him *Rocky*.
- He asked **Simon** if he loved (*agapao*) **Jesus** more than:
 1. The fish they had just caught
or more probably
 2. The other disciples.

Peter had boasted earlier about how much he was willing to do for **Jesus**.

But after I have been raised from the dead, I will go ahead of you to Galilee and meet you there." Peter declared, "Even if everyone else deserts You, I will never desert You." (Matthew 26:32-33 NLT)

- **Peter** was quick to answer "Yes, I love (*phileo*) you." He used a milder word of affection and did not reflect the word used by **Jesus**.
- **Jesus** told him to feed His **lambs**. The earlier denial had not disqualified Peter from taking an active leadership role. Perhaps **Jesus** was also saying to **feed His lambs** instead of spending his time fishing. But there were more questions.

(16.) Jesus repeated the question: "Simon son of John, do you love Me?" "Yes, Lord," Peter said, "You know I love You." "Then take care of My sheep," Jesus said.

- The same **question** is posed again to **Simon** and the same answer is received from him.
- Jesus broadened Peter's job from "feed my lambs" to "**take care of My sheep.**" But **Jesus** was not finished.

(17.) A third time He asked him, "Simon son of John, do you love Me?" Peter was hurt that Jesus asked the question a third time. He said, "Lord, You know everything. You know that I love You." Jesus said, "Then feed My sheep.

- **Jesus** made a slight change in the question that cannot be seen in English. He asked "Do you *phileo* me." Do you even **love** me at this emotional level? *Phileo* expressed the deep, warm, heartfelt affection of this impetuous man.
- **Paul Butler** writes:
Now it should not be too difficult to see why Peter used the word *phileo*. His love for Christ was more than an "at large" love—it was a love of "warmth and closeness and affection."
- **James Smith** writes:
Peter was hurt because Jesus had asked him this question the third time. The threefold repetition of the question reminded Peter of his threefold denial of Jesus in the courtyard of the high priest. Peter was confident that he had this affection for Christ. He was equally confident that Christ knew that he had this affection which he had twice before professed.
- Now Peter is to use his life to **feed** the **Lord's sheep**. The other men could hear the conversation.

(18.) "I tell you the truth, when you were young, you were able to do as you liked; you dressed yourself and went wherever you wanted to go. But when you are old, you will stretch out your

hands, and others will dress you and take you where you don't want to go."

- The expression **you will stretch out your hands** was a reference to Peter's crucifixion in his old age. So the Lord is saying that Peter will remain faithful through the rest of his years.

(19.) Jesus said this to let him know by what kind of death he would glorify God. Then Jesus told him, "Follow Me."

- Peter is said to have been crucified in Rome about AD 65.
- The early church historian **Eusebius** wrote:
Peter appears to have preached in Pontus, Galatia, Bithynia, Cappadocia, and Asia to the Jews of the dispersion. And at last, having come to Rome, he was crucified head-downwards; for he had requested that he might suffer in this way. (Book 3, 1)
- **"Follow me."** Follow me in service, suffering and death.

JESUS AND JOHN

(20.) Peter turned around and saw behind them the disciple Jesus loved -- the one who had leaned over to Jesus during supper and asked, "Lord, who will betray You?"

- **Peter** turned and saw John **behind** them. John clearly identifies himself to his readers by pointing to a past event.

(21.) Peter asked Jesus, "What about him, Lord?"

- **Peter** wanted to broaden the subject to include the future of John.

(22.) Jesus replied, "If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you? As for you, follow Me."

- **Jesus** was not about to discuss John's future with Peter. It was none of his business. For each of us, our focus needs to be on personally following **Jesus**.

(23.) So the rumor spread among the community of believers that this disciple wouldn't die. But that isn't what Jesus said at all. He only said, "If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you?"

- Some hearers got the wrong message from the Lord. **Jesus** did not say that John would **not die** or that He would return during the lifetime of John.

(24.) This disciple is the one who testifies to these events and has recorded them here. And we know that his account of these things is accurate.

- John again identifies himself as hearing and writing the story correctly.

(25.) Jesus also did many other things. If they were all written down, I suppose the whole world could not contain the books that would be written.

- John recorded just a fraction of what **Jesus did**. The writer had been very selective. Then in magnificent hyperbole, he states that the world could not contain the record of everything **Jesus did**.

WHAT JOHN HAS REPORTED

Chapter:

1. God became Man -- Jesus
1. The presentation of Jesus by John the Baptist
1. The presentation of Jesus to John's Disciples
2. The presentation of Jesus at a Wedding Feast
2. The presentation of Jesus Cleansing the Temple

- 3 The presentation of Jesus to Nicodemus, a leader
- 4 The presentation of Jesus to Samaritans
- 4 Jesus healed an official's son.
5. Jesus healed a man unable to walk -- on the Sabbath.
6. Jesus fed 5,000 plus. They wanted to make Him king.
7. Jesus proclaimed that He would bring the Spirit.
8. Jesus defended the woman taken in adultery.
9. Jesus gave sight to man born blind.
10. Jesus said that He is the Door and the Good Shepherd.
11. Jesus raised Lazarus after decomposition had set in.
12. Jesus was anointed for His Burial.
- 12 Jesus entered Jerusalem as a king.

13. Jesus washed the disciples' feet.
- 13 Jesus gave the commandment to love one another.
14. Jesus comforts His disciples.
15. Jesus taught He was the Vine, disciples were branches.
16. Jesus will send the Spirit when He leaves.
17. Jesus prayed for Himself, disciples and all believers.
18. Jesus was arrested and tried in five courts.
19. Jesus died on a cross and was buried.
20. Jesus came from the tomb and met friends.
21. Jesus showed His men that Peter was forgiven.

MUSIC BOX

Come, let us sing to the LORD! (Psalms 95:1 NLT)

Verse	Link:	Put in Browser:
17	<i>My Jesus I Love Thee</i>	http://bitly.ws/pXYs