



Week 4 – Breakfast

Check-in

How are you? Where have you seen Christ working in your life in the last week? And... since today's Stinger is about Jesus cooking breakfast, what is your favorite breakfast food? Are you an eggs and bacon person? Or maybe you're on Team Waffle? Bonus points... is it okay to eat breakfast for dinner?

Opening Prayer

God of Purpose, remind us of the call you have placed in our lives. Even when it becomes difficult, even when we stray, guide us back to the mission you have for us.

Introduction

Our "post-credits scenes" to the movie of Easter have contained some fun and interesting moments. Mary Magdalene thought Jesus was the gardener. Jesus pulled a little prank on the Emmaus Guys. Thomas was out picking up pizzas while Jesus appeared to the others. (Okay, that's

just speculation... point is, he wasn't there.) But today's "Stinger" contains yet another unique and powerful moment. We'll come back to that. First, let's recap the purpose of this series... movie "Stingers" are scenes at the very end of the film credits designed to pique your interest for the next movie. The next movie after Easter in the Bible is the story of the disciples going out to start the first Christian communities and spread the good news of Jesus Christ. However, if we skip straight there from Jesus's resurrection, we miss some incredible life-changing encounters these followers had with the Risen Christ. If they don't meet Jesus after his resurrection, they don't become the world-changers we know them to be. Embracing their stories can guide us as we ask ourselves the question, "how will encountering the Risen Christ inspire us?"

Review Question: We're halfway through our series on the scenes that take place after the resurrection but before the "next movie." What are your thoughts so far? How have the stories of Mary, the road to Emmaus, and Thomas impacted your life? Have you gained new insight?

Scripture

Our first few "Stingers" took place on the day of Easter. Mary Magdalene's encounter was immediately after they discovered the empty tomb that Sunday morning. Jesus appeared to Cleopas and his traveling companion later that afternoon. And Thomas's absence when Jesus showed up with other disciples was that evening. Jesus finally appeared to Thomas a week later, but that still leaves about 3

weeks before Jesus goes back up into Heaven for good and sends the disciples out to spread the Good News. We have one story that sits somewhere in those 3 weeks. We'll look at half of it today and the other half next week.

Read John, chapter 21, verses 1 to 14.

Pete, Tom, Nate, Jim, John, and two others, probably Andy and Phil... (yes, that list sounds like the lineup of an all-Dad's bowling team called the "Spare Tires,"...) these guys are hanging out together and decide to go fishing. And then, for the third time, Jesus appears to his disciples. There are two key moments in this story: the first is a powerful statement for the future mission of these followers, and the second is a beautiful moment that endears Jesus to them and to us.

Question 1: Discuss this story from Scripture. What stands out to you? If you're in the boat fishing, what are you thinking? Are you Peter, diving out of the boat to swim to shore? Are you John, hauling in the fish? Or are you one of the others, cursing Peter for leaving you to row all by yourself? What catches your attention here?

Reflection

This chapter in John's telling of Jesus's life almost seems like an addendum. Almost as if he finished the rough draft with the story of Thomas, let the other guys proofread it, and they came back with, "dude, you have to tell the story about the fish and the boat and

breakfast.” So, he adds one more “Stinger.” But, we have to be glad he did, because it contains some incredibly powerful moments that teach us so much about the disciples and the impact of Jesus.

First, notice where they are... The Sea of Galilee. Last week, we left them in Jerusalem. It’s a couple days walk from one to the other, so they didn’t just go for the afternoon. They’ve changed location. This is noteworthy, because, for these guys, the towns around the Sea of Galilee were home. This is where they grew up. This is where they met Jesus. This is where they joined the mission and began the ministry three years ago. So, why were they there? Why had they gone home? Well, by trade, these guys originally were fishermen, so it’s not surprising that this is something they would do... except that, they *used* to be fishermen, *now* they were followers of Jesus. So, what are they doing home?

Most likely, they still don’t know what to do next. Sure, they’re excited that Jesus is alive. Sure, they believe he’s now the Messiah, the Son of God, maybe even God on Earth. But, the fact that they’ve gone to their homes suggests they’re still struggling with what this all means for their lives. What do they do with a Risen Christ? They haven’t gotten their instructions yet. And what do you do when you don’t know what to do next? You go back to what you know, and they knew fishin’.

Question 2: When you don’t know what to do next, what do you go back to? What is your “gone home and gone fishing” when your future seems chaotic and uncertain? This can be as surface level as

“I go on a used-book buying spree,” or as deep as, “I push away people who have gotten close to me.” Discuss.

But there’s something powerful in this moment. As the sun begins to rise, having caught nothing all night, a stranger on the shore tells them to lower their nets again. The voice, the scene, the question, all sound vaguely familiar. Unsure but willing, they lower the nets. When they attempt to pull the nets in, they are so weighted with fish they can’t haul them into the boat. At that moment, they freeze. A look of realization crosses their faces. It all becomes clear. It hits them where they know this from. And John turns to Peter, knowing exactly who it is on the shore. And why? Why here? Why now? Why *this* that caused the realization? Because this was the exact same thing that happened when they met Jesus three years ago for the first time. Everything has come full circle. This is where it all started. It’s a beautiful scene of symmetry that, at the end of John’s gospel, we’re right back here where it all began.

Three years earlier, Jesus had asked to borrow Peter and Andrew’s boat. They’d caught nothing all night. (Sound familiar?) So, he tells them to lower their nets again. (Also, sound familiar?) And when they do, the nets are so full, they can’t haul them in. (Again, sound familiar? Yes, to all.) They fall at Jesus’s feet and he tells them, “come, follow me. From now on, you will fish for people.” (Matthew 4:19) Fast forward to today’s “Stinger.” These words must have been ringing in Peter’s ears when he dove into the water. This powerful sentence must have come flooding back to John’s heart as he rowed

back to shore. “From now on, you will fish for people.” They’d been wondering what to do next. This scene was Jesus’s way of reminding them of their call... the one he gave them three years ago, and the one they would be fulfilling quiet soon.

Question 3: Time to talk about purpose. This is a much bigger question than we can fully explore today, (in fact, we’ve done entire series on this topic. If you need to, go back and review our series called, “This.”) However, today can be a good reminder, just as this scene was for the disciples. Do you feel you are living the call that Jesus has placed on your life? Are you fulfilling what he has asked you to do, or are you out on a boat fishing? Nothing against fishing, a little “R ‘n’ R” is a good thing... just don’t use it as an excuse for not living into what Jesus has in mind for your life.

Closing

Today’s “Stinger” closes with a beautiful moment Jesus has with his followers, (and Pastor Mike’s favorite scene in the entire New Testament.) When they arrive at the shore, Jesus is there, cookin’ breakfast. The King of Kings, Prince of Peace, Messiah, Immanuel, God-with-Us... cookin’ breakfast. He gives them some bread and fish, and they eat. It’s a perfect scene of our Savior, our God, doing the most normal of human activities with the people he loved the most. Soon, they would find out what exactly their call to “fish for people” would entail, and it would be difficult. Soon, they would embark on a mission to tell others of the love and grace of Jesus Christ ultimately changing

the world. Soon, they would be persecuted and even killed for their commitment and obedience. But for now, they are sitting with their friend, their teacher, their loved one... eating breakfast. For us today, as you are reminded of the purpose God has for your life, take comfort in the fact that we have a God who goes with us. We have a Creator who knows us. We have a Savior who gets even the most basic things we go through. We have a Jesus who will sit on a beach and cook us breakfast.

Take some time to share prayer requests or celebrations.

Close in prayer.