



GONE FISHING
John 21:1-19
Bushawn Carpenter
April 12, 2026

I. Intro

A. Text: **John 21:1-8**

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. 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. 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." 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. (John 21:1-8)

B. The Aftermath

1. After Jesus' resurrection, the ladies (Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, Salome, Joanna, and other women) sent word to the disciples to meet Jesus in Galilee. (**Matt. 28:10**)
 - a. Disciples left Jerusalem, where Jesus was murdered, and returned to Galilee.
2. The problem is that they just saw their Deliverer, brutally (and publicly) executed.
3. So back to Galilee they went (as Jesus instructed through the women).
 - a. But dare I say that they were still experiencing fear, confusion, anxiety?

*19 On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the **doors being locked** where the disciples were **for fear of the Jews**, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." 20 When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. (Jn. 20:19-20)*

- b. The disciples were completely out of their comfort zone.
 - c. They were left comparing Jesus' prophetic declarations with their own human expectations.
4. But Jesus showed up... on a Sunday morning.
- a. Even though they had placed themselves behind self-imposed locked doors, Jesus still got in.
 - b. They locked their own selves in, hoping to gain some safety from an uncertain world, only for Jesus to show up.
 - c. Jesus showed up to bring them peace on the inside.

*Even though Jesus had proved that He was who He said He was, and He did what He said He'd do, the disciples went through a season of internal struggle.

II. Body

A. False Security In Going Back

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. 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. (Jn. 21:1-3)

- 1. Peter, Andrew, James, and John were in this same place 3 ½ years earlier when Jesus stopped by and called them unto themselves.
 - a. "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men" (**Matt. 4:18-19**)
- 2. For 3 years, they followed Jesus all over Israel, preaching the gospel of the Kingdom.
 - a. Healing the sick, casting out devils, and seeing the dead raised back to life.

-
- b. Feeding thousands with two loaves and two fish.
 - c. Learning at the feet of the Lord Himself.
 3. But after experiencing everything that was right in their time with Jesus, it seemed like only the worst followed.
 - a. He was murdered before their own eyes.
 - b. They all forsook Him and left him to answer for himself.
 4. Although they walked with Jesus, they now found themselves in the most challenging, painful time they could imagine.
 - a. Human expectations: They assumed it would be all good from here.
 5. Ultimately, they decided to go back to the same place they had been called out of.
 6. Peter said, "I'm going fishing."
 - a. I'm going back to what I was doing before I met the Lord Jesus.
 7. Peter said, "I'm going fishing". And all the disciples went back fishing, too!

B. Faithfulness Of The Savior Who Calls Us Forward

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." (Jn. 21:4-5)

1. They went back to the same place, doing the same thing they were doing when they met Jesus.
 - a. Went back to what made them feel safe.
 - b. Made them feel like something.
2. The one thing they felt comfortable doing... And it didn't work!
 - a. That's the mercy of God.
3. Just when it couldn't be more disappointing, Jesus showed up.
 - a. Imagine going to the place of your own self-comfort.
 - b. None of that can stop Jesus from loving you.
4. Jesus showed up... for His lost sheep (coin, sons).

-
- a. When He got there, He asked a simple question, “Do you have any fish”?
 - b. They toiled all night at what they thought they were experts at.
 - i. Results: Nothing!
 - ii. Professional fisherman... Nothing

5 Jesus said to them, "Children, do you have any fish?" They answered him, "No."

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. (Jn. 21:4-6)

5. Cast the net on the right side of the boat: More fish than they could handle.
 - a. This was an absolute miracle!
 - b. Demonstrates the Authority of Jesus!
6. As Jesus spoke from the shore, the disciples didn't recognize His figure (from the distance).

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. (Jn. 21:7)

- a. As His voice carried across the waters, they didn't even recognize His voice.
7. But when those fish jumped in that net, John immediately recognized that this was the Lord.
 - a. When John recognized the authority connected to the voice, “It must be the Lord”
 - b. The success of the task they were failing at, was not a change in technique, but a change in obedience.
 - c. “The difference wasn't the side of the boat—it was the voice on the shore.”

8. Resurrected Jesus Was Still in a Human Body

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. 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. (Jn. 21:8-14)

- a. Jesus had the barbecue already going.
- b. Jesus sat down and had breakfast with them.
 - i. Revealed His identity by His authority.

III. Conclusion:

A. **Question of Love (Jn. 21:15-19)**

- 1. The disciples heard Jesus' voice.
 - a. They've eaten at His fire.
 - b. Now Jesus Christ turns to Peter...
- 2. Jesus only asks one question: **"Do you love Me?"**
 - a. **Three times.**
 - b. He asks: **"Do you love Me?"**

B. You might be able to relate to Peter and the Disciples

- 1. **False Security of Going Back** → didn't fix Peter
- 2. **The Savior Who Calls Us Forward** → Found Peter at His low.
 - a. Brought Peter to this moment
- 3. Ask the question
 - a. Not: "Where have you been?"
 - b. But: "Where is your heart?"
- 4. Do you love Jesus?