

Westside Fellowship Sermon Transcript

Sermon Title: **“I Am Going Fishing”**

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Text: John 21:1-14

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On November 8th, 1847 Sir James Young Simpson, a renowned Scottish physician, he made history in Edinburgh with his first successful use of chloroform as an anesthetic.

All right, this was a revolutionary discovery in medicine that helped pave the way for modern practices in anesthesia for pain management in surgery and in childbirth. However, years later, when an interviewer once asked the great doctor and pioneer, "What do you consider to be the most outstanding discovery that you have ever made?"

Dr. Simpson simply replied without hesitation, "The greatest discovery that I have ever made in my scientific career is that Jesus Christ is Lord, and that He is my savior." He said, "That is by far the most important thing a person can ever come to know." Amen? Amen. Look, how many of you can agree with that truth this morning?

I pray that each and every one of us can and will agree with that truth this morning. In fact, if you are here, and you do not know Jesus Christ as your Lord and as your personal savior, as we have been singing about, as we have been praying about as the general tone of conversation has been about all morning, I pray that before you leave here this morning that your heart will be so stirred by the Word of God and by the Spirit of God that you will come to see with undeniable clarity that Jesus is Lord, and that you would be so willing as to trust Him as your savior this morning.

Look, if you have your Bibles with you, I'd like to invite you to open with me to John chapter 21. All right, open to John chapter 21. This morning we're continuing our series entitled 50 Days That Changed the World. All right, in this series, we are looking at a time in Jesus's life that is often overlooked.

We're looking at the 40 days that Jesus spent on Earth after the resurrection. Now, the question is why is it called 50 Days That Changed the World? Because as we will see, Jesus spent 40 days on Earth, and then there was a period of 10 days whereby He instructed the disciples to just stay in Jerusalem until the Holy Spirit, the, until the new covenant ministry of the Holy Spirit would begin, and the church would emerge, and boy, did things change at that point.

These were 50 days that truly did change the world. Last week, Pastor Grant walked with us through the end of John chapter 20, where Jesus appeared for the second time to the group of disciples, but this was the first time that Thomas witnessed the resurrected Christ. All right? We saw that this happened eight days following the resurrection, and together they shared in seeing Thomas proclaim his excitement over the greatest discovery ever made, that Jesus is Lord.

We saw Thomas just proclaim and exclaim- My God and my Lord, as he witnessed the resurrected Christ, an eyewitness to the resurrection of Jesus Christ. This morning, as we turn again to the fourth Gospel, we're gonna look at John 21. And at first glance, for those of you who have read through the Gospel of John before it almost appears as if this chapter just doesn't fit.

And, sometimes we read through this chapter, and we have to ask ourselves what is this doing in the Bible? How is it that, that John is going to write some of the details that we're gonna read about here in John 21 after this big climactic conclusion to Thomas proclaiming that Jesus is Lord.

And then John giving us this evidence at the end of chapter 20 that, that Jesus did many other signs in the presence... in, in the presence of the disciples which are not written in this book. He says but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ." And then we get to John 21, and we're gonna see that as we walk through John 21 that there are a few more questions that apparently were left unanswered throughout the Gospel of John.

And so John provides us this epilogue, right? An epilogue to a wonderful gospel letter so that we can begin to answer some of the questions in our mind that, that may have been left unanswered as we read through the gospel. Questions such as, now that Jesus is alive and resurrected, what happens to this relationship between the disciples and Jesus?

What does this mean for them i- in their walk and the rest of their life? Questions like what about Peter? The last time we saw Peter, he was denying Jesus right before the crucifixion. Now, we know that Peter saw Jesus on Resurrection Sunday, and we can totally see that, that perhaps it was at that moment that these forgiveness conversations took place because Peter is in the room with the disciples when Jesus comes the first time and then eight days later when Thomas is there.

But still what about Peter? Is there gonna be a time in which Peter is recommissioned and kinda placed back into this role of charging ahead and leading the church, so to speak? Because he was this leader of the 12. We have these questions such as, what are we going to do with the fact that, yes, now we know that Jesus is alive, but what does that mean for the life of the disciples?

And so John gives us this epilogue So let's jump and l- jump in and let's look at verse one. It says, "After this, Jesus revealed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias." All right, that's the Sea of Galilee. All right? It's another name for the Sea of Galilee. "And he revealed himself in this way: Simon Peter, Thomas called the Twin, Nathaniel of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples were together.

Simon Peter said to them, 'I'm going fishing.' They said to him, 'We'll go with you.' They went out and got into the boat. But that night they caught nothing." All right, let's start by, by looking at this kinda transition introduction here with the words after this. All right John brings us into this epilogue almost as if, for anyone who's ever watched the Marvel movies that, that have told the story of what's gonna happen with the Avengers and everything, there's always this cut scene after the credits have rolled whereby there's one extra little scene that kinda flashes in to let you know, hey, there's another movie coming out.

So everyone wants to stay in the theater and watch all the credits roll through so you can see what is this cut scene going to show us? What do we have to look forward to? Whether it's some type of struggle, or whether it's some type of excitement. I believe that's kinda how this is functioning in the Book of John.

We saw in John 1 this prologue of, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." And we see that Jesus is God, and now we see this epilogue. He tells this narrative of the life and ministry of Jesus. And now

after we see that Jesus is in fact Lord, we see this little cut scene after the credits of, okay, but now what happens in the life of the disciples before the new covenant ministry of the Holy Spirit begins?

Ah, that's very interesting. And so John is telling us after this. All right, how much time has passed since the last time we were with them in John chapter 20? We really don't know. But I would say perhaps it's been a week or so, maybe a couple of weeks. It's not been more than 40 days certainly, because Jesus was only on Earth for 40 days.

But it's been a little bit of time. Verse 14 is gonna tell us that this is the third encounter that this group of disciples has seen the resurrected Christ. But just to understand in context as we pick up in this narrative, what we're gonna see is this after this moment. And we pick up and we find seven of the disciples together by the Sea of Galilee.

All right? And we actually see their names. It's Simon Peter. It's Thomas, called the Twin. It's Nathanael of Cana in Galilee. The sons of Zebedee. All right, who are they? James and John. All right, so we know it's James and John, the sons of Zebedee, and then two others. Personally, I think the two others are Philip and Andrew.

Why do I think it's Philip and Andrew? Because those six, Peter- Peter, Nathaniel, James, John, Philip, Andrew. That was the original band of brothers that set out and started with Jesus. When you go back to John chapter one, you see that. That's that original six that Jesus called. Most of them were fishermen.

At least four of them were definitely fishermen, James, John, Peter, and Andrew. They were professional fishermen. But then very quickly you see that Philip and Nathaniel join the crew, and here they begin walking with Jesus and following Jesus. What's Thomas doing there then? I believe that the last time that Thomas wasn't with these guys, something really cool happened, and Thomas isn't gonna miss out.

He's gonna be with them from here on out. He's gonna be sure he does not miss whatever cool is gonna happen. And so here you have Thomas with them. All right. Now We have to kinda get an understanding for what really is at stake. All

right? It's not really surprising to find these guys in Galilee.

Why? Because they're from Galilee. All right? These men were from Galilee. It's not really surprising to find them by the Sea of Galilee. Why? Because they were professional fishermen. It's not really surprising to see that they go fishing. Why? Once again, they were fishermen. What is surprising is that they are in Galilee by the Sea of Galilee fishing at this time in history.

Let me explain to you what I mean by that. If we were to back up and look in Matthew 28 and we're not gonna put the text on the screen for that. You can jot that down in the margins. If you were to go back and look in Matthew 28, you're gonna find something really interesting. You're gonna find that when the women went to the tomb and saw that Jesus...

i'm sorry, saw that the tomb was empty. All right, let's start there. When they saw that the tomb was empty, an angel told them, "The Lord is risen. He is alive." And then he tells the women, "Go and tell the disciples that He has risen and that He is going ahead of them to Galilee." Oh, very interesting. All right?

Then when those same women are encountered by Jesus on Resurrection Sunday, they worship the Lord, and Jesus tells them in Matthew 28:9-10, He says, "Go and tell the disciples, my disciples, that I am going to meet them in Galilee." And then when you jump ahead to the end of Matthew 28, that the disciples are gathered there at the mountain to which Jesus had directed them to go.

All right, so we begin to put together what's going on at this time in history. Jesus has got plans to meet His disciples, I believe, as we'll talk about in a couple of weeks I believe it's even more, possibly even more than the 11. It's possibly just the full number of disciples that were following Jesus that were instructed by these women, "Hey, go to Galilee.

Go to Galilee. Jesus is gonna meet you there. He's gonna meet you there." And then we see that in, in verse 16 in Matthew 28 that, that Jesus instructed them to go to a mountain in Galilee and wait for Him until He is to come meet them there. All right, so begin to put the context into play here. Jesus instructed the disciples to go to Galilee to a mountain to wait on Him.

These guys are in Galilee- But they're not on a mountain waiting on Jesus. They're by the sea fishing. Ooh. Now we begin to see the conflict. Are you following me here? At first glance, we look at this and we try to fit all this together as well what is this doing here in John 21? I believe that we're getting a snapshot into the life, into the struggle, into the inner struggle that these guys are facing as to what does it look like to follow Jesus now that he's been crucified and is resurrected. See, all of this time they've been spending following Jesus, but Jesus has been right there with them.

Don't forget that. Jesus has been walking with them. Jesus has been leading them. Sure, there were times that Jesus sent them out two by two to go do some stuff, but they would all come back to home base, and they would follow up. They would get more marching orders, and they would go out. But now that Jesus has been crucified, and yes, I don't doubt for a moment that they believe that He's alive, 'cause they've seen Him.

They've seen Him twice already. I don't believe that this is a moment of doubt as to whether or not Jesus is alive. No. I think perhaps what we are seeing is a snapshot of a group of people who know that Jesus is the Lord, that know that He is alive, but they're struggling and they're wrestling with okay then, what now?

Okay, Jesus is alive. Jesus is God. Jesus is Lord. What next? What do we do?" And Jesus has instructed them go to this mountain and wait." And so w- we see this, that i- in verse three, Simon Peter... All right, Simon Peter's the one, he says, "I'm going fishing." And they say, the other six with him, "Okay, we'll go with you."

Now, at first glance, we might look at this and we see that the Simon Peter says, "I'm going fishing." And we might look at this and say what's the big deal about fishing? Why does this really matter so much?" So you got seven guys and they're going fishing. Okay, welcome to life in the country. That sounds great.

What a great way to spend time. See, there's a little bit more to it than that, and here's why. See, the way that, that John records these words of Peter here in saying, "I'm going fishing," and he records them using Greek words that suggest that Peter is saying that he is moving to do something to which there's no end in sight.

L- Let me say it another way. It's almost as if Peter is wrestling with the question, "Okay, what now?" And it's almost as if he said I don't know about y'all, but I'm going back to fishing." Oh. See, remember Peter was a professional fisherman. It's what he knew. It's what was comfortable. It's what was familiar to him.

It's what he was good at. It's what he was confident in doing And Bible scholars are divided. They're torn. A lot of ink has been spilled over what does Peter really mean? Some say that he's willfully and deliberately turned away from Jesus and running back to his former life.

Others suggest, no, he's just trying to pass time and he's just hungry. To be quite honest I think it's right in the middle there. And here's what I mean by that. I don't... I'm not necessarily convinced personally. I'm not convinced that a man who has seen the resurrected Christ is saying, "Oh, forget him.

I'm walking away." I'm not convinced that's the case. But I also am not convinced that he's just hungry and trying to go get some fish, I think and this is my assessment, all right? And I will be clear about that. I think that what's most likely at stake is that in the midst of everything going on, Jesus has commanded these guys, has instructed all of his disciples to, to go to a mountain in Galilee and just wait to meet him there.

Now, you gotta remember, Peter was no stranger to Galilee. There are people who know him there. So you imagine there are people who've seen him walking with Jesus there. What are people saying? Have you ever wondered that? What's the stress? What's the scrutiny that he's under?

I wonder the doubt that begins to come into his mind. Not doubt in terms of, is Jesus alive? But the doubt in terms of Man, can I really do what Jesus has called me to do? I wonder the insecurity that he begins to wrestle with in this time as he's just sitting there waiting, by the way. We don't know how many days he's been waiting.

He's waiting for Jesus to come and meet him there, and I wonder if he begins to wrestle with this kinda uncertainty an- and this kind of insecurity about- about, Jesus has called him to be a fisher of men, but he doesn't really know how to do that, and he doesn't really know what that means.

And really, he's way more comfortable with just fishing for fish because that's what he did for the majority of his life. And yeah, now, it ... Praise God that we see that Jesus is alive, but what's next for my life? Guys, I think I'm gonna go back to fishing. That's what I know. And so I think that's where we see Peter.

I ... Once again, I don't think that he's just that he's just running away from Jesus. I think he's going back to what's familiar. How many of us have ever been in a situation whereby God was leading us into one kind of ministry, but we got a little bit scared and just went right back into what felt familiar?

Can you relate to that? And that's why I believe that's where Peter is, because he's a guy just like us And so we pick up here. And once again, as a theological sidestep the New Covenant ministry of the Holy Spirit has not begun yet. Can we please remember that? All right, something happens in Peter a few days later and that dude turns the world upside down, and that's the Holy Spirit.

But Peter says, "I'm going fishing." And so they went out and they got into the boat. Another reason why I think that Peter's gone back to fishing is because it doesn't say that, that he got into a boat. There is a definite article there in the original language in the Greek. He got into the boat. It is a specific boat.

It is a boat they were familiar with. It is a boat that they spent some time in. You wanna know what boat I think it was? I think it's his old fishing boat. I think Peter said, "I'm going back to fishing," and they got into the boat to go fishing, right? But that night they caught nothing There are two kinds of people who fish, fishermen and catchermen

I know some people at this church who are fishermen. You love to fish. I am a catcherman. I love to catch. About a half an hour on the boat and there's not been a catch, I'm going to Freddy's

These guys were fishermen, all right? They were fishermen. And for those of you who are fishermen, perhaps you can relate with the truth that there is nothing more frustrating than spending all night on the lake fishing to catch nothing. You see what I'm saying? To catch nothing. All of their hard work, all of their toil, all came up empty, and the only thing they had to show for their expedition was an empty net.

Nothing Verse four, "Just as day was breaking, Jesus stood on the shore, yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to them, 'Children, do you have any fish?' They answered him, 'No.'

The only thing more frustrating about spending all night on the lake fishing to catch nothing is to have some guy on the bank holler out his opinion, "Hey, boys, don't look like y'all caught anything, did you?"

Can you begin to see where these guys are in the boat? I imagine they're a little tired. I imagine they're a little exhausted. I imagine they're a little frustrated at this point because they are professional fishermen and they've caught nothing. This is what they do. This is their realm of confidence, and they came up empty.

And moreover, as the sun's beginning to, to peek over the horizon, some wise guy standing on the banks gotta rub it in They don't know this is Jesus. Why? I think because it's still dark outside. There's a lot of speculation as to because Jesus appeared in a different... maybe. But guys if I'm stand- They're 100 yards away.

If I'm standing on one end of a football field and you're standing on the other end of the football field and it's dark outside, I don't know who you are either. You with me here? It's dark outside. They don't know it's Jesus. And Jesus said to them, "Children." I think this could be rendered, "Hey, guys.

Hey, guys, do you have any fish?" But I think something else that, that we need to pay attention to is once again, the way that John uses the Greek here, there's actually a negative phrasing to this question, do you have any fish? It's not rendered such in our English translations. Our English just simply a- gives us this question, approaches this question as if it's just some innocent interrogation of, "Guys, do you have any fish?"

No. The way that John uses the Greek language inserts a negative whereby it, it's more literally translated, "Hey, guys, you don't have any fish, do you?" Do you see the difference there? It's not so much a, "Children, have you any fish?" It's a, "Hey guys, you don't have any fish, do you?" And now that changes things again.

That adds to this level of frustration, this level of annoyance. I only begin- I wish that I could have been a fly on the side of the boat to hear some of the mumbling

that took place after that. "Can you believe that guy?"

Add to that, once again, the only thing more annoying than having someone tell you that you didn't catch fish is to then have that same person offer you fishing advice. My father-in-law

is a fishing expert

And he tells everybody that. And we will be on Lake Cammack fishing, and we enjoy it. And he takes us where we catch fish. But the moment that another boat rides by, his first question is what? "Hey guys, you caught anything?" And if their answer is a few," he proceeds to say let me tell you where to go to learn how to catch fish."

And you can hear those guys, they just begin to throw a little bit of that throttle in quick, and they speed on by But see, that's where the disciples are. But see, before we, we get to the fishing advice here, I want us to recognize that after Jesus asked them this question, "You don't have any fish, do you?"

They answered him, "No." How embarrassing that must have been. Had to be pretty humiliating, honestly, i- if you really think about that. A group of professional fishermen on the water that they're very familiar with. They know every square inch of this lake. They've been up and down. They know every cove.

They know where the best spots are to go. Spent all night, and they have to admit readily that their efforts were futile. They have to admit readily that they set out to do what they're confident in doing, what they're good at, and they came up empty They've gotta say, "No. No we didn't catch any fish."

Isn't it amazing how the Lord is so skilled at asking the perfect question at the perfect time? Now granted I don't believe this question was asked for Jesus' benefit. I think Jesus knew they didn't have any fish. I think this question is kinda like when the Lord asked Adam, "Hey, where are you?"

Or perhaps when he asked Eve, "What is this that you've done?" Or maybe when he asked Cain, "Hey, where's Abel your brother?" It's not that Jesus is asking the question 'cause he really wants to know if they caught fish or not. He's asking them the questions so that they'll come face to face with the fact that when they

set out to do something under their own direction and in their own wisdom and in their own strength and in their own confidence, they came up empty

He's asking them this question so that they come face to face honestly with the fact that they failed at what they set out to do

And he said to them, verse six, "Cast the net on the right side of the boat and you'll find some." So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in because the quantity of fish. Verse seven, That disciple whom Jesus loved therefore said to Peter, "It's the Lord." And 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.

The other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, but about 100 yards off.

Even though these seven did not recognize that this was Jesus on the bank, the simple authority in his command stirred within them a willingness to heed his advice. Maybe they were grumbling while they did it. He told me to throw the net on the right side of the boat. You think I've been out here all night and hadn't thrown the net on the right side of the boat?

You think that eight feet's gonna really make a difference? There are no fish on the left side, and I throw it on the right s- What is this guy telling me, throw the n- right side of the boat?" You can hear that? But nevertheless they heeded the advice. They tossed the net off the right side of the boat, and 153, we're gonna see that in a moment, 153 fish said, gathered up into the net.

And the net was more than they could drag into the boat

I bet that at this point, John, when he turns to Peter and says, "It's the Lord," I wonder if he's remembering that one time when they were kinda in the same spot on the Sea of Galilee that we see recorded in Luke chapter five, when something very similar took place. It was right at the beginning of this three-year ministry when they were hanging out, spending time together and Jesus is teaching the crowds and these guys had been out all night toiling and had come up empty and didn't catch any fish.

And so then Jesus comes up to Simon Peter, and he says, "Hey why don't you, why don't you put out and set the nets back in the water again?" And I imagine that Peter at that time in his life is thinking, "Do you know anything about fishing? You know that the best time to catch fish here in the Sea of Galilee is during the nighttime."

There's a reason we went fishing at night, and now it's daytime, and you're telling me to put the net back in the water. What are you thinking?" But nevertheless, Peter does it, and guess what happens at that time? It's filled with so many fish that when they pull it in, the nets start breaking, and the boat starts sinking, and Peter runs off the boat, and he falls down at Jesus' feet.

He says, "My Lord, depart from me. I'm an unworthy man." I wonder if John is thinking about that time in their life when these fish start swarming into the nets, and they start pulling the nets up. A- and all of a sudden, it hits John, and he can't necessarily see who it is on the bank because it's kinda dark, and they're 100 yards off, but it hits him.

He says, "Guys, it's the Lord." And Peter, without hesitation, he throws on his outer garment, and he dives in the water, and he's swimming as hard as he can 100 yards. What a swim. To get to the Lord, he doesn't care if those other guys are gonna have to struggle getting the fish in the boat and bringing that boat to land.

Such a Peter thing to do

But he throws himself in the water and he swims in. He just wants to be with the Lord. This is another reason why I don't necessarily believe that Peter's decision to go fishing is just some great apostasy where he's saying, "Ah, forget this." No. No. I do think he chose to go back to his old life but I think there's just more to it than that.

Because as soon as he sees that this is the Lord, man, he's in the water and he's swimming. He's getting there as fast as he can. What's the lesson here? Is the lesson that these guys were just fishing on the wrong side of the boat? Is the lesson that, move the net eight feet over and now you'll find fish?

No. The lesson here is that when the disciples are trying to do things in their own strength, according to their own wisdom and their own timing, according to what's familiar and comfortable to them with what makes them feel confident, they came up empty. But when they followed the direction and the leading of the Lord according to His will, according to His time, and doing things His way, they were far more productive and fruitful and successful than they could have ever imagined.

'Cause that's the lesson. It's in about the fish. It's about trusting in and following Jesus.

And so we continue on. Verse nine, when they got out on land, all right, they've brought the boat to land, they've got out of the boat, they saw a charcoal fire in place with fish laid out on it and bread. Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish that you just caught." So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, all right, this is, this verse 11, full of large fish, 153 of them.

And although there were so many, the net was not torn. Verse 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. Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and so with the fish. Verse 14 says, this was now the third time that Jesus was revealed to the disciples after he was raised from the dead.

When the disciples arrived back on land, they found Jesus already had a fire going. He already had fish on it. He already had bread ready. Guys, Jesus made breakfast. I want you to embrace that for a second. They got back to shore and Jesus had breakfast ready and waiting on them. There's some people who might ask, "Where did Jesus get the fish?"

It's not the point. "Where did Jesus get the bread?" That's, it's not the point. You know how Jesus makes breakfast? Breakfast.

The point's not where Jesus got the fish. The point's not where Jesus got the bread. In fact, if you remember, during his earthly ministry, Jesus did some really cool things with bread and fish by the Sea of Galilee before. I remember that one, right? He had just a little bit of fish and a little bit of bread, and he wound up feeding over 5,000 people.

It's pretty amazing The point of the passage is not to look at... The point of the passage is not to look at where Jesus got the fish. The point is to help us see that even after the crucifixion, and even after the resurrection, Jesus is still able and willing to care for and provide everything that his disciples need in their life and in their daily ministry

Just as he was able to provide for them while he was right there with them, walking with them You have to wonder if part of their questions that they were asking themselves as to why they went back fishing, perhaps one of the questions was, "Okay, Jesus has called us to follow him, but now that he's not with us, what does that look like?

Can he still provide for us even though he's not here?" And John 21 gives us a resounding yes and amen. Yes, he can provide for you even though he's not walking right beside you. Because remember, he told these same guys in the upper room the night before he was to be crucified, "It's better that I go away because then I'm gonna send a helper to be in you."

In other words it's better that, that the Spirit of God is living in you than it is to have the Son of God walking right beside you. But now understand, in this timeline, the new covenant ministry of the Holy Spirit's not yet begun. Don't forget that. That's an important detail. That's not gonna begin until Acts chapter 2 And so am I mad at Peter and John and James and these guys?

Am I mad at them for figuring out the only thing that they had left to do was just go back to fishing? No, I'm not mad at them for that. In fact, that's what I expect of them. You wanna know why? 'Cause I would've done the same thing Because I do the same thing

Because I have these moments from time to time in my life, these great mountaintop experiences where I know without a shadow of a doubt that Jesus is alive and well. And man it's like I can look at, I can look at his faithfulness laid out all throughout my life, and I just want to fall on my knees and worship him.

And then I have days when I wake up and wonder, "What in the world am I doing pastoring a local church? Why am I here? Why is it that God would ask me to do this? I'm not the guy for this. There's so many people way more qualified than me, way better at this. You know what I wanna do? Sometimes I just wanna go

back to playing music, 'cause that's what I'm good at."

That's not a cocky thing. That's just what I'm confident in. That's the tools that, that I used for a long time to make my living. Life would be so much easier if I just grabbed my guitar and went out and just played music. I don't even have to think about playing. You tell me what song you wanna hear, great, let's do it

But that's not where Jesus has called me at this time in history. You know what He's called me to do? Pastor Westside Fellowship. And the times in my life that I set out to pastor Westside Fellowship in my own strength, and in my own timing, and under my own direction, and at the pace in which I think it needs to go, and doing all the things that I wanna see happen, guess what ca- well, guess what happens?

I pull up empty nets. I work myself silly. I work myself to the bone. I toil all night long, and the only thing I have is some guy standing on the side of the shore saying, "Hey, you didn't catch anything, did you?" And I have to say, "No. No, I didn't." But then there have been times when I've done things His way, when I followed His direction, when I've waited on His timing, when I've walked in His will

And without any effort on my part, you start pulling up the net, and what I found is 153 fish came overflowing into the boat. And it's "What is this? What is this, Lord?"

That's the point of John 21. That's what John 21 is doing here. That's that epilogue after the Gospel of John, where a lot of us are left asking this question, what is this doing here? This chapter doesn't seem to make sense. We see that Jesus is alive, that he is the resurrected Lord. Yeah, but there's still a question.

What now? And the question that John is answering for us, and the answer that we see, the what now, is I am to follow Jesus every single day and wait on him and depend on him and abide in him in everything. Allow him to lead. And leave the results up to Him

And that's what we're all called to do. Now, I gave the example of me and my life pastoring this local church, but fill yourself in that blank. In your job, in your family. What is it that you're good at? What is it that you're comfortable with?

What is it that's familiar to you? What is it that, that continues to call in your mind every time that, that you doubt whether or not the, that the Lord has you where He needs you right now?

Every time that you begin to doubt what He's called you into and feel insecure and uncertain about what you're doing what is that thing that you think, "Man I need to just go back to doing this. Life was just easy at that point. I didn't have to think about anything. This is just what I'm good at.

It's what I'm confident at doing."

How do you see yourself leaning into those old habits even now?

And what is it that, that Jesus is asking you to do right now this morning?

There are three things from this text that I take, that I observe from this text that I believe that Jesus is calling all of us to see, calling all of us into The first of those is that as disciples of Jesus, we must learn to wait for Him

We gotta learn to wait on Him. Guys, I don't like waiting any more than the next guy does But I will promise you this If you will wait on Jesus The fruitfulness of the ministry that he is calling you into will be so full and abundant. But if you go at this thing on your own and in your own strength and in your own wisdom and in your own way, you're gonna pull up empty nets And don't be surprised if you come to me saying, "Oh, Jacob, my life is falling apart 'cause I've done this and this and this and this and this," and I look at you and say, "What did you expect?"

We must learn to wait on Him. We must learn to walk in His ways. The second thing we must learn as disciples of Jesus is we must learn to depend on Him All right? Not only did the seven disciples move according to their own direction ahead of Jesus' timetable, but they also slipped right back in to what made them feel comfortable.

They slipped right back in to their own self-reliance, their own self-dependence. What are they good at? They went back to fishing because it was what's familiar. But they didn't need more self-confidence. They needed to depend on Jesus They needed to be stripped actually of their self-reliance, stripped of their self-

confidence They needed to rest wholly on His care, on His provision, trusting that He would serve them exactly as He said He would provide for them.

I think it's fascinating that the Son of God served them breakfast

What are the areas in your life where you find that you struggle the most with depending on Jesus?

Would you allow him to strip you of that self-reliance this morning?

Third, we see in this text that as disciples of Jesus, we must learn to abide in Him

Throughout the Gospels, Jesus consistently invites people to come and be

And most of the time when we read the text, we underline all the verses that say, "Go and do."

But see, the problem is if we try to go and do before we come and be, all of our going and doing's gonna pull up empty nets. But first we must come and be, and then go and do, and leave the results up to Jesus

I feel that Jesus said that really well in John 15:5 when he said, "I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit. For apart from me you can do..." How much? Nothing. Empty nets every time

When you look throughout the Gospels, multiple invitations. Invitations that Jesus extends to each one of us. In John 1, the invitation is come and see. Come and see what the Son of God is doing, who He is

In John 7 and in John 4, it's come and drink. Come and drink from the well of living water. You'll never thirst again In Matthew 11, it's come and rest. All you who are weary and heavy laden come and rest. In Matthew 11 again, it's come and learn. Learn from me. Take my yoke upon you. Come, learn. But here in John 21, it's come and eat breakfast.

And I love that. I do love breakfast. But more than that, I love this invitation of Jesus. Just come and eat breakfast. Come and dine with me. Come and fellowship

with me. Come and be with me These seven guys were out working themselves tirelessly. When Jesus had instructed them to just go to the mountain and wait, they had to just go start doing a bunch of stuff.

And Jesus shows up and he says, "Guys, just come and eat breakfast." And then we'll go out and we'll do what I want you to do, my way and my time and under my direction

Amen

And we can trust that God's direction is always accompanied by His provision, because that's what we see right here in John 21

How many of us this morning need to commit? Let me rephrase that. How many of us need to respond to the invitation to just come and eat breakfast

Where does that begin? First, it begins to how many of us need to respond to the invitation that Jesus is Lord, that He has died on a cross in our place and risen from the dead, that there is life in His name. Amen.

But for those of us who have made that profession of faith, how many of us need, this morning need to be just reminded that there's an invitation out there for us to just come and eat breakfast? Come and be And then go and do Spend time in His Word, spend time in prayer. Allow Jesus to make clear the way He desires for you to go.

And at that point, all we have to do is walk and leave the rest up to Him

As the band's coming forward, let's pray. Heavenly Father, God, thank you. Lord, thanks for your graciousness thank you so much for the invitation that we see that all we have to do is just come. Just come and be

Lord we don't have to work for our salvation. You've already accomplished that. We just have to, we just have to come and see that you're the one who's done it, and trust that the work that you've done is that's just good enough for us too Lord, in our life, in the midst of the hustle and bustle and the busyness, the distractions of our schedules that keep us toiling and working away all hours of the night to find that our efforts are futile and that we brought up empty nets

Lord, would you help us to respond to the invitation to just come and eat breakfast with you, to dine with you, to fellowship with you Lord, you are the vine and we are the branches, and apart from you, we can do nothing So Lord, you're asking us to just abide

Lord, and so my prayer this morning for each of us at Westside is that we will learn more and more each day what it means to depend on you.

Lord, how we can depend on you in our prayer life, in our Bible study time More than that, in addition to that, how we can depend on you at work, in our marriages, at school, in the community, sports practices

Lord, how can we just depend on you?

And God forgive us of our efforts of seeking to do things on our own, in our own time, and under our own direction. And Lord, help us to lean into the truth that we can rest in you, and that we can do things your way, and that we can trust you with the outcomes. Oh God, we love you and we praise you, and in Jesus' name, amen.