

Have you ever wondered why God made us so that we have to eat?

It is a blessing. Things are tasty.

But the big reason is this; so that He can feed us. It is one more way of learning that we need Him.

And we will need Him forever, to care for us, to provide for us, for everything.

The risen Jesus shows His disciples that He knows them.

Jesus knows them. He cares about them. He is serving them. He is teaching them.

This never stops. It never stops for us as well.

Jesus had spent three full years with these men.

He had called them to be His disciples, to learn from Him full time.

He had shown them that He is God, the Son of God, the Messiah promised to Israel, the Savior of the world.

He had taught them with authority, about God, about themselves, about God's plan for them.

He had shown them His power in working signs: from turning water into wine to raising Lazarus.

They saw Him choose to go to Jerusalem when the religious leaders wanted to kill Him.

They witnessed His arrest and suffering and finally His death on the Cross.

They now have seen Him alive from the dead.

Jesus, after His resurrection, was not with them like He was before.

It seems that He came and went, appearing to them on only a handful of occasions.

There were more appearances, Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 15:5-8.

But we don't read about them in the Gospels.

He appeared to Mary Magdalene in the garden.

He appeared to the disciples when they were hiding in Jerusalem.

He appeared to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus.

Luke tells us that He walked with the disciples to Bethany.

Here in John 21 we read of Jesus appearing to some of His disciples in Galilee.

I. The disciples went back to doing what they knew. John 21:1-3

We have this morning an amazing story... it is powerful, touching, warm, and stunning.

It is about 7 men who went fishing and what happened to them in the morning. **John 21:1-3**

Realize that fishing for Peter, John, and the others was not like you and I think of fishing.

This was their livelihood. These are big, strong, rough handed men.

I think of John as 6ft. 6, rounded shoulders, huge hands, a huge smile, and a loud voice.

I did go fishing once like this, in the Sea of Marmara, all night. We caught nothing.

Why does Peter say, "I am going fishing?"

He is not being disobedient to the Lord. He probably doesn't know what to do, so he does what he knows.

We are like this, aren't we? When we don't know what to do, we go where we know, we do what we know.

The disciples had just spent three years with Jesus. It was life-changing to say the least.

They saw amazing things. They learned amazing things. They learned to trust Jesus.

They believed in Jesus as their Messiah, Savior. They saw Him die. They saw Him alive.

No experience could ever compare with the past three years.

But now it was over. They seemed to be on their own. They had no plan, no orders.

These guys were not instigators, activists, revolutionaries, they had no plans to start a movement.

They were fisherman. They went back to fishing.

Why do the others decide to go with him? They have nothing better to do. And it is what they know.

And, it turns out, they fail. They catch nothing, all night.

Then morning comes, and the Lord Jesus Christ shows up.

In this account of what happened, we find powerful lessons on the character of our Lord.

What is He like? This Jesus who has risen from the dead?

What sort of power does He have?

And what does He do for them?

II. Jesus is the ruler of all creation.

John 21:4-8

Lesson number one: Jesus is the better fisherman.

Consider first His question to them, “Children, you do not have any fish, do you?”

Now some of you have been out fishing. Some of you at night, all night.

Can you imagine this sort of question in the morning? Stupid rude idiot on the shore.

Yet, they answer him with complete honesty, admitting their failure.

Here’s another little lesson: if you do not admit your failure,

you fail to give God a chance to help you with what you are failing in.

Now, the big lesson.

But first, a brain teaser: How can you tell a good fisherman from a bad one? The good one catches fish.

They don’t. Jesus does. What’s the point?

John 15:5 Not even fishing.

These disciples were a picture of working hard without Jesus.

How is it that Jesus, a carpenter turned preacher, knows how to fish better than professional fishermen?

Jesus is the ruler of all creation. He runs it all.

You will not be able to impress Him with your performance in anything.

Jesus is a better farmer than you are.

He is a better banker, hunter, teacher, nurse, builder, welder, driver, preacher...

He doesn’t need you in order to do any of these things.

You need Him.

So, it makes absolute sense to ask for His help in everything, all the time.

Do you do this?

Characteristically, John exhibits insight, “It is the Lord.”

Why does He draw such a conclusion?

Well, who else would be able to fill their nets like this?

But there is another reason. John has seen this before, at the beginning, when Jesus first called them.

Luke 5:1-11 It was this that made them leave everything to follow Jesus.

In a sense, Jesus is taking them back to the beginning, reminding them of who He is.

And Peter, characteristically, exhibits impetuous action. He leaps into the sea.

He puts his clothes on and leaps into the sea.

This makes no sense, even if you are a fisherman.

Why? You might think that he would be helping the others haul the net into the boat.

Peter is learning another lesson. He is far more interested in Jesus than he is in all the fish.

And fish were what he had been after for most of his life.

But the narrative follows the disciples in the boat,

another small indication of the eyewitness integrity of John’s Gospel.

They get to land, finally, and find that Jesus is already cooking fish over a fire.

How did Jesus get fish?

We don’t know.

Maybe they jumped out of the water into His arms.

What we do know is this. Jesus is in complete control over all the fish.

This is because Jesus is in complete command over all things.

Do you know this? Yes?

Does it show?

After all, knowing that Jesus is alive and in complete control over all things is life changing.

1. It means that we ought to be at peace in the midst of it all.
2. It means that we ought to have complete trust in Jesus and His ability to do what He wants.
3. It means that we ought to be listening to Him and obeying Him in all things.
4. It means that we ought to give Him our troubles and concerns.
5. It means that we are exactly who Jesus says we are here: the Father’s children.

III. Jesus fed them breakfast.

John 21:9-14

Now, it is strange that someone actually counted the fish and recorded the number.

John was there and he remembered.

People have found all kinds of symbolism in the number: 153 is the triangular of 17 (1+2+3...+17)

Augustine recognized this, 10 representing the ten commandments, 7 the sevenfold spirit of God.

There are many other ideas on the symbolism of the number. But this is narrative, not prophesy.

The meaning, I think, is simply this: 153 is a lot of fish. And John was there to see it.

Good thing no game warden was there to see it. Jesus exceeded the limit.

Another interesting aspect is that the disciples did not seem to recognize Jesus by His appearance, but rather His words and His actions.

Some have speculated that it was the morning mist.

This inability to recognize Jesus was also true with the two disciples on the road to Emmaus.

I don't know why. His resurrected body was maybe different in some way.

Or possibly Jesus did not allow Himself to be recognized quickly.

Strangely, we are told that they did not ask Him who He was. (vs. 12)

Why? I think He must have looked different in some way.

But the real lesson is this: He fed them breakfast.

Before His death and resurrection, Jesus had demonstrated this kind of behavior to His disciples.

In John 13:1-17 He washes His disciples' feet. Now, He serves them still.

There is a modern Newsboys Song:

"When the big one finds you, may this song remind you that they don't serve breakfast in hell."

Satan doesn't serve you breakfast. Some hotels don't serve breakfast. I don't go back.

However, the risen Lord does indeed serve breakfast.

After a long discouraging night, the men were tired, cold, and hungry.

Jesus serves them with a fire and a hot breakfast. This is the point, again. Jesus serves them.

You might be so used to reading about this kind of behavior from Jesus that you fail to recognize the wonder.

The Lord of the universe comes into this world to be with us and He SERVES people!

Kings and emperors and presidents don't serve people. They get served.

No other deity in any other religion is a servant. None!

No, in every other religion the supposed gods are to be SERVED.

They do not serve people. People serve them.

They are demanding, unapproachable, dangerous, and fearsome.

We see this in movies, stories, and history.

Important powerful people, heroes, gods... they are served by regular people.

Jesus serves breakfast.

The King of the Universe meets us at our need and serves us.

This is who He is.

We are about to share a meal together. It is a symbolic meal, reminding us of when Jesus served His disciples.

During that last supper, Jesus provided a meal for his disciples.

But He did much more than that.

He used the meal to show that He is serving them, and us, by providing so much more.

He provides us with His body, sacrificed on the Cross to pay our sin price.

He provides us with His blood, poured out to wash away our sins so that we can be truly forgiven.

And we do this together not only to remember what He has done.

But we do it to respond to Jesus by saying, "Yes Lord, I accept your serving me in this way."

I want your broken body to pay for my sins.

I want your perfect blood to wash away my guilt.

I want You to be my Messiah who has come to serve me because you love me.

So, now. Let Jesus serv you.