

Fishing with Jesus

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[0 : 00] John chapter 21.

If you don't own a Bible, there are Bibles in the pews for you to use. And please take that Bible home with you today. If you, again, don't have a Bible, that you'd continue to be reading God's Word.

If you're there in John 21, would you please stand with me as we honor the reading of God's Word together. This is after the resurrection, after Jesus had appeared to his disciples.

He appears to them again here in John 21. After this, Jesus revealed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias. 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 am going fishing.

[1 : 05] They said to him, We will go with you. They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing. 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. 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. 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.

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. When they got out on land, they saw a charcoal fire in place with fish laid on it and bread.

Jesus said to them, Bring some of the fish that you have caught. So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore full of large fish, 153 of them.

[2 : 12] And though there were so many, the net was not torn. 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. This was now the third time that Jesus was revealed to the disciples, after he was raised from the dead. May God add a blessing to the reading of his word.

Would you please be seated? I was called to the ministry when I was 16 years old, but then I spent the next eight years of my life trying to run and hide from that call.

After I graduated from college, the company I worked for promoted me from my position in their warehouse to a desk job in the office.

The company I worked for was growing and was doing well, and so the plan was for them to groom me to do the job that my boss was doing, to help him with the growing amount of customers that we had.

[3 : 21] At that time, Danny and I were engaged and soon to be married, so I was excited about this new job and the future prospects that I thought it was going to bring.

But there was a problem. I knew it wasn't what God wanted me to do with my life. And you know, before too long, I was miserable at that job.

I was miserable at that job. God had called me to ministry, but I didn't want to be in ministry. I didn't want to be a pastor.

I didn't want to be a youth pastor. But I knew that I couldn't keep doing this job either because I hated it. I was absolutely miserable. Then one day, we were at my parents' house, and my dad had a subscription to a Christian magazine, and I just remember picking it up and looking it over.

And inside was an advertisement for Navy chaplains. And the advertisement was this picture of this beautiful white church, and in the background was the ocean.

[4 : 36] And I thought, you know what? That is something that I can do. I think I could do ministry like that. So I spent the next few months calling and meeting with chaplains, and over and over again, they kept telling me the same thing.

You have to go to seminary, and then you have to be endorsed by a denomination, a Christian denomination, in order to be a chaplain. So then I started looking at seminaries in the Kansas City area where we lived, and I encountered another problem.

See, I had horrible grades in college. I was an athlete in college, and I did just enough to be able to stay eligible. You know, I knew I could turn in this paper and not that one.

I can take this test and not study and still get just good enough grade to be able to continue to play, so I'm not put on any kind of probation. And so my grades were poor.

And when I sent my transcripts to these seminaries, some of them outright just said, no way, we won't accept you. So others said, we will, but it's going to be a probationary basis.

[5 : 51] We're going to let you take one class at a time and see how you do. But that wasn't good enough for me. I wanted to jump in. I was ready finally to commit to going to seminary. And the one seminary who would accept me as a full-time student was Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

It was just a couple miles up the road from where Danny and I lived at the time. So even though I grew up Nazarene, and I had never attended a Southern Baptist church in my life, I enrolled and I quit my job.

And then I became a youth pastor at a United Methodist church. And I did well in seminary. And I thought that, you know, things are working out.

I'm well on my way to becoming a Navy chaplain in a few years. I was going to graduate. I had ministry experience now. Now, I was working at the Eastern United Methodist church.

And I soon realized that doctrinally and theologically, we were not a good match. And so for the, but I told them, I'll be here for three and a half years.

[6 : 59] I made that commitment because that's how long it was going to take me to graduate from seminary. And again, I learned soon that it wasn't a good fit for me. And so over almost that entire three and a half year period that I was there, I applied for every single job opening as a youth pastor in a Southern Baptist church.

And I didn't get so much as one phone call. God was going to make sure I honored that commitment. Because I took the job because it paid the most of the other ones that I had applied for.

I learned that lesson. So finally, I'm a semester away from graduating. And I learned that I was not going to be able to get the endorsement that I thought I would so easily get.

In my mind, I was thinking, I graduated from a Southern Baptist seminary. Of course they would endorse me. But they said, well, we can't endorse you unless you're a member of one of our churches.

Which was a problem because I worked at a United Methodist church. And I didn't want to be endorsed by them. And they weren't going to endorse me anyways because I didn't graduate from one of their seminaries.

[8 : 09] So here I was a semester away from graduating. And I thought, I've made a mess of everything. And I was mad at myself for not planning better.

I was mad at God for allowing all of this to happen. And I was really upset about the whole thing, this mess that I had made. And so I thought, you know what?

I've got to quit my job and I'll just go back to working in the warehouse. That's what I'm familiar with doing. I like driving forklifts, loading, unloading trucks. Time goes by quickly.

I'll quit my job. I'll get a job doing that. Danny and I will become members of a Southern Baptist church. I'll get my endorsement. It was going to take probably about a year or something like that.

But before I started applying for any of those jobs, one last posting came across our job board for a youth pastor in Leavenworth, Kansas, at Calvary Baptist Church.

And I thought, you know what? Why not? Might as well. I've applied for like 60 others. This one couldn't hurt either. And so I applied. And sure enough, and I'm not joking, it was about 60 or more over those three years.

[9 : 23] And I applied. And I got a phone call. And I met with the pastor. And I explained my situation. You know, I'm really looking to be a chaplain. But I need to be a member of a Baptist church.

And I'll work hard for you for a year or however long it takes. And he said, that's fine. I'm going to retire at the end of the year as well. And so let's just see what the Lord's going to do. And I'll tell you, man, that man, Blaine Fye, was one of the greatest mentors that I've ever had.

And he retired 11 months into me being there. And when he retired, the deacons in our church came and asked me if I would consider being their pastor, which I did.

And I served them there for five years in that role. But again, I thought I had messed everything up. I was dejected.

I thought that I had failed. I thought that God had failed me. But I learned that God had a plan. And it was a plan that I couldn't see. It was a plan that was a lot different than my plan.

[10 : 28] But I learned that it was such a better plan. So much better than the plan I had. And so I relate to these guys, these disciples in this text. And I'm sure that you probably do too.

The Lord guides each one of us. He guides us in different ways. Sometimes he makes the next step clear to you. You just know.

It's obvious. Other times that's not the case. Like Peter and the other disciples in this passage. It feels like we're sort of left to sort through the mess that we have made.

Tempted to even resort back to what is familiar to us. Instead of being patient. And being faithful.

And waiting for the Lord. But they learned, as we often do, that the Lord uses our messes.

He uses our muddling. He uses our impatience to teach us and remind us of this. Which is the main idea for this morning's sermon. When you're unsure of God's plan.

[11 : 31] It is better to trust in who you know. Than in what you know. When you're unsure of God's plan. It's better to trust in who you know. Than in what you know. And obviously that who you know is Jesus.

This is the prologue of John's gospel. If you're a reader. You know the prologue comes at the end of the last chapter in a book. It serves as a final comment or a conclusion for what has already happened.

Sometimes the prologue answers questions or resolves issues that were not addressed or resolved in the final chapter. John 20, 30 through 31 is his conclusion of his gospel.

These things were written. That you might believe that Jesus is the Christ. The son of God. And that by believing you may have life in his name. Jesus has given his life to atone for our sins.

We've read that. We've been through that. Then three days later he rises from the grave as proof that he is the son of God. As proof that he has conquered Satan, sin and death.

[12 : 41] And that those who believe in him have eternal life. These things have happened. Peter appears in John chapter 20. If you remember he was there.

He witnessed Jesus' empty tomb. He was there in the locked room where the disciples were hiding. When Jesus suddenly appeared to them all. But nothing has been said to this point about his three denials.

Remember that? Jesus said you will deny me three times before the rooster crows. And sure enough that's exactly what Peter did. And we know that Peter was the leader of the disciples.

He was the first one who confessed that Jesus was the Christ, the son of God. Peter was very close to Jesus. He was one of the inner circle. Just Peter, James and John who were very close to the Lord.

But he had denied him three times. What about that? You know, we read 20 and we're left thinking, well what is Jesus going to do with Peter?

[13 : 46] How is he going to handle this shocking betrayal? It happens when I turn and look that way. So you guys, not going to look at you anymore. So everybody get up and move over here.

I'm just joking. What's he going to do with Peter? And then the other question is, what is the future of the disciples? What is the Lord's plan for them? What will become of them now?

And in this prologue, those answers are given. And we see again through this text that it is better to trust in Jesus.

It is better to trust him with our lives than to trust in ourselves. And so two principles emerge from this text about the importance of trusting in Christ, especially when you are uncertain or confused about what to do next with your life.

And you know, maybe that's the way you feel right now. Maybe you have felt that way, I'm sure, in the past. Just confused and uncertain. What is it that the Lord wants me to do right now with my life?

[14:55] And if you haven't been there or you aren't there, you're probably going to be there before too long. Whatever the case may be, the Lord has a word for you. And the first principle that we see in this text is this.

The disciples' trust in what they knew failed. The disciples' trust in what they knew failed. Look again at verse 1.

After this, Jesus revealed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias. And he revealed himself in this way. So there, the phrase, after these things, refers to the unspecified time after the events that have been recorded in John 20.

We know for 40 days after his resurrection, Jesus appeared to many of his disciples before he ascended to heaven. So this is at some point in time during those 40 days.

The disciples at this point had left Jerusalem where they'd seen Jesus and were heading north to Galilee according to Jesus' instructions recorded in Matthew and Mark's Gospels to go ahead of him to Galilee.

[16:03] By the time John wrote this Gospel, the Sea of Galilee was also commonly known as the Sea of Tiberias. Tiberias was a city on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee, and it was named after the Emperor Tiberias.

And so that's where these guys are at. Then in verse 2, it says, Simon Peter, Thomas, called the twin, Nathaniel of Cana and Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two other disciples were together. So seven of the eleven traveled together to this place. We're not sure where the other ones were.

And the ones that aren't mentioned here who are a part of the seven are probably Andrew and Philip because they were often close with Peter, James, and John, seen together with them.

Then in verse 3, it says, Simon Peter said to them, I am going fishing. And they said to him, We'll go with you. And they went out and they got into the boat. So the disciples are in Galilee here, but they're not in the location in Galilee where the Lord told them to go.

He said, Go to the Mount of Galilee. Instead, they were down at the lake. And here, evidently, Peter grew impatient, waiting for the Lord to appear to them.

[17:19] And so he decided, you know what? I'm going to go fishing. It wasn't in Peter's nature to wait, was it?

You read all the Gospels, you know that Peter was an impulsive person. The past few weeks were full of amazing events. The nightmare of Jesus' crucifixion was replaced three days later by the awesome wonder of our Lord's resurrection.

And now he was sitting with six of the other disciples, just waiting and waiting. Jesus had told them where to go, but he hadn't told them what to do.

And I think Peter was a type A personality kind of person, if you know the type. He needed to know what the plan was.

He needed a schedule. He needed an itinerary. But none of those things were provided to him or to any of the other disciples.

[18:24] And so Peter was the kind of guy, he didn't like knowing what wasn't going on. Or he didn't like not knowing what was going on, I should say. He didn't like not knowing what to do.

He used to know what to do. Before he met Jesus, he was a fisherman. And he knew what that job required, right? Getting up early in the morning or going out late at night.

He knew how to get all the supplies prepared for the boat, what would fit, what would be too much.

He knew how to catch fish. He knew how to sell fish. And so as he impatiently waits for Jesus, I think his mind, because he's such an impulsive person, he's got to have something to do.

I think his mind drifts back to his memories of when he was a fisherman. When he knew what to do. And I think those memories gave him comfort as he waited impatiently for the Lord.

So long as he didn't know what to do, he figured he might as well do something he was familiar with doing. And the fact that the other disciples joined him, I think, proves that Peter's restlessness existed also in them as well as they waited for Jesus.

[19:40] But I don't believe Peter's decision to return to fishing was for recreation. I don't think this was Peter's way of just making time go by until the Lord returned.

I think this was Peter's declaration that he was going to return back to his former way of life. I'm going to go back to being a fisherman. And here's why I think that.

In John 16.32, Jesus, before his crucifixion, had predicted that his disciples would abandon him. Here's what he said. Behold, the hour is coming, indeed it has come, when you will be scattered, each to his own home, and will leave me alone. Yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me. So you see there in John 16.32, the word home is not in the original Greek. The Greek text reads, each of you will go to his own.

[20 : 37] His own, that's a phrase that encompasses more than where a person's house is. It includes their property. It includes their possessions. It includes their business affairs.

So Jesus predicted that the disciples wouldn't just abandon him by going to their physical homes, but that they would try to return to their old professions, their old ways of living.

Also, the definite article with the noun translated boat in Greek suggests that this wasn't just some boat, but one of their boats.

This was maybe even Peter's boat. In verse 21.15, we'll get there next week, Jesus challenges Peter, Simon, son of Jonah, do you love me more than these?

And these there is better understood as Jesus is looking out, and he's seeing the boat, the nets, the fish, everything that is associated with Peter's old way of life, all the things that Peter is familiar with.

[21 : 43] He's saying to him, Peter, do you love me more than these things, than all of these familiar and comfortable things? Jesus was calling Peter to turn back from what was familiar, from his former way of living, his former livelihood, and is calling him to totally commit himself to serving him above any other thing.

And so we can read this and now understand that, and we can ask ourselves this question, how can Peter be so fickle? How can Peter be so faithless?

He saw the empty tomb. He saw Jesus risen twice by this point. And so we can read these verses and think, how could he not wait just a little bit longer?

But you know, we are a lot more like Peter than we want to admit. Let me start with pastors.

A recent Barna study found that 38% of pastors have thought about quitting full-time ministry. And that 38% is up 9% from last year, 2021.

[23 : 08] And 2020 is when we went through the whole lockdown junk surrounded with COVID, you know? And almost half of that number are under the age of 45.

Why do they want to quit? Well, ministry, for those who are in it, they know that it's hard. You buy it. Sometimes your vision of what will happen doesn't happen, and the timing that you think that it's going to happen.

And so, you know, kind of like me back in seminary, you think, you know what? I'll just go back to what I am familiar with doing. I'll just get a regular 9 to 5 job. How about us in the church?

Just the church, the resistance that we put up so often to any kind of change. So often in the church, we act like we're more wedded to our traditions than we're wedded to Christ.

We're the bride of our traditions instead of being the bride of Christ. We find comfort in the ways things used to be or the way that things are. Any new idea, any new ministry, any new way to seek to minister to the needs of God's people and make disciples are shot down before they can ever get off the ground because we're so attached to our traditions.

[24 : 24] Now, how about you personally? Following Christ means denying yourself. When the pressures and stresses of life mount up, instead of taking them to the Lord and patiently waiting and trusting in Him in faith, you too probably return to old familiar comforts.

Instead of taking my stress to the Lord and waiting for Him to help me with them, I'll go to something that helps me cloud them out or block them out.

I'll turn to drugs. I'll turn to alcohol. Gambling. Food. Relationships.

Searching for things on the Internet that you quickly have to delete from your history soon after you're done. You know, maybe for you right now, you're having difficulties at work.

And instead of sticking it out, instead of working for the glory of God in whatever place He's put you in, you're too busy preoccupying yourself with looking for greener grass without consulting if that's even the Lord's will for your life.

[25 : 40] You know, maybe you're lonely this morning. You desire a husband or a wife, but instead of waiting for the Lord and discerning His will for that, you lower your standards or you return to what is familiar.

A past relationship that ended, but you know how absence makes the heart grow fonder. So you think, maybe that person that I knew wasn't good for me has changed. And things will be different this time around. Maybe your plan for your life is not God's plan for your life, but you've convinced yourself that it's God's plan for your life. For me, that was returning to a job that I was familiar with. Knowing that I had made a mess of my life and not trusting God to fix it or even that God was going to be working through it. You know, and it could be that God is calling you to serve in some way in this church. But the openings that are available for serving in this church are ones that you don't feel like are good enough for you.

[26 : 52] They're beneath you. You know, also many people leave a church for the wrong reasons because of impatience. There's good reasons to leave a church, but our society has taught us to be consumers.

And so our attitude often is this. If things aren't going the way I want, or happening the way I want, or in the time frame that I want, well, you know what? I'll take my business elsewhere.

We are impatient people. We are all impatient people. And our phones have made us used to instant gratification, haven't they?

But patience is a fruit of the Spirit. And our Bibles constantly remind us that the Lord rewards those who patiently wait for Him.

But we're a lot more like Peter than we want to believe. But again, Peter's had enough waiting. He's not turned his back to Christ at this moment.

[27 : 59] And we'll see that next week. He was not deconverting. But I do think that in his mind, he was quitting ministry. He's denied Jesus three times.

And so maybe Peter is thinking somewhere along the lines like this. Christ has risen. But you know what? I'm such a lousy disciple.

I put my foot in my mouth. I said that they wouldn't get to Him unless they killed me first. That didn't happen. I told them that I'd never deny Him. And I did deny Him. And not only once, but three times, just as He said that I would.

And so I think that Peter thinks, you know what? I would be lousy in ministry. So I'll just go back to what I'm comfortable doing, what I think that I'm good at.

But the Lord would teach him and the others that trusting in what they knew, trusting in what they were familiar with, trusting in their own understanding would end in failure. And so back in the boat, back doing what was familiar, the disciples expended their energy casting and pulling in their nets.

[29 : 11] Casting and pulling in their nets. Move the boat over here. Cast and pull. Try this side over here. Cast and pull. And guess what? Scripture says, but that night they caught nothing.

Not even one fish. Not even one. Have you ever been fishing with an experienced fisherman? Back in my church in Leavenworth, I went with a guy who was a great fisherman and for every one fish I caught, he had like five or six.

He just knew where to cast. He knew where the fish were gonna be. He knew how to make the fish bite. It was almost like he spoke this fish language that they just would jump on to his hook and not on mine.

Experienced fishermen know how to fish. And these guys were experienced fishermen. But they didn't catch even one fish. They were learning a lesson.

If they continued to trust in what they knew or what they thought they knew instead of who they knew, it would end in failure. It would always end in failure.

[30 : 24] And so if you trust in what you know, if you trust in what is familiar, if you trust in your will, if you trust in your feelings over God's word, if you rely on your truth and your opinions, in the end, they will fail you.

But there's good news. There's always good news with Jesus. There's always hope in Christ. And that's the second principle. Disciples needed to trust in Jesus for success.

They needed to trust in Jesus for success. Look again at verses 4 and 5. Just as day was breaking, Jesus stood on the shore.

Yet the disciples did not know it was Jesus. Jesus said to them, Children, do you have any fish?

And they answered him, No. You know, I'm sure the disciples were frustrated with their failed fishing expedition.

And probably frustrated with each other too. You can imagine the conversations that they must have been having with each other that night. Where are the fish? Whose idea was this?

[31 : 30] Then along comes this bold stranger asking a question. But I bet the disciples, you know, were of the mind, you know, there is such a thing as a stupid question.

Have you caught anything? Hello? Look in the boat. Do you see any fish? And so they simply reply, No.

Verse 6. Jesus said to them, Cast the net on the right side of the boat and you'll find some. Again, I wonder if the disciples were frustrated by this man whom they still didn't know to be Jesus.

They were experienced at this. They knew what they were doing or they thought that they did. And so here comes this stranger and I bet they're thinking, Are you seriously trying to tell us us how to fish?

But they had to have recognized that there was something very familiar in the way this man spoke in such a commanding, in such a confident way. About three years before this failed fishing venture, these men had met Jesus on a fishing boat.

[32 : 50] Maybe even that same fishing boat. Look at Luke 5, 3 through 7 with me. Getting into one of the boats, which was Simon's, which was Peter's boat, Jesus asked him to put out a little from the land.

And he sat down and he taught the people from the boat. And when he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, Put out into the deep and let your nets down for a catch.

And Simon answered, Master, we toiled all night and took nothing, but at your word I will let down the nets. And when they had done this, they enclosed a large number of fish and their nets were breaking.

They signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so they began to sink. Now look back here in John 21, verse 6.

So they cast it and now they were not able to haul it in because of the quantity of fish. Now look back at verse 7. Just as John saw the empty tomb and believed, so here he connects the dots in his mind and instantly realizes this is Jesus.

[34 : 00] John was the one who was quick to perceive. Peter was the one who was quick to act. And so it says in verse 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 tripped for work and he threw himself into the sea. And I just imagine Peter just like belly flopping out into the sea.

Maybe, you know, clipping his foot on the back and I just figure, I see this awkward sort of just jumping out into the water. He wanted to be with Jesus.

That wasn't always the case. If we go back to Luke chapter 5 when Peter first encounters Jesus and he has this miraculous catch of fish.

We pick up with the story there in verse 8. But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees saying, Depart from me for I am a sinful man, O Lord. For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish they had taken.

[35 : 01] And so also were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, he said to Peter, Do not be afraid. From now on, you will be catching men.

And when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed him. Until this point. Until now. But here, in John 21, this is not a question of Peter's salvation.

Peter believes. What's in question here is his obedience and his lack of faith. Peter was an impatient follower of Jesus Christ.

But Jesus used his failure to trust in what he knew instead of who he knew to remind him of a very important truth.

It's like Jesus is saying to Peter here, Peter, what are you doing? What are you doing catching fish when I told you that you would be fishing for men?

[36 : 07] There's nothing wrong with fishing. It was and is a respectable profession. But fishing was, fishing for fish was no longer the Lord's will for Peter's life.

Peter had returned to the nets. He had returned to what he had left behind to follow Christ in the first place. He left to return to what was familiar.

But he learned that he'd no longer find comfort in success in that ever again. The Lord wouldn't allow it. And so there, there's an important lesson for you and I to learn as well. sometimes the mess you think you've made has been ordained by the Lord to teach you how much better it is to trust and follow him.

To stay committed to his will. To seek first his kingdom instead of setting out to build your own kingdom. And as I shared before personally, I thought I had made a mess of my life.

[37 : 13] I thought I went to seminary to become a chaplain but I learned that behind the scenes truly what was happening is the Lord was orchestrating those events in my life to put me in the places where he wanted me to be.

And that's sometimes how the Lord works. Jesus had divinely commanded those fish to stay out of his disciples' nets. They weren't going to catch a single one.

If they trusted in what they knew they were going to fail. But if they trusted in who they knew if they trusted in Jesus if they surrendered to his call in their lives they would have success.

And so Jesus here commands all of those fish to go rushing back into their nets just as he had done before when he first called these men to follow him. Now look at verse 8.

And 9. 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. When they got out on land they saw a charcoal fire in place and fish laid out on it and bread.

[38 : 29] The charcoal fire is important and we'll cover that more in depth next week because remember Peter had denied Jesus three times around a charcoal fire and now Jesus would restore him around a charcoal fire.

But what I think is awesome here is that though Jesus has been resurrected and we see that he's different now he's able to hide his identity when he wants to he's able to pass through locked doors but what we see is that he's still the same person.

The last meal he had with his disciples took place in the upper room prior to his crucifixion and remember that there he washed his disciples feet there he was serving his disciples all the way until the end serving them and here what do we see him doing?

The exact same thing he's still serving his disciples he's preparing their meal he's he's feeding them even though they grew impatient with him even though they thought they knew better and were ready to return to their own to their old lives we see that Jesus is compassionate here don't we? don't you love that about the Lord? still serving still ministering verse 10 Jesus said to them bring some of the fish that you have just caught so Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore full of large fish 153 of them why does he mention 153?

[40 : 01] because there was 153 there's no symbolic meaning right there there's 153 and although there were so many the net was not torn Jesus said to them come and have breakfast none of the disciples dared to ask him who are you?

they knew it was the Lord Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them we see him again serving and so with the fish this was now the third time that Jesus was revealed to the disciples after he was raised from the dead so here imagine that you're one of the disciples I would feel guilty for what I had been caught doing by the Lord I'm sure they felt guilty for returning to what was familiar and trusting in what they knew instead of who they knew returning to the nets they had left behind when Jesus had called them attempting to be fishermen again though Jesus had told them that they would be fishers of men what does Jesus do with these guilt ridden men he invites them to breakfast he calls them back into fellowship with him their disobedience had brought a night of fruitless labor and failure but their obedience to the Lord brought overwhelming success and they would become fishers of men and you are here today as a result of the

Holy Spirit's witness through these men thousands of years ago Jesus overcame the disciples fears of failure their guilt for trying to go their own way once more their lack of patience and trust which caused them to drift back into their old ways of living pursuing what was familiar the things that they knew and Jesus here forever settled in their minds that they were called to serve him with the rest of their lives with all of themselves and they would do so and they would be empowered by him and they would succeed what can I learn from this what can you learn from this a few things first waiting on Jesus is a common experience of those who follow him okay so understand that Jesus has called you to follow him you're going to have to learn to wait you're going to have to learn to wait sometimes we're stuck in a hard place sometimes we feel like we don't have any sense of direction sometimes we wait for the purpose of just understanding the

Lord's purpose for our lives sometimes we wait for provision sometimes we wait to learn how to wait Jesus' timing and purposes are not always clear in the moment but they were always what is best for you so wait in faith and while you wait rest upon the rock of his word obey and trust in the blessings that come with a being obedient to Christ though they may seem to be long off or long away from coming learn to wait second Jesus is in complete control even when you think he isn't even when you think or tempted to believe that he's forgotten about you Peter and the other disciples were experienced fishermen they did their best to catch fish but nothing came nothing was caught but their failure was used by

God to teach them a lesson and so when things don't go your way or things don't go the way that you had hoped or the way that you had thought they would go or should go don't get angry with God but search to see the lesson that he has to teach to you in those moments where your plans have failed you know one thing I learned long ago is that when things don't go according to your plan well it's because they weren't the Lord's plan and I know it's hard whenever all those plans come falling apart and I remember one time talking to a pastor friend of mine who experienced in the ministry and I was just complaining about all of these plans that I had had and how they had all come apart and I was angry and he stopped me and he said what do you think the Lord's trying to teach you in this moment I hadn't thought about that the Lord is using this moment to teach me something and he drew my attention to Romans 8:28 and we know that for those who love [44:40] God all things all things work together for good for those who are called according to his purpose and finally remember that Jesus is always serving you even when you can't see it he serves you in every conceivable way he has served you by paying for your sins on the cross by dying on the cross to atone for you he's served you by providing you with the righteous life that he gives to you in exchange for your sinfulness on the cross he's served you by dying and rising again which proves that your greatest enemies sin Satan and death have been vanquished and defeated that you can trust him now and always to know that he is still serving you presently at the right hand of the father where he intercedes on your behalf as we meet and as I speak your king loves you your king has served you well your king will serve you well and there is nothing that will change that can't you trust a king like that shouldn't you trust a king like that

Isaiah 64:4 says from of old no one has heard or perceived by the ear no eye has seen a God beside you who acts for those who wait for him who wait for him this past week at Falls Creek last night one of the last things our speakers said to us such a powerful sentence just such a powerful truth that I had known but just to hear him say it again was a great reminder to me he said to us surrendering to God's will is better than striving for our dreams surrendering to God's will is better than striving for our dreams and there's been something the Lord has laid on my heart to do and after I heard that you know he invites us to pray and the first words in my mind as I was praying were this if

Lord and I had to stop Randy doesn't talk and this is how I was going to go if this is what you want me to do Lord then this it's like the Holy Spirit stopped me in that moment was like there's no if brother because it's in the word and you don't need the if because you know what this says and you know that the answer isn't if God do this it's you surrendering and saying yes Lord I'll do it there is no if if you wait around an if it's not going to be fun you say yes and you be patient and you trust the Lord and there will be tremendous blessings that come along with that main point of application for this sermon the Lord's plan and timing for you is better than yours yours the Lord's plan and timing for you is better than yours three questions for application that I encourage you to look at today or later this week and I really encourage you to do this because

I know this is a hard lesson for us to learn especially being in this culture we're not a patient people but we need to be question number one are you trusting in what you know more than you you know right now there's something going on in your life and you just know the Holy Spirit has a way of telling you this is not good for you this is not a good decision for you stop saying if when you know the answer is yes is there something right now you're convinced this is God's will for you when reality is it's your will for yourself and you're just pretending as if it's God's will are you trusting in what you know more than who you know right now question number two what does this passage teach about patiently trusting in the Lord's timing and purpose what does it teach us about patiently trusting in the Lord's timing and purpose and then what is to be gained if you wait but what could be lost if you don't and then finally think of all the ways that the Lord has never failed you do you think he will fail you now

I'm going to pray during our time of invitation maybe there's something that you're wrestling with grappling with something that the Lord has revealed to you through his word this morning or maybe you're in that that that place where you're waiting and seeking to discern what the Lord's will I encourage you to come and pray if you want me to pray for you I'd be glad to do that I'll be standing right here and take your time as much time as you need even after your church is over to to to have this space to be with the Lord and to let him work in your heart let's pray Lord God we are so thankful that you are not like us you are holy and perfect and righteous God that you have a plan and it's perfect and it's good Lord forgive us that so often we think that we know more than you so often we think that we've got these great plans but we haven't considered what you say or what you want and so often Lord we convince ourselves that that the voice that we hear in our head is yours instead of the fact when it's when it's truly our own so God I pray that you would use this word that we've heard this lesson that your Holy

[50 : 32] Spirit would apply it to our lives that we would be patient that we would trust in you that we would resist the temptations to go back to what is familiar that we would know that you are a God who is good and has good plans in store for us but often it requires us to be patient and to wait and in the meanwhile Lord if there's anybody in that position who's trying to be patient who's been waiting and maybe they feel like it's been such a long time God I pray that you would continue to encourage them that the best thing to do is to continue to trust in you and so Lord I pray that for each and every one of us we would leave this room this morning that we would walk away committed to following you committed to trusting in your ways committed to being patient and knowing that you are a God who serves us well and will serve us well now and forever more and you know what's best and your ways are true and always right we ask these things in

Jesus name amen you