John 20:30-21:14 | Sunday January 26, 2025

Thomas was missing when Jesus revealed Himself to the 10 disciples. He missed the chance to see the risen savior, yet Jesus was so gracious to Him. Thomas is not chastised or belittled, but is encouraged to believe. Jesus wants to help Thomas trust Him.

John 20:26-31 ESV

> (26) Eight days later, His disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” (27) Then He said to Thomas, “Put your finger here, and see My hands; and put out your hand, and place it in My side. Do not disbelieve, but believe.” (28) Thomas answered Him, “My Lord and My God!” (29) Jesus said to him, “Have you believed because you have seen Me? **Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”** (30) Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; (31) **but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God,** and that by believing you may have life in His name.

I am amazed when Jesus takes the time to talk about you and I, future believers in the church. We were not born in the first century yet we have a special blessing. We can come to know Jesus through the testimony of those who saw Him, through the Word of God. John breaks from the story to tells us his purpose in writing down this gospel.

Jesus did so many things while He was alive. The four gospels combined record over **30** unique miracles of Jesus with countless more happening. John wrote these specific signs down so that we can believe. **But what specifically did He want us to believe?** Belief means nothing by itself, it finds value in the object of the belief. The first important thing John wanted us to believe is that **Jesus is the Christ**, the Messiah, the savior who would come and deal with sin.

Isaiah 53:10-11 ESV

> (10) Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush Him; He has put Him to grief; **when His soul makes an offering for guilt**, He shall see His offspring; He shall prolong His days; the will of the LORD shall prosper in His hand.
> (11) Out of the anguish of His soul He shall see and be satisfied; by His knowledge shall the righteous one, My servant, **make many to be accounted righteous, and He shall bear their iniquities.**

It was the will of God the Father to crush God the Son. The Christ is the perfect offering for sin. We can be counted as righteous because He bore our sins. Christ is a title not Jesus’ last name. John wanted his gospel to help us believe that Jesus is THE Christ. The anointed one promised of the Old Testament. **The title Christ explains what He did.**

He could accomplish this because He is the **Son of God**, fully God and fully man who lived a perfectly righteous life. **Son of God explains who He is**. If Jesus was only God then He could not die and pay for sin. If Jesus was only man, then He would have His own sin nature to pay for. John is simplifying the gospel as much as he can. Then He gives us the outcome of believing in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God.

John 20:31 ESV

> (31) but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and **that by believing you may have life in His name.**

When we believe in this truth. **When we believe in who Jesus is and what He accomplished we have life in His name.**

Romans 10:11 ESV

> (11) For the Scripture says, "**Everyone who believes in Him will not be put to shame**."

We are given eternal life and will never be put to shame when we believe in Jesus. Life is not found through our actions, and cannot be earned. We can have eternal life when we trust in Jesus. He is the perfect payment for sin, and His death gives us life. Some think the book of John should end here because it is such a great summary. Yet John lead by the Spirit has a few more things to wrap up.

John 21:1-2 ESV

> (1) After this Jesus revealed Himself again to the disciples **by the Sea of Tiberias**, and He revealed Himself in this way.
> (2) **Simon Peter, Thomas** (called the Twin), Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples were together.

The Sea of Tiberias is another name for the **Sea of Galilee**. This is the same place where Jesus fed the Five Thousand and Peter walked on water. Seven disciples are listed as being together. Peter is listed first. He denied Jesus three times, and this chapter gives further insight into Jesus' restoration of Him. Then Thomas is mentioned. I don't think it is an accident that the list starts with two men who have struggled in different ways. Jesus' grace is so big. **Neither man was cast off or shunned after their mistake**. As they were in Galilee, Peter had an idea to fill the time.

John 21:3 ESV

> (3) Simon Peter said to them, "**I am going fishing**." They said to him, "We will go with you." They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.

Some try to overstate this verse and claim Peter is going back to His profession of fishing. In reality the disciples are exactly where the angel and Jesus told them to be.

Matthew 28:5-10 ESV

> (5) But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified.
> (6) He is not here, for He has risen, as He said. Come, see the place where He lay.
> (7) Then go quickly and tell His disciples that He has risen from the dead, and behold**, He is going before you to Galilee; there you will see Him. See, I have told you."**
> (8) So they departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to tell His disciples.
> (9) And behold, Jesus met them and said, "Greetings!" And they came up and took hold of His feet and worshiped Him.
> (10) Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid; go **and tell My brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see Me."**

If Peter was abandoning Jesus then **he would not be in Galilee**. Instead, this is a case of how he handled waiting. Peter does not know when Jesus is going to reveal Himself, so why waste a nice night of fishing. The disciples were walking in a unique waiting period. There are 50 days from the resurrection to Pentecost and the start of the church.

Acts 2:42-47 ESV

> (42) And **they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship**, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.
> (43) And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles.
> (44) And all who believed were together and had all things in common.
> (45) And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need.
> (46) **And day by day, attending the temple together** and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts,
> (47) praising God and having favor with all the people. **And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.**

After Acts 2 and the coming of the Holy Spirit, we do not see these men out fishing. **God is not in a rush**. Jesus is resurrected and content to wait 50 days to start the church and proclaim what He has done. **It is after the coming of the Holy Spirit**, when God starts to increase the number daily.

Isaiah 40:28-31 ESV

> (28) Have you not known? Have you not heard? **The LORD is the everlasting God**, the Creator of the ends of the earth. **He does not faint or grow weary**; **His understanding is unsearchable**.
> (29) He gives power to the faint, and to him who has no might He increases strength.
> (30) Even youths shall faint and be weary, and young men shall fall exhausted;
> (31) **but they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength**; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.

If we were writing the story, I don't think we would have included a 50 day waiting period. Jesus would be resurrected and then gone to the mass crowds. God is everlasting, eternal, outside of time. What Jesus accomplished was ordained in eternity past. We struggle to wait on God's timing, because our perspective is off. **When God calls us to wait on Him He is asking us to trust Him.** The disciples were in the right spot waiting on God's timing.

John 21:4-7 ESV

> (4) Just as day was breaking, Jesus stood on the shore; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus.
> (5) Jesus said to them, "Children, do you have any fish?" They answered Him, "No."
> (6) He said to them, "Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some." So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in, because of the quantity of fish.
> (7) That disciple whom Jesus loved therefore said to Peter, **"It is the Lord!"** When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment, for he was stripped for work, **and threw himself into the sea.**

This disciples fishing night has not gone well. They are willing to take the advice from a supposed stranger on the shore. In reality it is Jesus. John is the first to perceive who gave them the advice. Everything is happening very similar to the day Jesus called John and Peter to be His disciples in Luke 5. That time Jesus was in the boat with them and told them to cast into the deep. This time He was calling from the shore. As the net is full of fish John makes the connection. Peter is so excited,

that he jumps into the water to swim to shore. **This is not the action of a man who is ashamed to see Jesus**. Jesus has had a private conversation with Peter by this point.

1 Corinthians 15:3-5 ESV

> (3) For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures,
> (4) that He was buried, that He was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures,
> (5) and **that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.**

Luke 24:24 also hints at Jesus meeting with Peter on resurrection Sunday. **This was a private meeting of restoration.** Our savior is so personal and loving, He seeks out Peter and meets with Him. It is another example of God pursuing us even in our sinfulness. Next week John gives us insight into Peter's more public restoration.

John 21:8-9 ESV

> (8) The other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, but about a hundred yards off.
> (9) When they got out on land, **they saw a charcoal fire in place, with fish laid out on it, and bread.**

The resurrected Jesus is still serving and caring for the disciples needs. After a long night of fishing, He has a fire already prepared, with bread and a **single fish cooking**.

John 21:10-11 ESV

> (10) Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish that you have just caught."
> (11) So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, **153** of them. And although there were so many, the net was not torn.

Peter had jumped off the boat in excitement, and now comes back to help with the net. It was too full to lift into the boat out in the water, but now Peter drags it ashore. Many commentators throughout church history have given explanations for why there are 153 fish and how this number is important. Cyril stated 100 stood for gentiles, 50 for the Jews and 3 for the Trinity. Jerome claimed there are 153 types of fish (which there is not) and it represented all the nations coming to Jesus. Augustine noted that 153 is a triangular (1+2+3+4…) of 17, and 17 points to the 10 commandments plus the 7 spirits of God. Still others tried to link the number to the numerical value of Hebrew words. My point in sharing all of this, is to caution us to be careful. **We need to stay focused on the clear truth and not on connections that cannot be backed up through the Word of God**. When in reality these fisherman are so amazed at the catch they give us the detailed count of 153 fish.

2 Timothy 2:14-15 ESV

> (14) Remind them of these things, and charge them before God not to quarrel about words, which does no good, but only ruins the hearers.
> (15) Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, **rightly handling the word of truth.**

We have the Holy Spirit in us as believers who has promised to teach us and guide us into truth. We need to be careful to rightly handle, which means to **guide the word of truth along a straight path**. This should not intimidate us to not approach the word. We all have the Holy Spirit,

and we all need each other's Spiritual gifts. Let us study together and not get caught in a ditch.

John 21:12-14 ESV

> (12) Jesus said to them, **"Come and have breakfast."** Now none of the disciples dared ask Him, **"Who are you?" They knew it was the Lord.**
> (13) Jesus came and took the bread **and gave it to them**, and so with the fish.
> (14) **This was now the third time that Jesus was revealed to the disciples after He was raised from the dead.**

Jesus invited the 7 disciples to eat with Him. This was a special fellowship that He offered to them. This privilege was not lost on Peter, He even recounts it to Cornelius.

Acts 10:39-43 ESV

> (39) **And we are witnesses** of all that He did both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They put Him to death by hanging Him on a tree,
> (40) but God raised Him on the third day **and made Him to appear,**
> (41) **not to all the people** but to us who had been chosen by God as witnesses, **who ate and drank with Him after He rose from the dead.**
> (42) And He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that He is the one appointed by God to be judge of the living and the dead.
> (43) **To Him all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins through His name."**

Peter knew He had been called to be a witness to what He was privileged to see. Jesus showed Himself to many more people **before His death than He did after**. He was very selective as to who he revealed Himself to resurrected. In being selective Jesus also made sure it was a verifiable testimony, and Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 15:6 that at one of the appearing's there were more than 500 people. Peter marveled that He had been chosen to eat and drink with the risen savior. **This was a unique closeness that He treasured**. What amazes me is this kind of special fellowship with Jesus is still offered to us today.

Revelation 3:19-22 ESV

> (19) Those whom I love, **I reprove and discipline, so be zealous and repent**.
> (20) Behold, **I stand at the door and knock**. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him **and eat with him, and he with Me.**
> (21) The one who conquers, I will grant him to sit with Me on My throne, as I also conquered and sat down with My Father on His throne.
> (22) He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'"

Jesus is speaking to the church of Laodicea. **In context this offer is not about salvation it is all about fellowship.** Jesus is active and working in the life of believers. This means He is correcting, guiding, and disciplining us. He desire a closeness and intimacy with us. He desires for us to repent and walk with Him. He is standing at the door knocking, offering fellowship. Do you realize this means that **we will never desire a closer relationship with Jesus than what He is willing to give.** He is all in and offering Himself to us. He wants to come in and eat with us. He wants to teach us how to be conquerors. To receive rich rewards for walking with Him.