



It is Not Over Yet!

SERMON NOTES MAY 4, 2025

3rd Sunday of Easter
Scripture: John 21:1-19

JOHN 21:1-19 (THE MESSAGE)

¹⁻³After this, Jesus appeared again to the disciples, this time at the Tiberias Sea (the Sea of Galilee). This is how he did it: Simon Peter, Thomas (nicknamed "Twin"), Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, the brothers Zebedee, and two other disciples were together. Simon Peter announced, "I'm going fishing."

³⁻⁴The rest of them replied, "We're going with you." They went out and got in the boat. They caught nothing that night. When the sun came up, Jesus was standing on the beach, but they didn't recognize him. ⁵Jesus spoke to them: "Good morning! Did you catch anything for breakfast?" They answered, "No." ⁶He said, "Throw the net off the right side of the boat and see what happens." They did what he said. All of a sudden there were so many fish in it, they weren't strong enough to pull it in.

⁷⁻⁹Then the disciple Jesus loved said to Peter, "It's the Master!" When Simon Peter realized that it was the Master, he threw on some clothes, for he was stripped for work, and dove into the sea. The other disciples came in by boat for they weren't far from land, a hundred yards or so, pulling along the net full of fish. When they got out of the boat, they saw a fire laid, with fish and bread cooking on it.

¹⁰⁻¹¹Jesus said, "Bring some of the fish you've just caught." Simon Peter joined them and pulled the net to shore—153 big fish! And even with all those fish, the net didn't rip. ¹²Jesus said, "Breakfast is ready." Not one of the disciples dared ask, "Who are you?" They knew it was the Master. ¹³⁻¹⁴Jesus then took the bread and gave it to them. He did the same with the fish. This was now the third time Jesus had shown himself alive to the disciples since being raised from the dead.

"Encountering the living Christ calls us out of our comfort zone into fresh new waters of possibility asking us to place ourselves into His hands!"

I. GONE FISHING!

- A. Overwhelmed, disillusioned and perplexed by Jesus' death, at least seven of the Disciples return to Galilee, to familiar surroundings and work.
- B. The account of the "third" appearance of Jesus to his Disciples after his resurrection in John's Gospel reads as if it was the first encounter.
- C. Having fished all night, the Disciples' net is still empty. Suddenly a voice from the shoreline says (and I love the NRSV translation of these words), "Children, you have no fish, have you?" How fitting these words are when Jesus' disciples try to do anything on their own!! And the voice says, "Throw the net of the right side of the boat...and see what happens!"
- D. Again, there is more than a hint of expectancy in Jesus' words...there is promise... though the Disciples do not know yet that it is Jesus on the beach. What amazing things can happen when Jesus' followers trust Him and respond with obedience! "They did what he said! Suddenly there were so many fish in the net that they weren't able to pull it in!"
- E. A "Miraculous Catch of Fish" is recorded in Luke's Gospel at the beginning of Jesus' ministry and is part of the call of the first Disciples. Matthew and Mark also give account that at least four of the Disciples were fisherman by trade and also testify to Jesus' appearing in Galilee after his resurrection. But in John's Gospel this "fish story" functions as a re-commissioning of the Disciples!

II. NO ARTIFICIAL LURES!

- A. It is after this "miraculous" catch that the "beloved" Disciple recognizes that the one who has called out to them is indeed "the Master!"
- B. With that recognition, impetuous Peter jumps in and heads for shore, soon followed by the others hauling the incredible catch! 153 large fish!! Peter must help bring in the heavy net and John gives us another clue into Jesus' words of promise as, "Even with all those fish, the net didn't rip!" What Jesus commands will be fulfilled in and through his followers!
- C. Breakfast is already cooking with fish on the fire, and Jesus invites them to "bring some of the fish that you have just caught" ...yet another invitation to discipleship!
- D. And having received what the Disciples brought to the morning feast, Jesus declares that "Breakfast is ready!" With the recognition that this is indeed their crucified and risen Master, there is more than a little tension in the air (after all each of them had so recently abandoned him on the cross) and they are speechless, "Not one of them dared ask, 'who are you?'"
- E. Then Jesus "took the bread and gave it to them and did the same with the fish." In the breaking of the bread and giving of the fish the Disciples experience the presence of the risen Christ and a reminder of their calling and mission!

This story mirrors one that is being written among us right now! We, the disciples of Mt. Tabor United Methodist Church are asking, "Lord, where will you have us go?". We are in our boat together and moving forward. Let's be expectant! We have heard Jesus' voice saying, "throw the net" once again! We celebrate how God has moved in our past to be bold and all the ways God has led those who have gone before us to witness to their faith and care for God's people in and beyond this community. We can be sure that as Jesus invites us to "bring some of what we have" to share, and we place it in His hands, we will not be disappointed, and the hungry will be fed, and we will see the Master!!

What are you/we hearing Jesus say to us?

What are you/we "daring" to do?