

Sunday Morning Message

April 23, 2023

Title – *Three Post-Resurrection Commandments from the Lord - Fellowship, Follow Me, and Feed My Sheep*

Text – John 21:1 - 3

Congregational Reading – John 21

Introduction

After the Lord had risen from the dead, He made many appearances to His disciples over a forty-day period. In fact, according to 1 Corinthians 15:6, He appeared to over 500 people. There are two reasons that Jesus hung around here on the earth for so long after his resurrection:

- 1 He wanted the people to know for sure that He had truly risen from the dead. The foundational doctrine of Christianity is the death and resurrection. Paul said that if Jesus didn't rise, then we are still in our sins, and we are most miserable.
- 2 Now that it was well established that the resurrection was true, He had some instructions that He wanted to give His disciples.

This morning, we will look at a final post-resurrection appearance of our Lord – this time to some of the disciples as they were fishing on the Sea of Tiberius, which is another name for the Sea of Galilee.

Let's read the story from John 21. We will make some comments along the way and focus on three post-resurrection commandments that the Lord gives to these disciples, which also apply to us. [Pray]

"1 After these things Jesus shewed himself again to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias; and on this wise shewed he himself. 2 There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, and two other of his disciples. 3 Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing. They say unto him, We also go with thee. They went forth, and entered into a ship immediately; and that night they caught nothing." (John 21:1-3)

1 Peter wasn't just going fishing; he was leaving his calling. Jesus called him to be a fisher of men, and now because of discouragement, Peter was abandoning that call and was going back to being a fisherman.

Peter had denied the Lord. He was once very self-confident. He promised the Lord that he would die for Him, but when the "chips were down", he three times denied that he even

knew the Lord. Now the guilt of that denial was weighing heavily on Peter. He had failed, and in his mind, he was sure that the Lord wouldn't have any use for him anymore, but he was wrong.

2 Peter took others with him in his discouragement. Your discouragement will discourage others.

3 Notice that they caught nothing. These men were all called to be preachers of the gospel, and God was not about to bless them in any other endeavor.

"For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." (Romans 11:29)

Jeremiah tried to get away from the calling of God:

"O LORD, thou hast deceived me, and I was deceived: thou art stronger than I, and hast prevailed: I am in derision daily, every one mocketh me. For since I spake, I cried out, I cried violence and spoil; because the word of the LORD was made a reproach unto me, and a derision, daily. Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay." (Jeremiah 20:7-9)

"4 But when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore: but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus. 5 Then Jesus saith unto them, Children, have ye any meat? They answered him, No. 6 And he said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes. 7 Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord. Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his fisher's coat unto him, (for he was naked,) and did cast himself into the sea. 8 And the other disciples came in a little ship; (for they were not far from land, but as it were two hundred cubits,) dragging the net with fishes. 9 As soon then as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread. 10 Jesus saith unto them, Bring of the fish which ye have now caught. 11 Simon Peter went up, and drew the net to land full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty and three: and for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken." (John 21:4-11)

Peter should have known that it was the Lord.

Turn to Luke 5:1 – 11

*"12 Jesus saith unto them, **Come and dine.** And none of the disciples durst ask him, Who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord. 13 Jesus then cometh, and taketh bread, and giveth them, and fish likewise. 14 This is now the third time that Jesus shewed himself to his disciples, after that he was risen from the dead. 15 So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest (ἀγαπᾷς from ἀγαπάω – agapaō) thou me*

*more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love (φιλέω from φιλέω – phileō - affection) thee. He saith unto him, **Feed my lambs.** 16 He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, **Feed my sheep.** 17 He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, **Feed my sheep.** 18 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. 19 This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, **Follow me.** 20 Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following; which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee? 21 Peter seeing him saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? 22 Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? **follow thou me.**" (John 21:12-22)*

What were the Lord's commandments to all the disciples, but especially to Peter on this post-resurrection appearance?

I Fellowship - Come and Dine (v. 12)

The Lord did not need what the disciples could do in their own strength. He already had a meal prepared for them. God has got wonderful plan for your life, a purpose, which includes provision for your needs and divine protection. Come and dine on God's will for your life. Put down your fishing nets and partake in what God already has prepared for you.

"O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him." (Psalms 34:8)

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls." (Matthew 11:29 - 30)

Come and dine on the Lord's Salvation

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." (Revelation 3:20)

"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." (Romans 10:13)

"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." (Revelation 22:17)

Come and dine on the Lord's Scripture

"But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." (Matthew 4:4)

"Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips; I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food." (Job 23:12)

The Word of God is the spiritual sustenance that your soul desires.

II Follow Me (vs. 19 and 22)

To follow the Lord means to do what He would do and be what He would be.

Follow Him in Winning Souls

"And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." (Matthew 4:19)

Follow Him in Sacrifice for Others

"Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." (Matthew 16:24)

Follow Him in Service

"If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour." (John 12:26)

God has a job for you to do for him. You are his ambassador. You are to shine the light of his love and his gospel to the world around you.

Jesus was a servant leader. There was no job that was beneath Him. He even humbly washed the disciples' feet, and when he was done, he explained that we were to follow His example.

Illustration - During the American Revolution a man in civilian clothes rode past a group of soldiers repairing a small defensive barrier. Their leader was shouting instructions but making no attempt to help them. Asked why by the rider, he retorted with great dignity, "Sir, I am a corporal!" The stranger apologized, dismounted, and proceeded to help the exhausted soldiers. The job done, he turned to the corporal and said, "Mr. Corporal, next time you have a job like this and not enough men to do it, go to your commander-in-chief, and I will come and help you again." It was none other than George Washington.

III Feed My Lambs; Feed My Sheep

We are to take what the Lord has given us and give it to others. God has saved us, and we are now to follow his example and pursue His will for our lives, which is a life of feeding others. God has given me certain gifts, and I am to use those gifts to be a blessing to other people.

Jesus told Peter to Feed His Sheep.

Conclusion

"23 Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die: yet Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die; but, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? 24 This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his testimony is true. 25 And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen." (John 21:23-25)

John would be the only disciple that would not die a martyr's death. Tradition tells us that Roman Emperor Domitian tried to have John executed by boiling him in oil but he did not die. God miraculously spared his life. He was banished to a little island on the Aegean Sea called Patmos, and it was there that God gave him the Revelation, which is the last recorded book of the New Testament to be given.

But notice again, that the Bible does not contain everything that could have been written about the Lord Jesus Christ; it just contains the Truth that God wants us to have.

Jesus paid the ultimate price so that you and I could be redeemed from the penalty of Hell. The Bible says, we are bought with a price. He purchased us. He could force us to do what he wants us to do, but instead he calls us to follow him, and to feed His sheep.

Illustrate – Hudson Taylor Preparation for China

Hudson Taylor's next abode — and the one where he felt that he could get real training for China — was in a very undesirable portion of the city of Hull. Two rows of poor little cottages faced each other, and between them was a ditch where rubbish was thrown. The neighborhood was called "Drainside." When the tide rose high enough the rubbish was carried away. Unattractive as this was, Hudson Taylor selected one of these cottages as his dwelling-place. A room less than twelve feet square was his, while his landlady, Mrs. Finch, with her children, occupied the upstairs room and the kitchen. Mr. Finch was away at sea most of the time, and his wife was glad of the three shillings a week paid her by Hudson Taylor.

He boarded himself and lived mostly on oatmeal, rice, and brown bread, finding it a pleasure to deny himself in order that he might have money with which to help others. At the close of his day's work, he would take his lonely walk to his comfortless room, and on Sundays he visited the sick and helped the poor. It was not the kind of life one would be apt to choose, but God's blessing was upon him, and that is more than all the world has to offer.