

5.02.21 ~ **Post-Resurrection Appearances of Jesus ~ Part Four**

Read John 21:1-5... Some time after the events of **John 20**, the disciples departed Jerusalem and traveled to Galilee, just as Jesus had told them to (during the Passover meal on Thursday night), before His arrest in the Garden on Friday morning (see **Mark 14:28**).

In our text we find Jesus manifesting Himself to a group of His disciples, at the Sea of Tiberias [note: This is the Sea of Galilee, but by the time of John's writing it was commonly called the Sea of Tiberias, after the city of Tiberias, on the western shore, which had been named after Tiberius Caesar (cf. **Luke 3:1**).

There are seven apostles in this story: Simon Peter, Thomas (called Didymus), Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the *sons* of Zebedee (John and James), and two others who are unnamed; but it is very likely they are Philip and Andrew who were often listed with Peter, James and John.

The disciples had previously been told by Jesus (**Matthew 28:10, 16**) to, "Go and take word to My brethren to leave for Galilee, and there they will see Me." "The eleven disciples proceeded to Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had designated."

Did you notice, it says the eleven went to meet Jesus at a specified mountain in Galilee; but it would seem that at least seven of the eleven got tired of waiting, and decided to go catch something to eat.

In **John 21:3**, it is recorded that Peter said to the other six, "I am going fishing," and they said back to him, "We will also come with you." And they got into a boat (perhaps belonging to Peter, or maybe John or James). They fished all night and caught nothing.

It would appear that Peter and some of the others who had been fishermen when Jesus called them, were now going back to their former occupation of fishing, although they are not having much success, in this instance.

Jesus said to His disciples (**John 16:32**), "Behold, an hour is coming, and has already come, for you to be scattered, each to *his own* home." The Greek doesn't have the word *home* but reads *his own*; the same phrase used in 1Thessalonians 4:11, is translated "*your own business*," signifying that they would return to the way of life they had before following Christ (i.e., for these seven) back to fishing.

Three years ago, these men had left their previous lives to follow Jesus, in order to become fishers of men (see **Matthew 4:19-20**; cf Luke 9:23).

Jesus didn't intend for them to return to their previous lives; they had been called to the Gospel of Christ, as (**Acts 1:8**) "witnesses both in Jerusalem, all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth." There really was no going back to their regular lives, after having received the calling and commission to follow Him.

John 21:4 tells us that after a long night without catching anything, these guys head back into shore, as the sun is coming up, and Jesus is standing on the beach, but they do not recognize Him.

In **verse 5**, Jesus says to them, "Children, you do not have any fish, do you?" they answer, "No." This was a mild rebuke for not waiting on the Lord to come, instead of trusting Jesus, they took it upon themselves to get food, by going back to their previous occupation, and they weren't doing so well at it.

Read John 21:6-14... The Lord calls them to put their net on the right side of the boat, they do; immediately their net is so full they can't pull it into the boat.

The disciple whom Jesus loved (John) recognized that it was the Lord, and so he told Peter, "It is the Lord." Peter put his outer clothing on and jumped into the lake, he couldn't wait for the slow moving boat to make it to shore; he wanted to be with Jesus right now!

The other six disciples were in the boat, "about one hundred yards off shore," dragging the net with their heavy catch, because they couldn't get it into the boat. When they finally reached the beach and got out of the boat, they could see there was a small fire with some fish and bread already cooking.

At this point Jesus tells them to bring some of fish they have caught, and He adds these to the meal He is already preparing. The net of fish is still a ways to in the water; but on hearing the Lord's command, Peter grabs ahold of the net and pulls it up on the land, it is full of fish, in fact, 153 large fish.

John (a fisherman by profession) is amazed (**verse 11**) that such a huge catch of large fish has not torn the net.

Jesus invites the men to come and have breakfast with Him (**verses 12-13**), and although they are still not absolutely sure it is Him, they don't ask any questions, for in their hearts they know it is Jesus.

It appears that they came up on the beach, where Jesus was cooking, they didn't take anything to eat; at least, not until the Lord took some of the bread and the fish and gave it to them. Here is the resurrected Lord, still providing for this band of misfit fishermen. Jesus loved these guys.

John tells us (**verse 14**), this is the third time Jesus has revealed Himself to His disciples, since He rose from the grave (see **John 20:19-20, 26-29**).

So, what can we takeaway from these Passages today?

Jesus had told His disciples to go to Galilee (to some specified location known to them, but not stated in the text) and there they would see Him; it would seem that the waiting became difficult, for at least seven of the disciples, so they decided to go back to their trade of fishing, although, they weren't able to catch any fish.

We are told that Jesus manifested Himself to these men at the Sea of Galilee, where He demonstrated His care for them, just like He had provided for them during three years they were with Him, before His death and resurrection. The narrative tells us that after the men fished all night and had caught nothing, they followed Jesus instruction on where to put their net, and the net became full of fish, 153 large fish.

I believe the takeaway from this story, is that we can trust our Lord to care for and provide for us, now and later; even if we can't see Him, once we come to Christ by faith, we cannot go back into the godless existence we had before coming to Him; we are called to be witnesses of the death and resurrection of God's Son.

The next appearance of Jesus seems to take place on a mountain in Galilee, probably the place where the seven fisherman, in the previous narrative, had been when they got tired of waiting for Jesus to show up, so they went fishing.

Jesus is now on the mountain, very likely the same place where He had given the Sermon on the Mount (**Matthew 5-7**). Paul tells us (**1Corinthians 15:6**), "He appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep."

This is very likely when Jesus gave the Great Commission (see **Matthew 28:1, 5-10, 18-20**), where every believer from the time of Jesus to the end of time as we know it, receives our commission to be witnesses of Christ (cf. **2Corinthians 5:17-21**).

The next appearance of Jesus mentioned in the biblical record is found in **1Corinthians 15:7a...** The James mentioned here is most likely the Lord's half-brother, who evidently, did not come to saving faith until he saw the risen Lord. We are not told where Jesus appeared to him; but we do know that James, Jesus' brother through Mary and Joseph, later became a prominent leader in the Jerusalem church, and author of the book by the same name: James.

There are four different men with the name of James who are mentioned in the New Testament (cf. **Mark 3:16-19; Luke 6:12-16**): James the brother of John (sons of Zebedee), James the son of Alphaeus, and James the father of Judas (not Iscariot).

The next post resurrection appearance of Jesus in the biblical record is recorded in **1Corinthians 15:7b...** I believe the statement here, "then to all the apostles," is speaking of the event recorded in **Acts 1:1-12**. Let's take a look.

As we have studied the post resurrection appearances of Jesus, it is worth mentioning here how Jesus appeared first to the women near the tomb on Sunday morning. Then He appeared to two disciples on the road to Emmaus on Sunday afternoon; after which, Sunday evening, He appeared to a group of followers that

included 10 of the original twelve Disciples, plus other followers of Jesus. He then appeared to all 11 of the original Disciples, again on a Sunday. Jesus then appeared to 7 of the Disciples at the Sea of Galilee; after which He appeared to more than 500 on the mountain. Next was Christ's appearance to James, we know not where; and then to all the apostles in **Acts 1:1-12**.

The record of Jesus' appearances to His followers after His death and resurrection is copious, credible, and conclusive; there is more than enough demonstrable evidence concerning His death and resurrection.

1John 1:1-3, "What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life— and the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us—what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ."

Why did God go to such great lengths to reveal and validate His plan?

John 20:30-31, "Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name."

1John 5:11-13, "And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life."