

where would you expect to find Him? Maybe we have missed seeing Jesus show up because we haven't expected Him. What does this appearance reveal about the ways Jesus wants to involve Himself in our lives?

John 21:12-14 NLT - 12 "Now come and have some breakfast!" Jesus said. None of the disciples dared to ask him, "Who are you?" They knew it was the Lord. 13 Then Jesus served them the bread and the fish. 14 This was the third time Jesus had appeared to his disciples since he had been raised from the dead.

Let's try to put ourselves in this scene. Are we like Peter, plunging into the water to get to Jesus as fast as we can? Or are we like the other disciples hanging back and taking care of business? Can you imagine being served breakfast this morning by Jesus Himself! He still wants to have a deep and personal encounter with His followers, and that includes you. Don't grow impatient in waiting for Jesus, and don't disqualify yourself from His love because of past failures. Expect to see Jesus showing up, loving, forgiving and inviting you into fellowship.

WRAP-UP

Jesus was faithful to His promise to show up in Galilee. Peter and company and returned to their fallback plan, providing for themselves, and coming up empty. But Jesus found them, directed them, and showed His love and forgiveness by serving them a meal. He also took this opportunity to restore Peter personally in Jn 21:15-18. Don't miss your opportunity to encounter the risen Christ. His love, forgiveness, and fellowship are still available to those who watch for Him, even in unexpected places.

MEMORY VERSE

John 21:12a NLT - 12 "Now come and have some breakfast!" Jesus said...

PRAYER (20 MIN)

Ask your group to pray for you regarding one area where you can apply this study in your life.

Challenge – Watch for Jesus in unexpected places this week.

Encounters with Jesus

Pastor David Hutsko

INTRODUCTION

On Easter Sunday the tomb was found empty, and Jesus appeared to Mary saying, "Go tell my brothers to leave for Galilee, and they will see me there." (Matthew 28:10) During the 40 days between His resurrection and ascension to heaven there were a dozen recorded appearances of Jesus and He was seen by hundreds of people. The accounts of the resurrected Jesus were from firsthand witnesses who had personal encounters. There is a significant difference between saying, "I've been told Jesus was raised from the dead" and "I saw Jesus after He was raised from the dead." Those personal encounters revealed a picture of who Jesus is and who God is. They solidified and galvanized the disciples into the emerging church we read about in Acts.

Ice Breaker

Did you ever meet someone personally who you had only heard about and discovered they were very different in person than you thought?

Key Passage

Matthew 28:10 NLT - 10 Then Jesus said to them, "Don't be afraid! Go tell my brothers to leave for Galilee, and they will see me there."

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Bonded by Faith

John 21:1-2 NLT - 1 Later, Jesus appeared again to the disciples beside the Sea of Galilee. This is how it happened. 2 Several of the disciples were there--Simon Peter, Thomas (nicknamed the Twin), Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two other disciples.

Before He was crucified Jesus had many following Him. After He died, In John 21:1-2 His closest companions had returned to Galilee as they were instructed. Can you imagine their pain and confusion, the doubt and hope they must have felt? Jesus had appeared, but then disappeared on the Emmaus Road and twice to them in Jerusalem. Now this band of brothers was back at the Sea of Galilee where Jesus told them to return.

Jesus' disciples came from diverse backgrounds. They included a Political Zealot, a Jewish tax collector, fishermen, and various others. With Jesus now absent they might have disbanded, but they didn't. What was it that bonded these men so closely together? What group or community do you feel most closely bonded to? In what ways are you connected to this group and what are some of the differences amongst its members?

2. The Fallback Plan

John 21:3 NLT - 3 Simon Peter said, "I'm going fishing." "We'll come, too," they all said. So they went out in the boat, but they caught nothing all night.

Waiting is hard. Jesus had told His disciples that they would see Him in Galilee. But He didn't say when or where. Peter became impatient. So, this diverse group of companions joined Peter in his fallback plan- Peter decided to do what he was good at and what he knew. He went fishing, and they all joined him. Peter was relying on himself. In a way, this brings the disciples full circle. Jesus first approached Peter, Andrew, James, and John when they were fishing. (Luke 5:4-6)

Luke 5:4-6 NLT - 4 When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Now go out where it is deeper, and let down your nets to catch some fish." 5 "Master," Simon replied, "we worked hard all last night and didn't catch a thing. But if you say so, I'll let the nets down again." 6 And this time their nets were so full of fish they began to tear!

John 21:4-6 NLT - 4 At dawn Jesus was standing on the beach, but the disciples couldn't see who he was. 5 He called out, "Fellows, have you caught any fish?" "No," they replied. 6 Then he said, "Throw out your net on the right-hand side of the boat, and you'll get some!" So they did, and they couldn't haul in the net because there were so many fish in it.

What had they accomplished during their night of fishing? What was to result of trusting Jesus to direct them in their work on both occasions? Have you ever given up on a project or a job that you knew you were good at, but it somehow failed to produce anything of substance? On the other hand, have you had amazing success in something you could only attribute to God?

John 15:5 NLT - 5 "Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing.

It is easy to become frustrated while we wait for God's timing. Most of us, like Peter, would rather take things into our own hands and do things our way. But as evidenced from their empty nets, apart from Jesus we can do nothing. Aren't these the disciples who reported that even the demons were subject to them in Jesus' name? But even when they wandered off, Jesus sought them out and restored them to fruitfulness.

At what point do you think the disciples realized that they made the wrong choice to go fishing? When we rely on ourselves to produce results, we might be missing something wonderful that God wants to give us. Maybe there is a ministry, or relationship or something else in your life that is stuck. This could be the time that Jesus wants to redirect your efforts and give you a new start. Pray and ask God to show you any area where you've relied too much on yourself and not enough on Him. Then be willing to risk trusting Him in a new way forward.

3. Jesus Finds Us

John 21:7-9 NLT - 7 Then the disciple Jesus loved said to Peter, "It's the Lord!" When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his tunic (for he had stripped for work), jumped into the water, and headed to shore. 8 The others stayed with the boat and pulled the loaded net to the shore, for they were only about a hundred yards from shore. 9 When they got there, they found breakfast waiting for them--fish cooking over a charcoal fire, and some bread.

What a beautiful surprise! Although Jesus had told them they would see Him in Galilee, they probably never expected an al fresco breakfast like this.

If you had been told that Jesus was going to show up in your life,