

## **John 21**

1 Tiberias was a Roman city on the western coasts of Galilee. Its ruins are still visible today in the modern city that now stands in the same place. Galilee had several names. Today it is Lake Kinneret because of its harp like shape. Jesus said He would meet the disciples there. (Matthew 26:32) Is this the meeting He was referring to? (Matthew 28:16) It sounds like the designated meeting took place on a mountain. It may be the Mark 16:7 meeting.

2-3 At Peter's suggestion, seven of the disciples got together for a night of fishing. What was going through their minds? Were they just waiting for Jesus' promised appearance or were they thinking about going back to their old life? Luke 5:10 Jesus had told them from now on they would catch men. Here is another lesson that teaches that without Jesus, we can't do anything productive.

4-6 Perhaps they assumed he was interested in purchasing some fish, at least until he told them to cast on the right side of the boat. They had hesitated to obey before (Luke 5:5-11). It was when they were called to follow Him full time. Perhaps this is a recall, or at least a reminder of the initial calling that had never been changed. Though at times Paul and other ministers labored to support themselves, it seems that the Apostles were to put their whole efforts into catching men (1Corinthians 9:4-6). Psalm 8:8 The fish of the sea are subject to the son of man. Compare this catch with the one in Acts 4:4.

7 This is the season before Pentecost, Spring. That lake is cold then! But Peter couldn't wait to stand in His presence. He had met with Him once alone. Now He desires that time alone with Him again. Do you have a heart that runs to Jesus? Sometimes He calls to our spirit. Do you drop everything and run to Him? This isn't the first time Peter has jumped in to be with Him. Matthew 14:28-29

8-10 That was quite a swim. Peter must have been a good swimmer! The net was too full to bring it into the boat. This wasn't the first miraculous meal in the Bible (1Kings 19:5-6). Don't forget the feeding of the 5000 and 4000. Perhaps Jesus was teaching Luke 12:29-31 by demonstration. They brought what they had but even that was from the hand of God.

11 The Jews believed there were 153 types of fish in the sea. Jerome suggested that if this is a picture of catching men, then Jesus is reminding them of the great commission. The net does not break because it is a picture of the power of the Gospel to catch men or perhaps of the church to hold them. In Luke 5:6 the net began to break, but here it does not.

12-14 Jesus was not an apparition. He guided them to the catch, made the fire, cooked the fish and bread, and ate with them. Acts 10:41 The first two times were in the house in Jerusalem, without (20:19) and with Thomas (20:26).

15 More than the boat, nets and fish or more than the other disciples? If it was the first, it would imply Peter was thinking of going back to fishing and a comfortable

predictable life. If the second meaning, then Jesus is reminding Peter of the time he insisted that even if the others left, he would stay at Jesus side (Matthew 26:33). Do you agapao me more than these? Jesus asked. Peter answered that he loved Jesus like a brother, phileo. Jesus then instructed him to feed His lambs.

16-17 For every denial, Jesus gave Peter a chance to declare His love. In 16 Jesus asked the same question with the word agapao and Peter replied again with phileo. In 17 Jesus asked if he did indeed phileo Jesus.

The three instructions were to feed the lambs, take care of the sheep, and to feed the sheep. The New Testament term for church leaders became "shepherds" because of Jesus' analogy (Acts 20:28). He is the Great Shepherd and has undershepherds. Jeremiah 3:15

Peter seemed to take it as a lack of trust in his veracity when Jesus asked a third time. Peter declared that Jesus was omniscient, even knowing the extent of his love. Jesus point seems to be that since Peter is declaring his love for Jesus, he needs to follow it up with walking in his calling. This makes me wonder if Peter was considering himself unworthy to lead because of his denials and was thinking of returning to fishing. Jesus declared that love is expressed through obedience. John 14:21;15:10,14

18-19 Tradition tells us that Peter died in Rome, crucified upside down. He asked to be crucified that way because he did not feel worthy to die like his Lord. One tradition says he was leaving Rome, fleeing persecution when the Lord met him. He asked him where he was going, Quo Vadis? Peter replied that he was fleeing the persecution. Jesus answered that he would go and die again in his place. Peter went back into Rome and was captured and crucified. The veracity of that story is doubtful, but there is a message to it. It is our turn to suffer as the body of Christ. His work is done. Jesus commands Peter to "Follow me!" These are the same words He used when He was first called. Matthew 4:19

20-22 What about John? You love him best, so what's going to happen to him? Don't worry about other people. What if I let him live until my return? What difference would that make? Would it mean that I love him more, or make things easier for him? Just follow me. I'm not asking you to go where I haven't gone.

23-24 John lived to die of old age, to write this gospel and see the Revelation. He endured torture and hard labor. Funny how rumors start and how we miss what Jesus is saying. His point was that each individual needs to look at his own walk and relationship, not at others. Each of us has a unique call, but all follow the Shepherd.

25 Like the end of the last chapter, there is so much that could be written. Every detail of the life of Jesus brought glory to God. Everything He did was an example, but we have what we need to be convinced and believe that He is the Son of God. In believing we have life in His name. What we see of Jesus is only a small portion of the wonderful reality of His fullness. Job 26:14; Psalm 71:15