

## **EASTER SUNDAY – Breakfast with Jesus.**

### **Scripture: John 21:1-17**

This morning's text starts with Jesus, risen from the dead, ringing the dinner bell. He is on the beach by the Sea of Tiberias, catching up with His disciples. We heard that the disciples had spent the night fishing but had had no luck. Jesus appears at daybreak and calls out to them to fish on the other side of the boat. They do, of course, and their nets are full, beyond full, of fish, and they know that it is the Lord.



Naturally, they rush to shore. As usual Peter takes the lead, jumping in and swimming to the shore. When the disciples arrive, Jesus already has some fish cooking, and asks for some of their catch too. He invites them simply, “Come and have breakfast.”

Overall, this interaction is really normal. Oddly so. The disciples have recognized Him as the Christ, the one who two other times had appeared in locked rooms and shown His wounds and now He's going about a mundane morning task as if everything is the same.

Here we find a beautiful understanding of God on this first Sunday after Easter. It is a day when many of us may be experiencing a bit of “post-Easter decline.” Like the disciples, this week we have returned to our everyday lives, business as usual. Today's text reminds us that sometimes God appears here, too.

For many of us, God does not show up with lightning, full of explosions of clarify and wonder, but in awkward moments of inexplicable holiness. This is what Easter looks like, John tells us. Sometimes life with Christ looks like the dead raised, mountains of transfiguring light and the feeding of 5 thousand with last night's leftovers. Often, though, it is as simple as breakfast by the sea. It is the mundane mingled with miracle, charcoal fires and unbroken nets.

What follows next in the story is a surprising lack of dialogue. The disciples are stunned into silence. You might imagine everyone standing or sitting around the fire, watching the fish cook, eyeing the horizon, trying to figure out what to say.

Scripture says the disciples dare not ask Him who He was – they knew that. But they couldn't seem to find any other words, either. It must have been awkward.

“So, how have You been Jesus? The last time we saw you.....” yeah, there's not a good intro into that conversation is there and talking about the weather probably seemed minimal. They couldn't even talk about their night of fishing, their nets had been empty until Jesus came along. And so, they sit in silence.

Perhaps the disciples were quiet because they were embarrassed or scared or otherwise nervous about this strange encounter. There was a lot Peter probably didn't want mentioned. The last time Peter was by a charcoal fire he denied knowing Jesus three times.

Here on the beach Jesus looks at Peter and says, “Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?”

What a heavy-hitting question, especially first thing in the morning. He uses Peter's full name, so you know it is serious. Jesus' questions were not mean-spirited, He was calling Peter out for his past actions. His questions were about love and reconciliation.

This conversation at the beach is a moment of redemption of Peter, carefully crafted to mirror his denial, even down to the detail of doing so sitting by a fire. It is no accident that Jesus asks Peter the question 3 times, paralleling the 3 times Peter was asked if he knew Jesus and the 3 rooster crows.

Jesus gives Peter the opportunity to undo his previous statements. Peter is given not just one more chance, but three, a testament to a grace that's just as abundant as the net overflowing with fish.

Peter responds with a profound statement of faith – Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He can rest in the hope that Jesus knows his heart and affirm that indeed, Jesus is the one and the same omniscient God. A God who knows him, better than he knows himself. A God who loves him, even when he has demonstrated the opposite. A God who shows up to give him second and third chances. This is the reality of the risen Lord.

Jesus' question is meant to remind His disciples of what is more important so that He can point them in the right direction. Likewise, to us today, it is a question to help remind us of the central component of our faith – a love of Jesus Christ.

I think it is significant that Jesus met His disciples on the beach for breakfast, rather than lunch or dinner. Breakfast is the start of

the day. Some say it is the most important meal and that you should make sure to get the nutrients you need to sustain you for the work you have ahead.

On the beach, Jesus provided the disciples with all they needed – literal and spiritual food. This wasn't a wind down meal to talk about the events that had happened and turn in for the night. Instead, this is a starting point giving them their commission – to go and do things.

Feed my lambs.....tends my sheep.....feed my sheep. This is the response Jesus has to Peter's profession of love. In John 13 Jesus has instructed the disciples to love. He washed their feet and gave them a new commandment – love one another. By this everyone will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.

The story of this simple breakfast on the beach reminds us that Easter is not the end point to a beautiful story about how the baby in the manger emerged from the tomb.

Easter is the beginning, the dawning of a new day. And our risen Lord meets us to help us understand what we are to do next?

So, come and eat breakfast: hear Christ asking you that same question He asked Peter, "Do you love me?" And may our lives be a witness to our answer. Amen.