



The God of Second Chances!

John 21:15-17

Observations: Please Make This Sermon Personal

- Think for a moment about the times you've failed Jesus
- Think about going to worship Jesus after both you and He knew that you betrayed Him again
- What would He say to you at worship or Bible study?
"After all I've done for you, how could you?"
- Would He say something through someone else that YOU KNEW was meant for you? (preacher, teacher, brother, sister)
- Would He give you an experience in life that unmistakably drew your attention to His strained relationship with you?
- Or did Jesus just, "put you on the shelf" and never blessed your desires, and moved on to another saint?

What Does Jesus Do When You Let Him Down?

#1 Jesus Comes Looking for You

- If anybody ever needed a second chance in his spiritual life, it was Peter, one of *“the inner three”* in *“the exclusive twelve”*
- Peter was the disciple that made that powerful profession of his faith, *“Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God,”* Matthew 16:16
- Peter was on the Mountain of Transfiguration with Jesus in Matthew 17, along with James and John
- But later, this same Peter denied that he knew Jesus 3 times in one night, and on the third denial, their eyes met
- Jesus died later on that same night, but He had some *“unfinished business”* with Peter that needed to take place

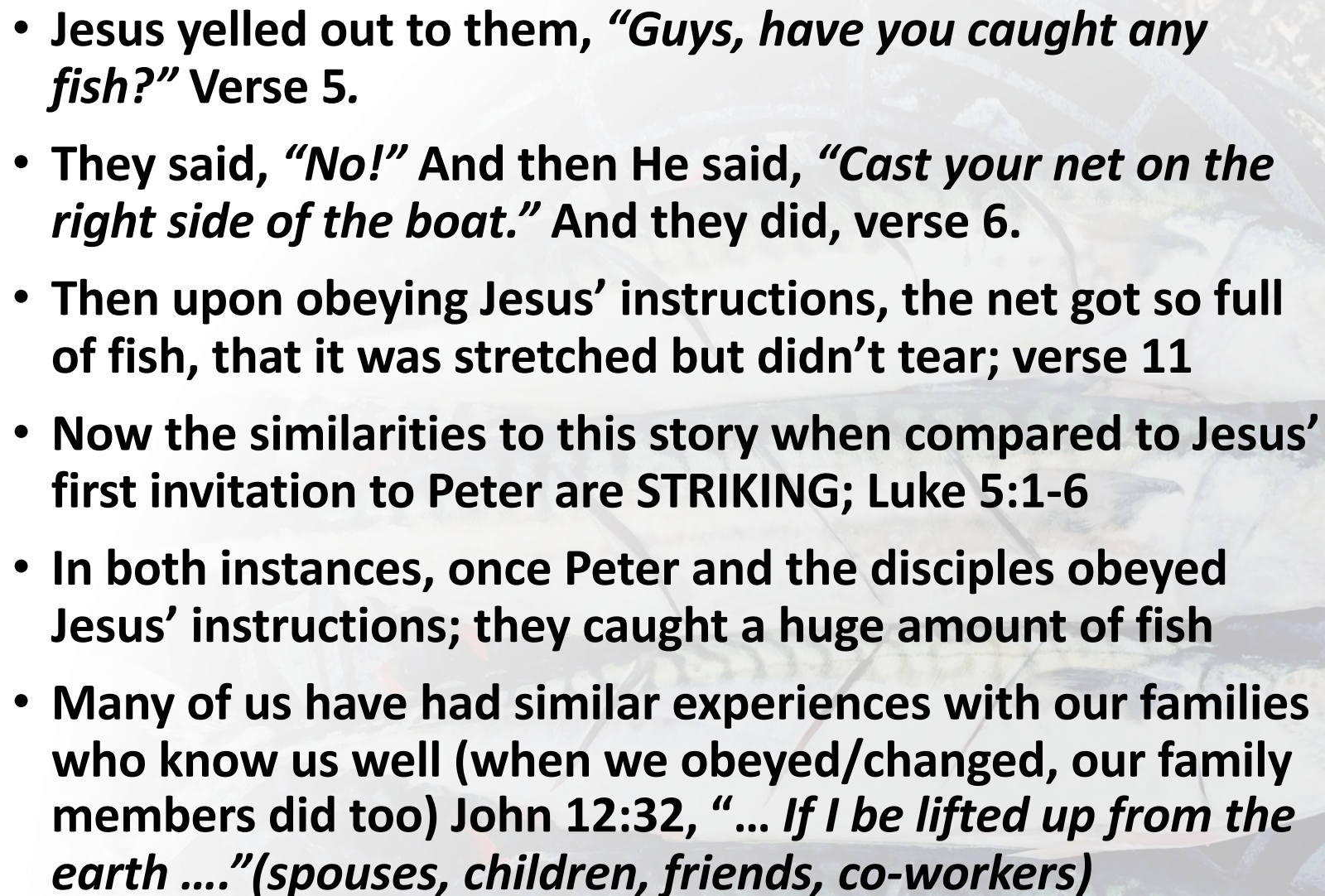
Jesus Came Looking for Peter

- After Jesus' death, John 19, Peter announced to 6 of Jesus' disciples that he was going fishing, John 21:3, and they went with him
- We aren't told why (fishing was his vocation, not just a recreational pursuit)

Maybe he thought it was time to get back to his regular routine. Jesus had been crucified. *"The movement is over!"*

Maybe it was because he had been through a lot, (Jesus' trial and his denial, as well as Jesus' death and burial, he had run in fear of recognition); or maybe he thought that he needed a fresh change of scenery

- But what we do know is that Peter did go fishing in a boat with the other disciples that evening; and they were unsuccessful all night long (they caught nothing, verse 3)
- John 21:4 says that the next morning, Jesus stood on the shore, but they didn't recognize Him

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- Jesus yelled out to them, *“Guys, have you caught any fish?”* Verse 5.
 - They said, *“No!”* And then He said, *“Cast your net on the right side of the boat.”* And they did, verse 6.
 - Then upon obeying Jesus’ instructions, the net got so full of fish, that it was stretched but didn’t tear; verse 11
 - Now the similarities to this story when compared to Jesus’ first invitation to Peter are STRIKING; Luke 5:1-6
 - In both instances, once Peter and the disciples obeyed Jesus’ instructions; they caught a huge amount of fish
 - Many of us have had similar experiences with our families who know us well (when we obeyed/changed, our family members did too) John 12:32, *“... If I be lifted up from the earth”*(spouses, children, friends, co-workers)

Notice What Happens Next

Then the disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter. "It is the Lord!" As soon as Simon Peter heard him say, "It is the Lord, he wrapped his outer garment ... and jumped into the water. The other disciples followed in the boat dragging a net full of fish ... about 100 yards from the shore. John 21:7-8

- **Question: Why would Peter, the only one out of 7 men, ostentatiously swim approximately 100 yards to try to impress Jesus, though the boat was headed to the shore?**

Answer: Sometimes an outward show of devotion can "suggest" a commitment above and beyond the others

But the question that remained for Peter was: Was he pretending? (was he acting out of guilt)

Jumping in the water for Jesus didn't answer that question, but Jesus needed to know the answer

When We Let Jesus Down, Expect Him to Come Looking for Us

- He may show up: at your house, at your school, at your church, at a recreational event, while you are shopping (it may be a moral question of which you know the answer, but you find yourself on the wrong side of it!)

Look for Jesus in the Routines of Your Life!

Behold I stand at the door (whose door?) and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and dine with him and He with me. Revelations 3:20

*Remember: You Didn't Choose Jesus First, He Chose You!
1 Peter 2:9, "but ye are a chosen generation ..."*

#2 When You Let Jesus Down, He Still Provides for You; Verses 9-10

“When they landed, they saw a fire of burning coals there with fish on it, and some bread. Jesus said to them, “Bring some of the fish you just caught. So Simon climbed back into the boat and dragged the net ashore. It was full of large fish”

- If Peter had thought that because of his recently documented betrayals, Jesus had written him off and no longer wanted him; these actions by Jesus blew those thoughts away

Jesus had already started a fire for the disciples

He already had some fish on the fire before they had arrived with their catch and didn't leave Peter out of it

Jesus had prepared a meal and ask Peter if He could use his fish to go along with the fish He had already prepared

Observations

Even Knowing Our Failures, Jesus Still Wants to Be Our Shepherd, Our Provider, and Our Friend

Psalms 23 Comes to Mind. Jesus is the Good Shepherd:

Thou preparest a table (feast, NLT) before me in the presence of mine enemies; thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.”

Romans 2: 4

Or despiseth thou the riches of His goodness and forbearance, and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?

#3 When We Have Failed Jesus, He Deals Personally With Us, Verses 15-17

Verse 15, When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon (not Peter) son of John, do you love me more than these? He said to Him You know that I love you"

Verse 16, He said it to him a second time, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" He said to Him, "Yes Lord, You know that I love You."

Verse 17, He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love me?" And he said to Him, "Lord You know all things; You know that I love You."

- It was not coincidental that Peter was grieved, nor was it coincidental that Jesus' questions should have reminded Peter of his three most recent denials. Jesus confronts Peter failures **HEAD ON!** (Peter knew what he had done)

“Do You Love Me More Than These?”

What Does “These” Mean?

- Was it the objects, the fishing utensils, the boat, the employment? (the things Jesus provided him) gift vs. giver
- *Question: “Are you willing to put me first and rely on me to sustain you” “You may not be the most successful fisherman in town if you follow me.” “But I will provide for you,” Philippians 4:19 “And my God shall supply all”*

“But now you will be a fisher of men” more expensive than fish

- Remember Matthew 6:33

But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”

Did “*These*” Mean the Other Disciples? “Lovest thou me more than these?”

- Listen to Peter’s proclamation to Jesus earlier in Matthew 26:33

“Even if everyone else deserts you, I will never desert you,”

- Compare that with John 13:37

“Lord why can’t I follow you now? I will lay down my life for you.”

- Well, we already know that Jesus predicted Peter’s performance after he had given his words of loyalty
- But Jesus lets Peter know that even with his obvious failures, he would get a second chance to be utilized

“Feed my lambs,” “Feed my sheep,” “Feed my Lambs,”

In Acts chapter 2, Peter leads 3000 to Jesus Christ

Do You Need Another Chance?



The Plan of Salvation

Hear the Gospel

Acts 15:7

Believe the Gospel

Acts 15:7

Repent of Sins

Acts 17:30

Confess Christ

Acts 8:37

Be Baptized

Acts 8:38