

Observing Before We Observe
John 21:1-19

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Text: After this, Jesus revealed Himself again to His disciples by the Sea of Tiberias. He revealed Himself in this way:

² Simon Peter, Thomas (called “Twin”), Nathanael from Cana of Galilee, Zebedee’s sons, and two others of His disciples were together.

³ “I’m going fishing,” Simon Peter said to them.

“We’re coming with you,” they told him. They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.

⁴ When daybreak came, Jesus stood on the shore. However, the disciples did not know it was Jesus.

⁵ “Men,” Jesus called to them, “you don’t have any fish, do you?”

“No,” they answered.

⁶ “Cast the net on the right side of the boat,” He told them, “and you’ll find some.” So they did, and they were unable to haul it in because of the large number of fish. ⁷ Therefore the disciple, the one Jesus loved, said to Peter, “It is the Lord!”

When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he tied his outer garment around him (for he was stripped) and plunged into the sea. ⁸ But since they were not far from land (about 100 yards away), the other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish. ⁹ When they got out on land, they saw a charcoal fire there, with fish lying on it, and bread.

¹⁰ “Bring some of the fish you’ve just caught,” Jesus told them. ¹¹ So Simon Peter got up and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish—153 of them. Even though there were so many, the net was not torn.

¹² “Come and have breakfast,” Jesus told them. None of the disciples dared ask Him, “Who are You?” because they knew it was the Lord. ¹³ Jesus came, took the bread, and gave it to them. He did the same with the fish.

¹⁴ This was now the third time Jesus appeared to the disciples after He was raised from the dead.

¹⁵ When they had eaten breakfast, Jesus asked Simon Peter, “Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these?”

“Yes, Lord,” he said to Him, “You know that I love You.”

“Feed My lambs,” He told him.

¹⁶ A second time He asked him, “Simon, son of John, do you love Me?”

“Yes, Lord,” he said to Him, “You know that I love You.”

“Shepherd My sheep,” He told him.

¹⁷ He asked him the third time, “Simon, son of John, do you love Me?”

Peter was grieved that He asked him the third time, “Do you love Me?”

He said, “Lord, You know everything! You know that I love You.”

“Feed My sheep,” Jesus said. ¹⁸ “I assure you: When you were young, you would tie your belt and walk wherever you wanted. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands and someone else will tie you and carry you where you don’t want to go.” ¹⁹ He said this to signify by what kind of death he would glorify God. After saying this, He told him, “Follow Me!”

Introduction: Before we observe the Lord’s Supper today, we ought to make a few observations in the text to prepare our hearts. In John 21, Jesus invites the disciples to breakfast. It is a touching scene filled with imagery that is reflected here at our Communion Table.

The Lord’s Supper is ...

A Call to the Table

The table is a place of . . .

- Fellowship
- Forgiveness

A Call to the Task

The task is to be followed with faith and not with fear.

Scripture Meditation

1 Corinthians 11:23-26

²³ For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: On the night when He was betrayed, the Lord Jesus took bread, ²⁴ gave thanks, broke it, and said, “This is My body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of Me.”

²⁵ In the same way, after supper He also took the cup and said, “This cup is the new covenant established by My blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.” ²⁶ For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until He comes.