

JesusOnline Equip

Ministry Resources Hub

Follow Jesus!

A free resource from JesusOnline Ministries.

Read or share online: app.jesonline.com/post/22010-072-follow-jesus

JesusOnline Equip · Ministry Resources Hub · equip.jesonline.com

Free media and discipleship resources for pastors, leaders, and growing disciples.

Follow Jesus!

“After this Jesus revealed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias. Now this is how he did so. Simon Peter, Thomas (called Didymus), Nathanael (who was from Cana in Galilee), the sons of Zebedee, and two other disciples of his were together. Simon Peter told them, ‘I am going fishing.’ ‘We will go with you,’ they replied. They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing. “When it was already very early morning, Jesus stood on the beach, but the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. So Jesus said to them, ‘Children, you don’t have any fish, do you?’ They replied, ‘No.’ He told them, ‘Throw your net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some.’ So they threw the net, and were not able to pull it in because of the large number of fish.” —John 21:1-6

The Sea of Tiberius, also known as the Sea of Galilee, was the chosen sight for our Lord’s appearance to His beloved disciples. This would have been familiar territory and sweet surroundings for these men. Indeed, it was the place where Jesus had done some of His mightiest works—walked on water, stilled the waves and winds, provided money for taxes from the mouth of a fish, fed the multitudes loaves and fishes, cast out legions of demons, and delivered the parable of the sower. This place would serve to remind His disciples of the days when Jesus’ power, love, and wisdom were constantly in their view. Sometimes we just need to be reminded of His mercy, power, love, wisdom, and forgiveness. Jesus is always aware of what His followers need—ever reminding us of His presence, especially when faith ebbs low.

Interestingly, this was where Peter, James, and John had first followed Jesus. It was here that He had called them to abandon their fishing for mere fish and embrace the highest work of fishing for the souls of men. Of interest as well is the fact that Thomas, the doubter turned believer, is now mentioned with Peter. Thomas had missed the appearance of Jesus when the other disciples had assembled, and he was wisely not about to let another opportunity slip through his hands!

Peter demonstrates his leadership abilities as the small band of disciples seem to follow him when he makes mention of going fishing. The simple definition of a leader is to have someone follow. In our verses for today, Peter goes fishing with six others. Not wanting to simply wait for Jesus’ next appearance with idle hands, Peter gravitates to what he knows—fishing. He goes back to what he is accustomed to

doing and the others follow suit. There is something very comforting in doing the familiar—it clears one’s mind particularly when so much surprise and unknown swirls in the head.

Not much has gone as expected for the disciples! In the beginning, when the disciples left everything to follow Jesus, their expectations and dreams were not exactly what eventually played out (to say the least). Now they are trying to absorb all that has just happened: Judas’ betrayal; Peter’s denial; Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection; *and* His appearance to them after His resurrection. They had to have been overwhelmed. As they try to figure out where to go from here, they return to what they know.

Oftentimes, when we set out to follow Jesus, we must tear up into the smallest pieces any itinerary we may have for the journey. Not much happens as we expect. Jesus keeps to no beaten path nor will He allow us to put Him in a box. He leads us by a way our eyes and ears and minds have never seen, heard, imagined, or dreamed. He knows no fear and He expects His servants to fear nothing because He always walks with us. It is His great promise to all believers. He is a “with us” God.

“Your conduct must be free from the love of money and you must be content with what you have, for he has said, ‘I will never leave you and I will never abandon you.’” —Hebrews 13:5

In our passage for today we find that the disciples catch nothing, not a thing. I think this is another lesson Jesus was gently teaching his followers, apart from Him we can do nothing. However, with Him, abiding in Him, we can turn the world upside down. In and of ourselves we can do nothing of eternal value. Only He can do all things. Our power is in following Him.

Become More

“We need to keep reminding ourselves that without the Lord we can do nothing. It needs to become a habit of mind with each of us to tell the Lord as we tackle each task, ‘I can’t do this without your help, please help me’, and then to expect to be helped because we have admitted our helplessness, given up self-reliance and are now looking to Him.” —J. I. Packer

Further Reflections

“But just as it is written, ‘Things that no eye has seen, or ear heard, or mind imagined, are the things God has prepared for those who love him.’” —1 Corinthians 2:9

“Remain in me, and I will remain in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it remains in the vine, so neither can you unless you remain in me. ‘I am the vine; you are the branches. The one who remains in me—and I in him—bears much fruit, because apart from me you can accomplish nothing.’” —John 15:4-5