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06 September 2017

John 21 - Part I The Greatest Commission

As I reflect back on our studies in the book of John, I can see some things we missed. It takes time and much study to reach the deep things of God; and it seems the deeper one gets in God's understanding, the more depth that is revealed. The last chapter closed with the following verses:

John 20:30-31: *30 Then truly Jesus did many other signs^{g4592} in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book. 31 But these have been written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.*

The word *semeion*^{g4592}, a neuter noun, appears in the NT 77 times. The root of the word, *semaino*^{g4591} is a verb meaning *to indicate, to signify*, cf Rv 1:1. The noun, therefore, has a meaning of *an indication, a signification*, a better meaning than a *miracle or wonder*, as rendered 26 times. To me the word miracle misdirects the mind away from the purpose of the supernatural events performed by God through Jesus. Those things are signs to teach us something. Revelation is a book of signs, all there to teach us something, and most of which have to be decoded by the Spirit in order for us to understand. John said there were many other signs not recorded, but the ones given to us were so that we would believe that Jesus is the anointed One, the Son of the God.

1. What does it mean to have life in his name? Gen 32:24-28; Jn 5:23-26

{Jacob means *supplanter*; The name Israel means *to prevail with God*. Jacob was wrestling with Christ. Because he prevailed, his *character* was to be changed, Gen 35:10. This Jesus did in human flesh, & his victory is offered to all humanity. Another example is Abram, *lofty father*, & changed to Abraham, *father of a multitude*, Gen 17:5. Anyone to be saved will have to wrestle with who Jesus really is - a real son, or God role playing as a Son?}

2. In whose name (character) was the gospel to the world to be preached? Mk 16:15-18; Lk 24:46-47; Mt 28:18-20. Does Mt 28:19 contradict Mark & Luke?

{Look at the context: Matthew 19: 18: *all power is given unto me*; Verse 20: *Teaching them to observe all things... I have commanded you;... I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.*

Mt 28:19 is a modified verse which does not appear in any Greek manuscript prior to the 4th century. See attached research from other writers verifying the same. We are to be baptized, (immersed), not in man's understanding, but in the name of Jesus, i.e. his character, which is the same as the Father's. Here are verses showing in whose name the Apostles & others baptized: Acts 2:38; 8:16; 10:48; 16:18; 19:5; Jn 3:18. Mt 28:19 was foreign to them. Other references: Rom 6:3, 4; Col 2:12; 3:17; Gal 3:27; Jn 20:31; Acts 4:12, 18, 30; Eph 5:20.}

Read John 21:1-14:

3. In verses 5-6, what lesson might be learned concerning obedience? Example - Mt 4:1-22; Lk 5:4-11

{A properly trained child will respond immediately to a parent's direction; whereas, an improperly trained child might be slow to respond, or, may refuse to obey. We are God's children, called to be obedient to His word.}

By following Jesus' instruction, the net was filled with fish. What lessons might be learned from the experience?

4. First, what does the net represent? Eccl 7:26; Ps 10:4, 9; Job 18:5-8; Mt 13:47-50

{A net is likened to a heart, or an understanding, which can be from good or bad knowledge, even mixed. When we started our religious experience, the knowledge is generally mixed. When the true gospel net is cast over us, all our thoughts, good & bad are brought to bear, the bad being separated from the good. It is human messengers & the ones who wrote the Bible that help us to separate false ideas from good ones. The fire of God, Jer 23:29, burns away the bad thoughts. In reality, people not willing to change are those wailing (weeping, Mt 8:12) & gnashing their teeth - Wailing, Lk 6:25, because they are rejected; angry & lashing out with their authority [teeth a symbol of - 1Ki 10:18; Act 7:54; Ps 37:12; 57:4 (64:2-3 for arrows & sword)]

4a. What do the fish represent? Mt 13:47-50

{Inwardly, fish represent thoughts from the sea - clean & unclean; outwardly it is people carrying the thoughts. The gospel net is cast on the right side, it brings in the people, and the truth teaches them to separate God's thoughts from their thoughts. There is no end to the impact on our daily lives & relationships that can be had by seeking wisdom from God and following His instructions.}

4b. Why was John so specific about the number of fish being 153? Jn 21:11

{I am still seeking the Lord to make sure of an answer. My initial take - Numbers are also spiritual; when broken down to the basic integers reveal their secrets. $153 = (3 \times 3) \times (7 + 10)$; 3 = completeness; 10 = understanding; & 7 = a fullness. $3 \times 3 =$ understanding the Son in the OT & NT brings one to a completion in Christ, Eph 4:13, which is multiplied by $(7 + 10)$, or a full understanding from God, Jn 17:3. Also 3×3 is 9, the number for finality, Gal 5:22-23; Eph 5:9 - there are 9 fruits of the spirit.}

Re-read John 21:12-14: It is the third time Jesus showed himself since his resurrection.

5. What, in verse 12, is John indicating by his statement, *None of the disciples dared ask him, "Who are you?" They knew it was the Lord*, NIV? Jn 20:14; Lk 24:15-16, 36-37

{They did not recognize Jesus standing on the shore. John was first to know it was Jesus when the net was filled with fish (a sign). Jesus, in his glorified body was not recognizable to his closest companions, unless he revealed himself to them. How is Jesus recognizable to us today? He helps us understand the signs.)