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John 21 - Part I

Come and Dine

John 21:1-14: *1. After these things Jesus showed himself again to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias; and on this wise [in this manner] showed he himself. 2. There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, and two other of his disciples. 3. Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing. They say unto him, We also go with thee. They went forth, and entered into a ship immediately; and that night they caught nothing. 4. But when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore: but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus. 5. Then Jesus saith unto them, Children, have ye any meat? They answered him, No. 6. And he said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes. 7. Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord. Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his fisher's coat unto him, (for he was naked,) and did cast himself into the sea. 8. And the other disciples came in a little ship; (for they were not far from land, but as it were two hundred cubits,) dragging the net with fishes. 9. As soon then as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread. 10. Jesus saith unto them, Bring of the fish which ye have now caught. 11. Simon Peter went up, and drew the net to land full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty and three: and for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken. 12. Jesus saith unto them, Come and dine. And none of the disciples did ask him, Who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord. 13. Then comes Jesus and takes bread and gives them, and fish likewise. 14. This is now the third time that Jesus showed himself to his disciples, after that he was risen from the dead.*

When the women first went to the tomb, the angels told them that Jesus had risen, go tell his disciples. Apparently Mary lingered while the other women left to tell them. Jesus appeared, first, to Mary (Mk 16:9), then to the other women while on the way (Mt 28:9). Afterward, he appeared to the two men who were walking to a village called Emmaus (Mk 16:12; Lk 24:13-15). Somewhere between his appearance to the group of women and the two going to Emmaus, Jesus appeared to Peter (Lk 24:34; 1Cor 15:5), of which no details are recorded. Two followers, to whom Jesus appeared while they were alone, were depicted as great sinners. Each acknowledged their sins were great and Jesus dismissed them, for they loved much; but to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little (Lk 7:47). Anger, jealousy, bitterness, adultery, lust, pride - we must acknowledge all, and ask Jesus to remove them.

John mentioned that this was the third time Jesus appeared to the disciples after his resurrection (Jn 21:14).

First time: When he appeared, the disciples, except for Thomas, were in a room and the doors shut (Jn 20:19); They recognized him not, but thought he was a spirit (Lk 24:36-37). Jesus showed them the signs of the cross on his body; then he reproached them because they did not believe those who first saw him after he was risen.

Second time: Thomas, when he was told by the others that Jesus was alive, stated that he would never believe unless he could touch the wounds of Jesus himself (Jn 20:24-29). Eight days later Jesus appeared and had Thomas touch his wounds. Then Jesus said: *Thomas, because you have seen me, you have believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.*

Third time: This time is described in the verses above. Again the disciples did not recognize that it was Jesus speaking to them, until they obeyed and cast their net on the right side of the ship and it was filled with fish. John was first to recognize him; the disciple who came to emphasize the doctrine of love so strongly.

The first two times Jesus appeared to the disciples as they assembled, the doors were shut, a metaphor of their hearts which were yet hard for lack of understanding (Mk 16:14). He ate of their food the first time (Lk 24:42), but gave them to eat of his food the third time (Jn 21:9), after they obeyed by casting the net in a different place. Think of these things as metaphors. I studied in a denomination for years; and what I was giving others was the bread of man, until I began to listen. Remember, Jesus said, *Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me* (Mt 25:40).

So, even when the door of the heart remains closed, Jesus will speak to a person, until such time they will no longer listen. *Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any one hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me* (Rev 3:20, RV). What does it mean to open the door of the heart? **John 10:2, 9: 2.** *But he that enters in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.... 9. I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.* Figuratively, the heart is the door into the deepest thoughts of a person. Jesus enters our hearts and we also enter his heart. For a sheep to find pasture is another way to indicate eating with him. Just because a person sits in church, or reads their Bible every day does not mean that the door of the heart is open or that they are dining with Christ. We each have to face our worst sins and confess our faults (Jam 5:16, not the specifics of the sin) one to another. When we can do that, then will Jesus lift up those things from us because we are willing to let them go. When we can do that, then: *the one keeping his commandments dwells in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit which he has given us* (1Jn 3:24).

I have been involved many years in casting the net into to the sea; and I keep correcting the errors I have believed. I have discovered that most do not have ears to hear, as they are satisfied with what they have. So, as the truth advances, the groups keep getting smaller. The hardest things to face always, are the sins of self. The day is right before us, when Jesus will direct us to cast the net in a different way and in a different place. Then will we see the effect of the truth on a much larger scale, as it separates the sheep and goats. At that time, the bread we feed others will not be ours, but that which is given us in that hour, for it will be the Holy Spirit speaking through us (Mk 13:11).

Matthew 13:47-50: *47. Again, the kingdom of the heaven is like to a net that was cast into the sea, and did gather together of every kind, 48. which, when it was filled, having drawn up again upon the beach, and having sat down, they gathered the good into vessels, and the bad they did cast out, 49. so shall it be in the full end of the age, the messengers shall come forth and separate the evil out of the midst of the righteous, 50. and shall cast them to the furnace of the fire, there shall be the weeping and the gnashing of the teeth. 51. Jesus said to them, Did ye understand all these?....* If the kingdom of heaven is inward (Lk 17:20-21), then the separating happens in the heart first, but only if you are willing to open the door. Once we are settled into the truth, then are we prepared to share so that the separating can take place in the thinking of those who will listen.

Colossians 1:21-23: *21. And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now has he reconciled 22. In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight: 23. If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven... Amen.*