

What's Next?

Jesus leads us in many different ways. Sometimes he makes the next step clear as day. Other times...not so much. Today...life may feel uncertain, unsettled and confusing. Maybe the life you once dreamed about seems so distant and unattainable. The question that may be on your heart this morning may be a simple one but asked with a desperate plea for rescue.

What's next? Maybe followed by...where are you?

In the Gospel of John, the disciples are in a similar dilemma... John 21:1–14

Peter is restless, uncertain...disturbed. He used to know how his life was supposed to be. Get up early, fix nets, and get his boats ready and go fishing...catch some fish (hopefully), sell it in the market, go home, eat, sleep and repeat the next day... It was a set routine.

Then Jesus showed up...messed with his life, upset his everyday life and for three years He followed a Messiah and became a fisher of men.

Then the cross happened...his Messiah crucified, murdered on a cross. His Lord is miraculously raised three days later and Peter has seen Him...but Jesus seems to be popping in and out of their lives instead of the constant day-to-day fellowship they once enjoyed.

I mean, it seems that Jesus is just randomly popping in and out of the disciple's lives. He's there one moment and then...He vanishes...where does He go? Did you ever wonder that? Am I the only strange one who thinks this is a bit particular? I'm thinking the disciples thought so...at least Peter seems to. Perhaps not knowing if he should wait around for the Master, he makes a decision...

Peter says..."I am going fishing." Peter didn't know what else to do.

He decides to go back to what was comfortable, he finds no comfort.

He decides to go back to what was profitable, he finds no profit

The disciples have come full circle, this is where Jesus first met them and He is going to reaffirm their calling. He helps them finally understand that they can't return to what was and find what they need. Following Him is the only way now: fishing at His command is the only true method for capturing the souls of a lost world. How does He do that? He starts with feeding them breakfast...He serves them again...showing the way they need to lead.

What does this mean to me? What is Jesus asking on the shores of my heart? I believe the same thing He asked of the disciples.

"Jay...did you catch anything?"

Here are some hopeful lessons to catch from this story and help us prepare for what's next.

First, waiting on God shouldn't be a surprise for followers of Christ. Sometimes we're stuck in a very hard place waiting for release. Many times we wait on God for understanding, wisdom and guidance. Sometimes we wait for his provision, healing and deliverance. God's timing and purposes are not always clear to us, though they are always best for us. God wants our faith to be dependent on Him, for us to trust Him and not bow to fear and discouragement.

Proverbs 3:5-6

Trust in the LORD with all your heart And do not lean on your own understanding. (6) In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He will make your paths straight.

Next, this story teaches us that Jesus is in complete control. The disciples were experienced and seasoned fishermen...and yet caught nothing. But that morning they discovered (again) that Jesus was sovereign over their decisions, the boat, the sea, the fish, and time.

When Jesus speaks...things happen, life happens and what seemed impossible becomes possible.

Matthew 19:26

"But Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

Possible = able, powerful, mighty, strong...the picture is of a mighty man

Lastly, Jesus' is always serving us, even when we can't see it. Our Messiah acts like a mighty man by serving, by giving Himself to us...drawing us into a covenant relationship. His provision is off the charts, He breaks the nets with His provision.

Isaiah 64:4

From of old no one has heard or perceived by the ear, no eye has seen a God besides you, who acts for those who wait for him.

What's next? Jesus calls the disciples again to follow Him...

Listen to these Scripture dealing with...our "what's next"

Matthew 28:20

"Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

He doesn't leave us!

Psalm 32:8

"The LORD says, "I will guide you along the best pathway for your life. I will advise you and watch over you."

He will guide us, watch over us!

Psalm 37:23-24

"The steps of a man are established by the LORD, when he delights in his way; (24) though he fall, he shall not be cast headlong, for the LORD upholds his hand."

He enables us to walk in His ways, holding us all the way!

Philippians 4:6-7

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. (7) And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

He guards us, bringing peace in difficult "what's next" moments! Jesus is in everyone of those moments...He is in EVERY moment.