**New Hope Global Sermon “It is the Lord!”**

**Introduction**

The text in John 21:7 is our theme this week. It is a story of Jesus’ third post-resurrection appearance that the Apostle John records and is a beacon of life and hope for us this week. Here is the story:

21 Later, Jesus appeared once again to a group of his disciples by Lake Galilee.[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+21%3A+1-7&version=TPT#fen-TPT-8250a)] 2It happened one day while Peter, Thomas (the Twin), Nathanael (from Cana in Galilee), Jacob, John,[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+21%3A+1-7&version=TPT#fen-TPT-8251b)] and two other disciples were all together. 3Peter told them, “I’m going fishing.” And they all replied, “We’ll go with you.”[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+21%3A+1-7&version=TPT#fen-TPT-8252c)] So they went out and fished through the night, but caught nothing. 4Then at dawn, Jesus was standing there on the shore, but the disciples didn’t realize that it was him! 5He called out to them, saying, “Hey guys! Did you catch any fish?”[[d](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+21%3A+1-7&version=TPT#fen-TPT-8254d)] “Not a thing,” they replied. 6Jesus shouted to them, “Throw your net over the starboard side, and you’ll catch some!” And so they did as he said, and they caught so many fish they couldn’t even pull in the net! 7Then the disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, “It’s the Lord!”[[e](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+21%3A+1-7&version=TPT#fen-TPT-8256e)] When Peter heard him say that, he quickly wrapped his outer garment around him, and because he was athletic,[[f](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+21%3A+1-7&version=TPT#fen-TPT-8256f)] he dove right into the lake to go to Jesus. 8The other disciples then brought the boat to shore, dragging their catch of fish. They weren’t far from land, only about a hundred meters. 9And when they got to shore, they noticed a charcoal fire with some roasted fish and bread.[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+21%3A+8-14&version=TPT#fen-TPT-8258a)] 10Then Jesus said, “Bring some of the fish you just caught.” 11So Peter waded into the water and helped pull the net to shore. It was full of many large fish, exactly one hundred and fifty-three,[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+21%3A+8-14&version=TPT#fen-TPT-8260b)] but even with so many fish, the net was not torn. 12“Come, let’s have some breakfast,” Jesus said to them. And not one of the disciples needed to ask who it was, because every one of them knew it was the Lord. 13Then Jesus came close to them and served them the bread and the fish. 14This was the third time Jesus appeared to his disciples after his resurrection. *Passion*

In terms of the context, commentators are divided about why the disciples were in Galilee. In Luke’s post resurrection account, they are given clear orders to stay in Jerusalem until they received power from on high. (Lk. 24:49). But in Mark 16:7 and Matt. 28:7 they are told to go to Galilee where Jesus would meet them. Galilee was their “home base throughout Jesus’ ministry” (Gary Burge, *NIV Application Commentary, John,* Zondervan, 2000, p. 582) and where many of Jesus’ miracles took place.

And in this incident at the Lake of Galilee there are 5 miracles alone. We will deal with 4 of them this week and the miracles of forgiveness and restoration for Peter next week.

First, a Christian perspective on miracles. C.S. Lewis says, “Miracles are a retelling in small letters of the very same story which is written across the whole world in letters too large for some of us to see,” (C.S. Lewis quoted in Donna Van Liere, *The Christmas Note*, p. 165.) Liere also quotes Blaise Pascal in her book. He says, “In faith there is enough light for those who want to believe and enough shadow to blind those who don’t),” (Liere, Ibid, p. 130). Miracles are sign gifts that demonstrate the presence, purposes and power of God. They are God’s touches of love and healing and mercy and victory. For example, Jesus’ miracle of turning the water to wine at the wedding in Cana “manifested his glory” with the result that the disciples believed in him (Jn. 1:11). In healing the paralytic let down from the roof in front of Jesus, the miracle demonstrated his authority to forgive sins (Mk.2:5-11). There are countless other examples in each of the Gospels.

**Miracles at Lake Galilee**

The miracles Jesus performed at Lake Galilee in this post-resurrection appearance clearly show both His love for his disciples as well as his power over all nature.

* 1.The first miracle is in his actual appearing. He loved his followers so much he went to where they were (these seven disciples were fishermen) to convince them of his resurrection and show how He cared for them. As Commentator Burge says, “Jesus is still the disciples’ champion, aiding them in the struggle of their labors.” Then, in application he adds, “ But more, he wants to direct their work, and with his help, they will find catches beyond their wildest belief,” (Burge, Ibid., p. 594.)
* The second miracle was in the catch of fish. He instructed them to cast their fishing nets over on the other side of the boat where He orchestrated a great catch of 153 large fish. These weary, discouraged disciples had been fishing all night and caught nothing. So, to have 153 fish suddenly overflow in their nets was astonishing to them. But it was also a sign of Jesus’ power because Jesus had done a similar miracle when he first called them to follow him and told them they would become fishers of men (Luke 5:1-11). John’s exclamation, “It is the Lord!” was a cry of recognition, awe and wonder. He knew Jesus’ voice and saw His miracle as an unmistakable sign of His presence. It’s been said that the reason Peter did not recognize Jesus’ voice as he shouted instructions to them from the shore was Peter’s own depth of discouragement that had temporarily deafened him to Jesus’ voice. The Passion footnote for John 21:7 adds, “Our hearing of Jesus’ voice is hindered when we are confused and filled with doubts,” (*Passion* footnote John 21:7). A word of warning for us today.
* The third miracle was that their fishing net was not broken. Normally, their nets would not be able to handle a catch of 153 large fish, but obviously Jesus had held the nets together (as he holds the universe and his believers together (Col. 1:17) by the word of His power. This is not an insignificant detail in the story because these men were professional fishermen. That net was the essential to their livelihood. So Jesus’ demonstration of his love and care for His followers included their work lives as well as their emotional, physical and spiritual lives. Another important application for us.
* The fourth miracle was the fire He had built to cook their breakfast on and the bread He supplied for their meal to eat with the fried fish. Middle-Eastern hospitality at dawn’s early light with the Risen Lord! Burge notes, “ In Judaism, an abundant catch was a sign of God’s favor and blessing; this is precisely what Jesus has done. He blesses them further by greeting them with a fire and roasting fish together with fresh bread (the mainstays of a first-century meal in Galilee),” (Burge, p, 584). He made them breakfast in those early dawn hours after their whole night on the lake, catching nothing. And he fed them, as He fed the 5,000 and ate with them in the post-resurrection appearances recorded in Luke 24:30 and 42. It reminds the believer of the promise in Revelation 3:20: “Behold, I’m standing at the door, knocking. If your heart is open to hear my voice and you open the door within, I will come in to you and feast with you, and you will feast with me.” *Passion.* Eating together is a mark of intimacy and growing friendship. With the Lord that includes how He feeds us with His Word as well as in prayer and through the counsel and words of others in Christian community. And this hospitality is how we need to reach out to others, in and out of the Christian community.

**Conclusion**

“It is the Lord!” The very presence, blessings and miracles Jesus provided for his early disciples are still what He does today. We need to ask Him for open hearts, not clouded with confusion and doubt, so we can hear his voice and follow His instructions. He is still the believers’ champion, caring for us and providing for us – in our minds and hearts and bodies and in the resources we need for our work. And when He does that, we need to exclaim to others, as John did, “It is the Lord!” And then believe Him for the new miracles He can direct us to be part of what we share in community. In addition, we need to extend His hospitality to others as Jesus did in preparing the meal on the beach. In this kind of hospitality, we show His love to others and welcome others to share in the abundance of the grace and mercy He so freely gives.

We will go deeper into the depths of that mercy next week in the sermon on Peter’s forgiveness and restoration. More wonderful applications for our walk of faith in community.

Blessings, beloved. Dr. Mary Lou

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