

WHEN EVERYTHING CHANGES

JOHN 21:1-14



Genesis 3:23-24 NIV 23 So the Lord God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken. 24 After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.

What questions do you think Adam would have asked as he was outside staring at the cherubim with the flaming sword?

- How can I get back in?
- How could I have been so stupid?
- How can I fix this?
- Now what?

It would be the same questions we would ask when everything in our life changes suddenly

- An unexpected, sudden death of a spouse or child
- Termination from your job with overdue bills sitting on the kitchen table
- A serious medical issue
- A personal failure that has damaged relationships

It was the same questions the disciples of Jesus asked after His resurrection

- We rejoice in that fact today and they did as well
- But they had a personal physical life with Jesus for 3 years
- All 12 of the disciples failed Him, Peter denied Him, and Judas betrayed Him

It was the same questions the disciples of Jesus asked after His resurrection

- Now Jesus is alive but what does that mean now?
- What kind of relationship with Him do we have now?
- Everything has changed – Now what?
- We know, as Paul Harvey would say something about the rest of the story and a wonder it is

It was the same questions the disciples of Jesus asked after His resurrection

- But the rest of the story had not been written yet for these followers of Jesus
- They thought they had it all figured out, but now know they missed some very big points – mainly Jesus' resurrection
- They are hurt, embarrassed, confused, excited, bewildered, clueless all at the same time

It was the same questions the disciples of Jesus asked after His resurrection

- I think this is what John is addressing in chapter 21 of his gospel
- After the triumphant declaration of Thomas in chapter 20, “My Lord and my God!” there were some unanswered questions
- What will happen to Peter?
- What is our role as apostles now?

John 21:1-3 NIV Afterward Jesus appeared again to his disciples, by the Sea of Galilee. It happened this way: 2 Simon Peter, Thomas (also known as Didymus), Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two other disciples were together. 3 “I’m going out to fish,” Simon Peter told them, and they said, “We’ll go with you.” So they went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.

John 21:1-3

- We find the disciples in Galilee waiting to see Jesus as instructed
- The angel at the resurrection told them Jesus would meet them in Galilee
- We are not told how long they waited but long enough they get antsy (impatient and restless)

John 21:1-3

- Peter decides he is going fishing, his previous occupation, and some of the other fishermen with him
- We do not know Peter's motive or heart in doing this
- I don't find where Jesus criticized any of them for doing this
- He actually used part of their catch to supplement his fish and bread he was cooking on the shore

John 21:1-3

- Fishing probably feels familiar/good to Peter and the others, feels like this is something they are good at
- Almost hear the doubts creep into his mind about his role as an apostle now

John 21:4-6 NIV 4 Early in the morning, Jesus stood on the shore, but the disciples did not realize that it was Jesus. 5 He called out to them, “Friends, haven’t you any fish?” “No,” they answered. 6 He said, “Throw your net on the right side of the boat and you will find some.” When they did, they were unable to haul the net in because of the large number of fish.

John 21:4-6 NIV

- Jesus has appeared to the disciples twice now, so His appearances are not common
- Jesus met with Peter once by himself, but no record of what was discussed is found in scripture
 - Most likely for repentance and forgiveness

John 21:4-6 NIV

- Greek read, “Lads, you haven’t caught any fish to eat, have you?”, could be more of a statement than question

John 21:7-8 NIV 7 Then the disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, “It is the Lord!” As soon as Simon Peter heard him say, “It is the Lord,” he wrapped his outer garment around him (for he had taken it off) and jumped into the water. 8 The other disciples followed in the boat, towing the net full of fish, for they were not far from shore, about a hundred yards.

- After witnessing the miracle John identified the one on the shore as Jesus, not because his eyesight changed but this was familiar to him

Luke 5:1-6 NIV 5 One day as Jesus was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret, the people were crowding around him and listening to the word of God. 2 He saw at the water's edge two boats, left there by the fishermen, who were washing their nets. 3 He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little from shore. Then he sat down and taught the people from the boat. 4 When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch."

Luke 5:1-6 5 Simon answered, “Master, we’ve worked hard all night and haven’t caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets.” 6 When they had done so, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break. 7 So they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them, and they came and filled both boats so full that they began to sink.

John 21:9-14 NIV 9 When they landed, they saw a fire of burning coals there with fish on it, and some bread. 10 Jesus said to them, “Bring some of the fish you have just caught.” 11 So Simon Peter climbed back into the boat and dragged the net ashore. It was full of large fish, 153, but even with so many the net was not torn.

- The number of fish indicates that this is being remembered from an eyewitness

John 21:9-14 NIV 13 Jesus came, took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. 14 This was now the third time Jesus appeared to his disciples after he was raised from the dead.

- As they had done 100s of times previous, they sat down to eat and fellowship
- Whereas before some doubted upon seeing Jesus here, they did not question what their eyes were showing them

Be careful of sliding into old lifestyles and habits as you are waiting

- Whenever everything changes there will be times of waiting, sometimes extended periods of time
- Waiting for a diagnosis, waiting for the funeral, waiting for another job, waiting for the hurt to subside a little, waiting for decisions to be made

Be careful of sliding into old lifestyles and habits as you are waiting

- It is in these times we must be careful not to slide into an old lifestyle or maybe some old habits that you thought were long conquered
- They are familiar to us and may feel natural like fishing to Peter
- We could justify them because of what we are experiencing

Be careful of sliding into old lifestyles and habits as you are waiting

- Giving into fear or anxiety, taking control of the circumstance instead of letting God control, questioning your relationship with God
- What could it have done to these fishermen to have had a successful catch on their own?

Be careful of sliding into old lifestyles and habits as you are waiting

- **Ephesians 4:27 NIV** do not give the devil a foothold.
- Can you hear the whispers in their ears from their adversary or from themselves if fishing was successful?

Be careful of sliding into old lifestyles and habits as you are waiting

- When COVID hit everything changed in our country and churches
- COVID has not been good from some people in their relationship with God

Be careful of sliding into old lifestyles and habits as you are waiting

- It is easy be comfortable at home and watch the service on Facebook live
- You watch like a TV show, but do you participate
- Not that you have to personally be here, but are you sliding into some old habits or ways of thinking?

Be careful of sliding into old lifestyles and habits as you are waiting

- **Hebrews 10:24-25 NIV** 24 And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, 25 not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

Be alert and recognize the presence of Jesus in your current circumstance

- When everything changes, our normal response is to put up protective walls on our inside
- Try to deflect the hurt, anger, confusion, give time to process
- When we do this, we also block out sensing the presence of Jesus and we will assume He is not there even though He is

Be alert and recognize the presence of Jesus in your current circumstance

- The disciples could not use their eyes to identify Jesus, but He was recognized in how He worked with them
- Why would they listen to this man they don't know on the beach and put down their nets on the right side when they know there is no fish there?

Be alert and recognize the presence of Jesus in your current circumstance

- It's a lot of work to get it into position to lower or throw the net out, then you must pull it all back in and they are exhausted
- Maybe it was an authoritative voice Jesus was using
- Maybe it was John thinking, "This seem familiar and the request feels familiar."

Be alert and recognize the presence of Jesus in your current circumstance

- Notice, John recognized not so much the person, but the work of Jesus
- He more sensed it than saw it

Be alert and recognize the presence of Jesus in your current circumstance

- Notice, Jesus came to where they were at
- Jesus is not locked up on some building, religion or denomination
- He is active in your world, right where you are at
- In His way He is showing them that He will continue to lead and guide them, even if He is not physically present

Understand Jesus is always the same, only the circumstances have changed

- **Mark 10:45 NIV** For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”
- Has this changed after the resurrection?
- No, Jesus is still serving these disciples and He continues to serve His children today
- This is an intimate breakfast among friends

You must have this understanding solid in your life so you will not be washed away when everything changes

- Neil and Anna Mammen, like a lot of Christian couples at one time or another, met with tragedy last year: the loss of a child. Their second child was born just before Thanksgiving—a second little girl, Caroline—and soon after, they found that the baby had serious medical complications.

You must have this understanding solid in your life so you will not be washed away when everything changes

- Neil and Anna Mammen, Then they learned that the baby might not make it, which is what happened. They lost her just nine days after she was born.
- Following is a section of what Anna wrote in reflection soon after her newborn baby died.

Anna Mammen wrote:

- Caroline's death was now a very real possibility [based on the news they'd just received]. I remember everything turning black and feeling like the bed was going to open up and swallow me. I felt my heart had been ripped from my chest, and that I was freefalling into the blackest abyss I could imagine. And I didn't know what to do. I kept asking, "What do I do? I don't know what to do! How can this happen?"

Anna Mammen wrote:

- I also remember saying, “How will we go on? How will I raise my first daughter, Mary Katherine?” Neil [her husband] held me, and we cried, and I sobbed. And then my mom came in, and she cried with us, and I sobbed, and we prayed, and then my mom left us alone, and I sobbed some more.

Anna Mammen wrote:

- And then Neil started feeding me...and feeding me...feeding me lines of Truth. He gently said, “She’s not ours. We don’t deserve her. This happens every day, all over the world. We’re not special. We will go on. We will have more kids. We will not let this harden us.” And I was comforted.

Anna Mammen wrote:

- Now, why I'm bringing this up is because in that moment, up until that time—the worst day in my life—I was so thankful I didn't have the added burden of questioning my belief and faith in God, and that's because I hadn't made the decision to become a Christian based on tradition or emotion. I had a faith that stood upon reasonable evidence.

Anna Mammen wrote:

- I know that for me, personally, cherubs and clichés of guardian angels and some fuzzy picture of an old man in the sky with a long beard wouldn't have been enough, as my daughter lay dying 30 miles from my house. In fact, tradition and my religious upbringing instantly vanished, and couldn't have been less important. But Neil reminded me of these Truths, and I grabbed hold of them, and they were my lifeline.

Anna Mammen wrote:

- God really does not rescue us out of troubles, but rescues us in them, rescues us through them.
- **Amos Khan**, “When sorrow and bewilderment overflow, perhaps you and I can respond with the message of the gospel: Turn to Jesus, for in Him there is hope.”

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Announcements

- Love offer for Asian Hope – Cody and Arin Rogers
- Wednesday, 7:00
 - Video is “Comfort Must Fall”

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