

BREAKFAST WITH JESUS

Easter to Pentecost in John's Gospel

April 21, 2024

*Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast."
None of the disciples dared ask him, "Who are you?"
They knew it was the Lord. Jesus came, took the bread
and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish.
John 21:12-13*

The third appearance

Afterward Jesus appeared again to his disciples, by the Sea of Tiberias. It happened this way: ² Simon Peter, Thomas (called 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.

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.

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. 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 Simon Peter climbed aboard and dragged the net ashore. It was full of large fish, 153, but even with so many the net was not torn. ¹² Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast." None of the disciples dared ask him, "Who are you?" They knew it was the Lord. 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.

John 21

1. Rather than abandoning their mission, the disciples were obedient to Jesus' directions to go to Galilee (Matthew 28:5-10). It would be expected that Mrs. Peter and her mother would send Peter and his friends out to fish.
2. This is the second great catch (see Matthew 5) and the second time after the resurrection that Jesus eats fish with his disciples. There is something about fish and fishing that is important.
3. Should the great catch of fish be understood as a key sign in John's gospel?
4. Just as Jesus' breath prepared the embryonic church for Pentecost, Jesus' cooking prepared his followers for the breadth of the Great Commission.

Almost sacramental

1. “Took” and “gave” point back to Jesus’ Last Supper and forward to the church’s sacramental life

¹⁹ And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me.”

Luke 22 (See also Luke 24:30-35.)

2. Jesus is teaching his disciples the importance of sharing meals together

⁴² They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. ⁴³ Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. ⁴⁴ All the believers were together and had everything in common. ⁴⁵ Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. ⁴⁶ Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

Acts 2

The first point: It’s not about what we eat but about whom we eat with!

Q 79. Why then does Christ call the bread his body and the cup his blood, or the new covenant in his blood, and Paul use the words, a sharing in Christ’s body and blood?

- A. Christ has good reason for these words. He wants to teach us that just as bread and wine nourish the temporal life, so too his crucified body and poured-out blood are the true food and drink of our souls for eternal life. (1)

But more important, he wants to assure us, by this visible sign and pledge, that we, through the Holy Spirit’s work, share in his true body and blood as surely as our mouths receive these holy signs in his remembrance, (2) and that all of his suffering and obedience are as definitely ours as if we personally had suffered and made satisfaction for our sins. (3)

1 [John 6:51, 55](#) 2 [1 Cor. 10:16-17; 11:26](#) 3 [Rom. 6:5-11](#)

Heidelberg Catechism, Lord’s Day 29 (See Belgic Confession, Article 35, included below.)

What about the 153 fish?

1. “Full of large fish” is a picture of God’s plan for his church

⁹ Swarms of living creatures will live wherever the river flows. There will be large numbers of fish, because this water flows there and makes the salt water fresh; so where the river flows everything will live. ¹⁰ Fishermen will stand along the shore; from En Gedi to En Eglaim there will be places for spreading nets. The fish will be of many kinds—like the fish of the Great Sea.

Ezekiel 47 (See the Mitch Chase article for more on this topic.)

The second point: This miracle prepared Jesus’ followers for the power of the Great Commission

¹⁸ Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

Matthew 28 (See Acts 1:8 for Luke’s version of the Great Commission.)

We are asking John’s three questions – because Doug considers the great catch of fish to be one of John’s signs

Question 1: What is Jesus revealing about the kind of Messiah he will be?

Question 2: What is Jesus revealing about authentic or inauthentic faith?

Question 3: What is Jesus teaching his followers about walking in the light?

1. Jesus is the kind of Messiah who desires to share a meal with his followers

¹⁵ *While Jesus was having dinner at Levi’s house, many tax collectors and “sinners” were eating with him and his disciples, for there were many who followed him.* ¹⁶ *When the teachers of the law who were Pharisees saw him eating with the “sinners” and tax collectors, they asked his disciples: “Why does he eat with tax collectors and ‘sinners’?”*

¹⁷ *On hearing this, Jesus said to them, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.”*

Mark 2:15-17

⁹ *Then the angel said to me, “Write: ‘Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!’ ”*

Revelation 19

2. Fishing is one of the best metaphors for becoming and making disciples

¹⁸ *As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen.* ¹⁹ *“Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will make you fishers of men.”* ²⁰ *At once they left their nets and followed him.*

Matthew 4 (See also Luke 5:1-11 for the other “draught of fishes” narrative.)

3. Fishermen toil, but Jesus gives the harvest

In the first case, Christ was in the ship. Oh, blessed be God, Christ is in his Church, though she launch out into the deep. In the second case, Christ was on the shore. Blessed be God, Christ is in heaven. He is not here, but he has risen; he has gone up on high for us. But whether he be in the Church, or whether he be on the shore in heaven, all our night’s toiling shall, by his presence, have a rich reward.

Spurgeon’s “The Two Draughts of Fishes”

at <https://www.spurgeon.org/resource-library/sermons/the-two-draughts-of-fishes/#flipbook/>



Resources for further study

The Bible Project team does a great job of introducing John's themes even if it might be too busy at <https://bibleproject.com/downloads/posters/>

Doug has referenced these commentaries:

Hendricksen's *New Testament Commentary* (Baker, 1953)

D.A. Carson has a great commentary (Eerdmans, 1991)

Merrill Tenny's commentary in the *Expositor's Bible Commentary* (Zondervan, 1981)

J. C. Ryle's commentary is always helpful at <https://www.gracegems.org/Ryle/j20.htm>

Dorothy Sayers' "The Man Born to be King" is a wonderful retelling of the story at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wQ-8zhRpD8s>

Tim Keller has a classic lecture on belief and skepticism at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C9fmKSwooDE>

Bob Deffinbaugh has a good sermon series on the Gospel of John at <https://bible.org/series/you-might-believe-study-gospel-john> His sermon on this text is at: <https://bible.org/seriespage/seeing-and-believing-john-2010-31> and <https://bible.org/seriespage/what-thing-called-love-john-211-25>

I also appreciated Kim Riddlebarger's series on John at <http://kimriddlebarger.squarespace.com/sermons-on-the-gospel-of-john/> . Especially his sermon on the end of John 20 and 21:1-14 at <http://kimriddlebarger.squarespace.com/sermons-on-the-gospel-of-john/63%20These%20Things%20Were%20Written%20edited.pdf>

Spurgeon's as a classic sermon on this text at <https://www.spurgeon.org/resource-library/sermons/the-two-draughts-of-fishes/#flipbook/>

Mitch Chase has a god summary of the numerical understanding of the 153 fish at <https://mitchchase.substack.com/p/14-generations-and-153-fish>

