

I. My Notes ... WWC message7/19

II. Series: That You Might Believe

- Title: Be Restored
- Text: John 20:24 – 21:25
- Quote: I will end where we started almost a year ago ... *But these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name. (John 20:31 CSB).*

III. Introduction

- We are coming to the end of an incredible journey. We have been walking through John's Gospel for quite some time. It has been eye-opening and encouraging. I hope that the lessons have spoke to your heart and helped you in your faith walk. The goal at the beginning of this journey was to help us grow in our knowledge and understanding of who Jesus is and what He taught us. This was so that we could live in a way that reflects Christ to those around us, to point them to a place where they could choose to honor and glorify the Lord in their lives.
- By Jesus coming, life was changed for every person from that point on. Transformation and reconciliation became possible for one reason ... the One full of Grace and Truth (go back to John 1:14) came so that we might have life and live it in a manner that glorifies the Father. In the point that we are at in John's Gospel, Jesus alleviated the Disciples fears after His death by coming to them. It is a consistent message. Jesus came so that we might have life and have it in abundance (ref. John 10:10).

- Catching us up. After the crucifixion, burial, and resurrection Jesus appeared no less than 5 times to different people that first day of the week. He was seen by Mary Magdalene (John 20:11–18), the other women (Matt. 28:9–10), Peter (1 Cor. 15:5 and Luke 24:34), the two Emmaus disciples (Luke 24:13–32), and the disciples minus Thomas (John 20:19–25). (adapted from the Bible Exposition Commentary). Now, a week has passed. We have no record of what transpired during this week. But I would just speculate that Jesus was spending time encouraging others after reading what the Apostle Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 15.
- There are times that every believer needs encouragement, they need their faith reinforced in a moment of struggle. Often it is something simple – a kind word, a random phone call or text message, anything that might take the focus off the struggle for just a moment. Jesus' appearances after His Resurrection did that.
- Our focus today is going to be on the last 3 times Jesus appeared in John's Gospel. My prayer is that this will encourage you to continue to grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord.

IV. Thomas

- Thomas has been given the moniker “Doubting Thomas.” I’m not sure that it is all that warranted. I might call him grouchy or sullen (reread John 11:16, 14:5).
- Jesus has already appeared to many, including the Disciples – except Thomas wasn’t with them. Now, a week has passed since Resurrection Day, and the Disciples have gathered again. This time Thomas was in attendance.
- Just a side note: apparently, the Disciples made a habit out of gathering on the first day of the week ... Sunday. Dr. Warren

Wiersbe writes, “It appears that the early church met on the first day of the week to worship the Lord and commemorate His death and resurrection (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:1–2).” (taken from the Bible Knowledge Commentary).

- **John 20:26 CSB**

A week later his disciples were indoors again, and Thomas was with them. Even though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.”

- Jesus came to where the Disciples were gathered together once again. I believe that He came to encourage faith, to remove any doubts. This was Jesus stepping into a situation of hurt and despair and meeting all right where they were. By Jesus telling Thomas to touch His wounds, He was saying – “Quit being faithless, your trust in Me is well placed, it is time to begin living the way that I have taught you to live.” The response of Thomas was not because of anyone else’s words ... it was because he saw Jesus. He didn’t need to touch the wounds. Because Thomas saw Jesus, He was able to acknowledge that Jesus was Lord.
- Here’s a great reminder in Scripture ... *“Be careful, brothers and sisters, that none of you ever develop a wicked, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God.” (Hebrews 3:12 GW).*

V. The Sea of Tiberias

- Waiting is hard. I’m not a fan of it. Jesus has appeared to the Disciples twice after the Resurrection, along with several other people. We don’t know how much time had passed but apparently the Disciples (at least several of them) had stepped back to what was familiar to them. Peter said, “I’m going fishing” (John 21:3) and several of his friends responded, “we’re going with you” (John 21:3).

I think that it is this way with us too. When waiting doesn't feel like the right option, we have to do something – anything. My default is chores. No, I'm not looking to do chores all the time. I just need to feel like I am accomplishing something that waiting doesn't accomplish.

- **John 21:4-12 CSB**

4 When daybreak came, Jesus stood on the shore, but the disciples did not know it was Jesus. 5 “Friends,” Jesus called to them, “you don’t have any fish, do you?”

“No,” they answered.

6 “Cast the net on the right side of the boat,” he told them, “and you’ll find some.” So they did, and they were unable to haul it in because of the large number of fish. 7 The disciple, the one Jesus loved, said to Peter, “It is the Lord!”

When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he tied his outer clothing around him (for he had taken it off) and plunged into the sea. 8 Since they were not far from land (about a hundred yards, away), the other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish. 9 When they got out on land, they saw a charcoal fire there, with fish lying on it, and bread. 10 “Bring some of the fish you’ve just caught,” Jesus told them. 11 So Simon Peter climbed up and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish—153 of them. Even though there were so many, the net was not torn.

12 “Come and have breakfast,” Jesus told them. None of the disciples dared ask him, “Who are you?” because they knew it was the Lord.

- The Disciples had been here before ... working all night without success, ready to quit, only to be told “try again” (see Luke 5). Being a fisherman is demanding work. It not only takes strength, but it

requires courage also. Add to this the uncertainty they must have been feeling about their future, and it must have been a long night.

- To have someone standing on shore questioning them must have been surreal. It seems that it only caused John to remember the earlier lesson. John, being John, acknowledged it was Jesus. Peter, being Peter, reacted differently. He dove headlong into the water and made a mad dash to get to Jesus.
- There are lessons in both responses to understanding it was Jesus coming to them again. Initially, the Disciples (at least most of them) didn't recognize Jesus standing on the shore and speaking to them. Jesus is with us whether we recognize it or not. He didn't abandon His Disciples; He won't ever abandon us. Another lesson is that obedience works. They may have been tired and just wanting to rest but when Jesus told them to recast their nets, they did it. The reward for this obedience was amazing. It makes you realize that even when it seems illogical, obedience is the right response. Think about this for a moment – Jesus invited them into exactly what they needed ... fellowship. He had prepared a fire and a meal for them. He was ready to serve them and spend time with them. Our Lord goes before us, preparing the path so that we can find purpose and peace in every situation. I will end this section with a thought, maybe a question. Peter's brash reaction spoke loudly. There is no doubt that he loved Jesus. Peter gave up what he knew to follow Jesus. Yet, when the pressure was on, Peter failed miserably. I think we all have had those big failures at one time or another. Could it be that Peter's response to John's declaration that it was Jesus be one of seeking forgiveness and reconciliation?

- It's an incredible example of restoration. I have heard countless sermons and examples of how Jesus brought Peter back to right standing as a Disciple. It is a lesson that every believer needs to take to heart. Knowing that even at our worst, when we have messed up more than we even thought we could, Our Lord and Savior is waiting to restore us. It is why Paul told the church at Corinth, *"And all of this is a gift from God, who brought us back to himself through Christ. And God has given us this task of reconciling people to him. For God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, no longer counting people's sins against them. And he gave us this wonderful message of reconciliation."* (**2 Corinthians 5:18-19 NLT**). Each believer is restored to a right relationship with God because of Jesus and what He did at the Cross.
- After they had eaten breakfast (remember, they had been up all-night fishing), Jesus took Peter aside and addressed the deep wound that Peter carried.
- **John 21:15 CSB**
15 When they had eaten breakfast, Jesus asked Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?" "Yes, Lord," he said to him, "you know that I love you." "Feed my lambs," he told him.
- I'm sure that all those that were there listened to this conversation. While it was aimed at Simon Peter, it was for all of them. Each Disciple had failed in one way or another to trust and believe what Jesus had said. They all needed restoration. It had to begin with Peter, their leader. In compassion and understanding Jesus spoke to Peter to point him back in the right direction.
- There is no doubt that Peter loved Jesus. His bold statements in the Upper Room made that clear. I think that he took his failure (the

denial of Jesus 3 times) extremely hard. It could have festered into a deep hurt without the proper attention. That came from Jesus.

- For every time that Peter failed, Jesus offered him a way to get back on track. It was and is about love. Loving our Lord is seen in the way we love others. Our focus on Jesus is seen in how we treat others. Understand this ... love is the foundation of ministry. Ministry flows from love, not perfection. Our efforts may fall short, love never fails (ref. 1 Corinthians 13). Jesus restored Peter with love and because of His compassion for Peter. It's the same for you and I. God loves us and cares enough to help us find the right path.

VII. Bringing it to a Close

- We began this journey so that we might grow in love and understanding. Almost a year ago, I wrote these words in the first message of this series ... The Gospels were written to point people to Jesus, to motivate them to learn His words, and live obediently to His instruction (8/5/24). I hope and pray that this journey through John's Gospel has helped you with your belief and faith.
- I will close with John's words at the end of this Gospel.
- **John 21:24-25 CSB**
24 This is the disciple who testifies to these things and who wrote them down. We know that his testimony is true.
25 And there are also many other things that Jesus did, which, if every one of them were written down, I suppose not even the world itself could contain the books that would be written.
- You are part of the story of Jesus that is still being written today. He is at work, He is calling. It's up to each person to listen and respond. Doing that is life changing – to the point of peace and joy being the predominant traits in our lives.

- I will end with this ... Jesus is the Way, He is Truth, and He gives life – abundantly and eternally. The choice is yours.
- Let's Pray
- Grace First, Grace Always