

The Pastor's Bible Study

An interactive study of the Gospel of John¹

Week 23 ~ Exploring John 21:1-25

Personal Study Time:

(Use the following suggestions in your personal Bible study time this week to prepare for our class discussion next Saturday.)

Day 1: Please read John 21:1-23 at least twice and then answer the following questions:

- On a piece of paper list all the post-resurrection appearances of Jesus mentioned in the Gospel of John. How many different occasions are mentioned? How many different people saw Jesus? In a paragraph or two write out what you think is the main purpose of the post-resurrection appearances in the Gospel of John.
- Have there been times in your life when God seemed absent and you decided to "go fishing" spiritually for a while? Describe one of those times and refresh your memory regarding the means by which God succeeded in getting your attention again. Is there a way by which you can make yourself more open to such encounters in the future?

Day 2: Please re-read John 21:1-23 and then answer the following questions:

- Compare John 21 with Gen 1 and 2. In what ways is Jesus portrayed like Adam? What implications does this comparison suggest about the purpose of Jesus' ministry? Does it have any implications for the debate over the human nature of Christ?
- If you were asked the same question that Jesus asked Peter, how would you respond? Based on your own experience with failure, how do you suppose that Peter felt about his denials of Jesus in John 18? How do you feel when you fail? What ways has God used to "reinstate" you?

Day 3: Please re-read John 21:1-23 and then answer the following questions:

- What insights in this chapter would be of particular interest to the second generation, that didn't know Jesus or anyone who had known Jesus when He walked on earth in physical form? Write out your answer, either in list form or in a paragraph or two.
- Do you ever compare yourself with others? Have you ever wondered why other people's lives move along the way they do? How did that affect your desire to do what God was indicating that He wanted you to do? Was the result of such thinking positive or negative? Why? We often compare ourselves with others either to rationalize our own conduct or to blame God for being unfair. How has comparison worked in your experience?

¹ Much of this study is quoted and/or adapted from Jon Paulien and George R. Knight, *John: Jesus Gives Life to a New Generation*, The Abundant Life Bible Amplifier (Boise, Idaho: Pacific Press, 1995).

Day 4: Please re-read John 21:1-23 and then answer the following questions:

- Three times Jesus questions Peter. On a piece of paper make three columns. In the first write out the exact words of Jesus' three questions. In the second column write out Peter's replies, in the third write out Jesus' responses. Note the similarities and differences between the three sets of questions and responses. What significance do you draw from this encounter between Jesus and Peter? Why did Peter immediately ask about John?
- Have comments of yours ever been taken out of context or completely misinterpreted? Describe the last time this happened to you. In what way do you find it comforting to know that Jesus, the all-knowing Son of God could be misinterpreted as well, even by sincere and well-meaning Christians? What does John 21:20-23 imply about the value of second- and third-hand information? Why should John's Gospel be treated differently than other forms of secondhand information?

Day 5: Please re-read John 21:1-23 and then answer the following questions:

- John 21:20-23 is a very early reference to an effort on the part of some Christians to set an approximate time for the second coming of Jesus. Write out what you think "the brothers" were trying to accomplish by spreading this rumor. What do think the consequences would have been if John hadn't taken the time to squelch the rumor?
- Have you ever encountered people who tried to calculate the general timing of the end? How did you respond to their way of thinking? What were the consequences in your life and theirs when time continue beyond expectation? How would John relate to such calculations?

Day 6: Please read John 21:1-25, then re-read 21:24-25 several times before you contemplate the following questions:

- As a member of Jesus' new generation, have you allowed His words and His works their full place in your life?
- Have you come to believe that His word is as good as His physical presence on earth?
- In believing have you experienced abundant life in His name?
- Are you ready to write your own gospel, as a testimony to the Jesus you have come to know?
- The story of John's Gospel and the narrative of this book are now coming to an end. The impact of Jesus on your life is only beginning.