

FISHING WITH A NET

By Pastor Tom Marxen

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NOAH

Noah and his family were saved from destruction because his heart was toward God and he had the favor of God upon his life.

God the savior, God the rescuer, God the protector of the righteous, God the just judge of all. God the instructor gave Noah grace and wisdom to build a huge wooden vessel that provided protection and supplies for every living creature that survived the great flood. There was no alternate means of survival.

The ark floated. That's about it. It lasted as long as it needed to last, it was well built, fit for its intended use. The ark preserved a remnant or seed for all life on earth. There were many rooms in the ark - In my Father's house there are many mansions (abode, staying place). There is much we could say about the ark, Noah and the flood, but that is beyond the scope of this article.

All the provision for life was INSIDE the ark, but this is not the completion of the working of the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom of God has not been made available to us merely to save us from judgement (the flood was an execution of the judgement of God upon evil on the earth). There is a flood promised that will overwhelm any vessel or contrivance built by the hand of man.

Isa 11:9-10

9 They will neither harm nor destroy
on all my holy mountain,
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD
as the waters cover the sea.
10 In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples;
the nations will rally to him, and his place of rest will be glorious.

NIV

So ultimately, it is not about being sequestered away in a little boat preserved from the seas, but rather it is about being ON THE EARTH, FULLY IMMERSSED in the FLOOD of the KNOWLEDGE of the Lord. There is no place to hide. We are found in Him and He is found in us as the waters cover the sea.

Gen 6:5-7:1

AMP

5 The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination and intention of all human thinking was only evil continually.

6 And the Lord regretted that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved at heart.

7 So the Lord said, I will destroy, blot out, and wipe away mankind, whom I have created from the face of the ground--not only man, [but] the beasts and the creeping things and the birds of the air--for it grieves Me and makes Me regretful that I have made them.

8 But Noah found grace (favor) in the eyes of the Lord.

11 The earth was depraved and putrid in God's sight, and the land was filled with violence (desecration, infringement, outrage, assault, and lust for power).

12 And God looked upon the world and saw how degenerate, debased, and vicious it was, for all humanity had corrupted their way upon the earth and lost their true direction.

- 13 God said to Noah, I intend to make an end of all flesh, for through men the land is filled with violence; and behold, I will destroy them and the land.
- 14 Make yourself an ark of gopher or cypress wood; make in it rooms (stalls, pens, coops, nests, cages, and compartments) and cover it inside and out with pitch (bitumen).
- 15 And this is the way you are to make it: the length of the ark shall be 300 cubits, its breadth 50 cubits, and its height 30 cubits [that is, 450 ft. x 75 ft. x 45 ft.].
- 16 You shall make a roof or window [a place for light] for the ark and finish it to a cubit [at least 18 inches] above--and the door of the ark you shall put in the side of it; and you shall make it with lower, second, and third stories.
- 17 For behold, I, even I, will bring a flood of waters upon the earth to destroy and make putrid all flesh under the heavens in which are the breath and spirit of life; everything that is on the land shall die.
- 18 But I will establish My covenant (promise, pledge) with you, and you shall come into the ark--you and your sons and your wife and your sons' wives with you.
- 19 And of every living thing of all flesh [found on land], you shall bring two of every sort into the ark, to keep them alive with you; they shall be male and female.
- 20 Of fowls and birds according to their kinds, of beasts according to their kinds, of every creeping thing of the ground according to its kind
-two of every sort shall come in with you, that they may be kept alive.
- 21 Also take with you every sort of food that is eaten, and you shall collect and store it up and it shall serve as food for you and for them.
- 22 Noah did this; he did all that God commanded him.

Genesis 7

7:1 AND THE Lord said to Noah, Come with all your household into the ark, for I have seen you to be righteous (upright and in right standing) before Me in this generation.

AMP

The Lord is a place of safety

And just as Noah and his family were required to completely and utterly rely upon God and his instructions and provisions in order to SURVIVE the flood, so also must we TODAY. The deception is that it APPEARS as if we have a choice, do we depend on God for our provision, or do we work out of our cunning and abilities and do what WE want to do? We can clearly see that Noah had no other provision outside of

that ARK, but we easily miss our own need for the same protection and provision that was given to him.

REMOVE THE LOG that us in your own eye, then you can clearly see to remove the speck that is in your brother. The Lord is our place of safety, nowhere else is safe.. Always. Always.

Ps 27:5-9

5 For in the day of trouble He will hide me in His shelter;
in the secret place of His tent will He hide me;
He will set me high upon a rock.

6 And now shall my head be lifted up above my enemies round about me;
in His tent I will offer sacrifices and shouting of joy;
I will sing, yes, I will sing praises to the Lord.

7 Hear, O Lord, when I cry aloud;
have mercy and be gracious to me and answer me!

8 You have said, Seek My face [inquire for and require My presence as your vital need].
My heart says to You, Your face (Your presence),
Lord, will I seek, inquire for, and require [of necessity and on the authority of Your Word].

9 Hide not Your face from me; turn not Your servant away in anger,
You Who have been my help!
Cast me not off, neither forsake me,
O God of my salvation AMP

Ps 33:18-22

18 Behold, the Lord's eye is upon those who fear Him
[who revere and worship Him with awe],
who wait for Him and hope in His mercy and loving-kindness,

19 To deliver them from death and keep them alive in famine.

20 Our inner selves wait [earnestly] for the Lord;
He is our Help and our Shield.

21 For in Him does our heart rejoice, because we have trusted
(relied on and been confident) in His holy name.

22 Let Your mercy and loving-kindness, O Lord, be upon us

in proportion to our waiting and hoping for You. AMP

2 Peter 2:5-11

5 And He spared not the ancient world, but preserved Noah,
a preacher of righteousness, with seven other persons,
when He brought a flood upon the world of ungodly [people].
[Gen 6-8; 1 Peter 3:20.]

6 And He condemned to ruin and extinction the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah,
reducing them to ashes [and thus] set them forth as an example to those who would be ungodly; [Gen
19:24.]

7 And He rescued righteous Lot, greatly worn out and distressed by the wanton ways of the ungodly
and lawless-- [Gen 19:16,29.]

8 For that just man, living [there] among them, tortured his righteous soul every day with what he
saw and heard of [their] unlawful and wicked deeds--

9 Now if [all these things are true, then be sure] the Lord knows how to rescue the godly out of
temptations and trials, and how to keep the ungodly under chastisement until the day of judgment
and doom,

10 And particularly those who walk after the flesh and indulge in the lust of polluting passion and
scorn and despise authority. Presumptuous [and] daring [self-willed and self-loving creatures]! They
scoff at and revile dignitaries (glorious ones) without trembling,

11 Whereas [even] angels, though superior in might and power, do not bring a defaming charge
against them before the Lord.

Amp

But life in the Kingdom is not just about being saved - there is so much more. In Noah we see saving and protecting, living in the Ark while ungodliness is destroyed all about us.

In the New Testament we see the disciples in boats also, but there is a new function and purpose. Here, the disciples are actively reaching OUT OF THE BOAT to seek and save those that are lost. He is not willing that any should perish.(Matt 18:14). The LORD knows how to rescue the ungodly!

FISHERS OF MEN

Mark 1:14-20

14 Now after John was arrested and put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the good news (the Gospel) of the kingdom of God,

15 And saying, The [appointed period of] time is fulfilled (completed), and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent (have a change of mind which issues in regret for past sins and in change of conduct for the better) and believe (trust in, rely on, and adhere to) the good news (the Gospel).

16 And passing along the shore of the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon [Peter] and Andrew the brother of Simon casting a net [to and fro] in the sea, for they were fishermen.

17 And Jesus said to them, Come after Me and be My disciples, and I will make you to become fishers of men.

18 And at once they left their nets and [yielding up all claim to them] followed [with] Him [joining Him as disciples and siding with His party].

19 He went on a little farther and saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who were in [their] boat putting their nets in order.

20 And immediately He called out to them, and [abandoning all mutual claims] they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men and went off after Him [to be His disciples, side with His party, and follow Him]

AMP

COME AFTER ME AND BE MY DISCIPLE, AND I WILL MAKE YOU TO BECOME FISHERS OF MEN!

NETS THAT BREAK

Luke 5:1-11

5:1 One day as Jesus was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret, with the people 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."

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.

8 When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus' knees and said, "Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!"

9 For he and all his companions were astonished at the catch of fish they had taken,

10 and so were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, Simon's partners.

Then Jesus said to Simon, "Don't be afraid; from now on you will catch men."

11 So they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed him.

NIV

How many times have we sat down to listen to Jesus teachings, but secretly in our hearts we disqualify ourselves from the promises, the peace, the healing, or whatever He is giving us because " We have been working hard all night and haven't caught anything"? We may hear His words, but we still keep thinking that our needs can only be met by the methods and ways with which we have become familiar. If we get no fish, well that's just our lot. We get into a mind set that cannot receive the things of God. At the root of it is usually pride and self will.

It may take you a while to get there, but its likely to be just plain old pride with a "pity me" mask on.

I think that Peter was really thinking, " If we only had some fish, a harvest for all our efforts, then maybe I wouldn't have to worry so much for my family..." or something along those lines. Jesus filled Peter's perceived desire, but in so doing,

He revealed the fears and lack of faith that was in him. This explains Peter's statement, " I am a sinful man".

Instead of a rebuke, Jesus removes fear - "Don't be afraid", and promises Peter a promotion into a new occupation - "from now in you will catch men". Peter saw the Truth, he confessed it, and he was set free.

We think so much of our nets and methods, we get to thinking, "O if only our nets could be filled, we would finally have enough". But the nets break! They are not what we think they are, and they cannot accomplish the work of the Kingdom. There comes a time when we must decide to abandon them if we are to become fishers of men. Don't be afraid. Don't be proud and deny the truth about yourself. Jesus came to this place to offer personal training and equipping for Peter and a few others to operate in and with true spiritual and supernatural power. He is offering the same today if we will only forsake these nets that break.

WALKING ON THE WATER

Job 9:8

**8 He alone stretches out the heavens
and treads on the waves of the sea.**

NIV

Ps 89:9

**You rule over the surging sea;
when its waves mount up, you still them**

NIV

Matt 14:22-29

22 Then He directed the disciples to get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, while He sent away the crowds.

23 And after He had dismissed the multitudes, He went up into the hills by Himself to pray. When it was evening, He was still there alone.

24 But the boat was by this time out on the sea, many furlongs [a furlong is one-eighth of a mile] distant from the land, beaten and tossed by the waves, for the wind was against them.

25 And in the fourth watch [between 3:00--6:00 a.m.] of the night, Jesus came to them, walking on the sea.

26 And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were terrified and said, It is a ghost! And they screamed out with fright.

27 But instantly **He spoke to them, saying, Take courage! I AM! Stop being afraid!** [Ex 3:14.]

28 And **Peter answered Him, Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water.**

29 He said, *Come!* So Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water, and he came toward Jesus

30 But **when he perceived** and felt the strong wind, he was frightened, and as he began to sink, he cried out, *Lord, save me [from death]!*

31 Instantly Jesus reached out His hand and caught and held him, saying to him, *O you of little faith, why did you doubt?*

32 And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased.

33 And those in the boat knelt and worshiped Him, saying, Truly You are the Son of God!

34 And when they had crossed over to the other side, they went ashore at Gennesaret.

35 And when the men of that place recognized Him, they sent around into all the surrounding country and brought to Him all who were sick

36 And begged Him to let them merely touch the fringe of His garment; and as many as touched it were perfectly restored. [Matt 9:20.]

AMP

The disciples have been sent on a mission, namely, to **GET TO THE OTHER SIDE**. They are not in the boat to merely survive the storm, indeed if their purpose was only to avoid the dangers on the sea, they could have stayed right where they were, after all, Jesus healing ministry was successful and popular, and they had just witnessed the miraculous feeding of more than 5000 people. It would seem to the natural mind that this ministry was successful, people were coming from all around the country to be healed, so why go out and expose yourself to the risks of the sea? The Kingdom of God is advancing and this world is not our home, the Kingdom is not of **THIS** world, we must get to the other side.

Walking on the water is walking through the "real" storms of life, what most people would call "reality", **but without fear**, with no thought except that Jesus has called me and I am going because He said "Come". "Come to me all who are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest." It often does not look like His invitation will produce rest. After all, if you are like Peter, you are coming to Him by leaving a boat full of companions many or all of which are disciples as well. The boat is full of fearful believers (a true oxymoron), but at least you are not alone. Everything in the boat is familiar and of human nature. It's the way we have always done it, and we must remember that it was the Lord who told us to go to the other side. It is a rough ride with only each other to hang on to, but, we say, but at least we are doing "the Lord's work".

"Come up here", He says. Leave all the others, leave that mind set with its limitations and fears. What is it that the ONE WHO WALKS ON THE WAVES is saying to you?

FORGIVE? GIVE? BELIEVE? FEAR NOT, ONLY BELIEVE?

Maybe He is telling you to teach, but you do not consider yourself a teacher, maybe there is some change of occupation, or beginning to operate with a new skill. Perhaps there are people groups that you always avoided, and now is the time to change that. Whatever giants are coming out to taunt you and tell you what you cannot do, these are the ones that must go. What are the situations or circumstances that produce fear? What worries are chaining you to your boat load of fearful companions? The Lord walks over the waves, that is, the causes of all those things that produce your fears. He has come to travel WITH you and He will not share this journey with any of these ugly devils. IT is true that when He gets in the boat, the winds will cease, but you can also jump out and go to Him right now, right in the middle of all your troubles, He is saying, "COME", and you can go just like Peter. Now you are working without a net. This is something completely different.

Any other thought will cause you to sink and be swallowed by the "natural reality" that says, "no one can walk on the water, we all know that." The scripture says that Peter "percieved", and then he sank. Walking on the water is the place where what WE KNOW does not determine our course. BELIEVING keeps us ON TOP the waves, percieving plunges us into them.

Jesus' rebuke, "you of little faith" is for the only person that actually got out of the boat! It would seem to the natural mind, that Peter deserved at least a little pat on the back for being the only one to dare to try to walk out there on the sea. Why did you doubt?, He asked Peter. Why do we doubt?, Why do we start out, leave our nets, forsake OUR nets to follow Him, hear His voice, follow again, even leave the others to follow Him, but then we perceive our situation and we doubt.

The waves are dangerous, they are real, but they are temporary and their purpose is to separate out and destroy all those things that divide us and keep us separate from walking continually WITH the Lord.

Jer 51:41-44
(And also on to verse 58.)
What a horror Babylon will be
among the nations!
42 The sea will rise over Babylon;
its roaring waves will cover her.
43 Her towns will be desolate,
a dry and desert land,
a land where no one lives,
through which no man travels.
44 I will punish Bel in Babylon
and make him spew out what he has swallowed
NIV

"The sea will rise over Babylon," Babylon represents, the World and its system of thinking and supply. Confusion. James says that a double minded man is like a wave on the sea, and he should expect to receive NOTHING! Again, the natural mind would expect to receive at least some part of the reward, after all, "doesn't God care that at least we TRIED to walk out of the boat?" But this realm, the realm of walking on the water is not about our "trying", rather it is about WHAT WE BELIEVE. If we believe that Jesus is who HE says he is, that He has the authority that He says He has AND if we have heard Him say "come", there is no problem.

The problem is that we do not really believe that when the waves of confusion, fear, anxiety, anger, and oppression swell and torment us that the LORD is still LORD. He has already set the boundaries for them, they will in no way harm us. He has spoken to them: 'This far you may come and no farther; here is where your proud waves halt'.

Job 38:8-11
8 "Who shut up the sea behind doors
when it burst forth from the womb,
9 when I made the clouds its garment
and wrapped it in thick darkness,
10 when I fixed limits for it
and set its doors and bars in place,
11 when I said, 'This far you may come and no farther;
here is where your proud waves halt'?"
NIV

HAS GOD SAID? This was the original challenge and attack against the character, nature, and operation of the Kingdom of God on earth. There is no new thing in this, just another empty wave of accusation crashing against the unchangeable ROCK of the WORD of the LORD. Jesus said that heaven and earth will pass away, but His Word will NEVER pass away. Paul exhorts us to never cast away our CONFIDENCE which has a great recompense of reward.

Heb 10:19-25

19 Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus,

20 by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body,

21 and since we have a great priest over the house of God,

22 let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.

23 Let us hold unwaveringly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful.

24 And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds.

25 Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

NIV

Heb 10:35-39

35 So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded.

36 You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised.

37 For in just a very little while,

"He who is coming will come and will not delay.

38 But my righteous one will live by faith.

And if he shrinks back,

I will not be pleased with him."

39 But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who believe and are saved. NIV

WE ARE OF THOSE WHO BELIEVE AND ARE SAVED.

BUT AGAIN AS WITH NOAH, THE HIGH CALL AND FULFILLMENT OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS NOT JUST ABOUT BEING "SAVED" .

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THERE IS MORE.

GOING BACK - FISHING FOR FISH

John 21:1-14

- 21:1 AFTER THIS, Jesus let Himself be seen and revealed [Himself] again to the disciples, at the Sea of Tiberias. And He did it in this way:
- 2 There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas, called the Twin, and Nathanael from Cana of Galilee, also the sons of Zebedee, and two others of His disciples.
- 3 Simon Peter said to them, I am going fishing! They said to him, And we are coming with you! So they went out and got into the boat, and throughout that night they caught nothing.
- 4 Morning was already breaking when Jesus came to the beach and stood there. However, the disciples did not know that it was Jesus.
- 5 So Jesus said to them, Boys (children), you do not have any meat (fish), do you? [Have you caught anything to eat along with your bread?] They answered Him, No!
- 6 And He said to them, Cast the net on the right side of the boat and you will find [some]. So they cast the net, and now they were not able to haul it in for such a big catch (mass, quantity) of fish [was in it].
- 7 Then the disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, It is the Lord! Simon Peter, hearing him say that it was the Lord, put (girded) on his upper garment (his fisherman's coat, his outer tunic)--for he was stripped [for work]--and sprang into the sea.
- 8 And the other disciples came in the small boat, for they were not far from shore, only some hundred yards away, dragging the net full of fish.
- 9 When they got out on land (the beach), they saw a fire of coals there and fish lying on it [cooking], and bread.
- 10 Jesus said to them, Bring some of the fish which you have just caught.
- 11 So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net to land, full of large fish, 153 of them; and [though] there were so many of them, the net was not torn.
- 12 Jesus said to them, Come [and] have breakfast. But none of the disciples ventured or dared to ask Him, Who are You? because they [well] knew that it was the Lord.
- 13 Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and so also [with] the fish.
- 14 This was now the third time that Jesus revealed Himself (appeared, was manifest) to the disciples after He had risen from the dead.

AMP

This is the **THIRD** time Jesus revealed Himself after the resurrection. Three is the number of completion and the pictures and patterns of completion associated with the number three in the Bible are numerous and compelling. In this account there are hidden clues and truth concerning the fulfilment of God's purposes in His Kingdom. Jesus has already shown Himself to His disciples twice. Even the doubts of Thomas have been removed, and Jesus himself handed over authority to His disciples to forgive sins. These 11 men left everything else to follow and be trained and taught

by Jesus. There can be NO DOUBT in their minds that Jesus IS the LORD, and that He is alive and well having victory even over death. It would be reasonable to expect that these men would explode into the world with the power of this news and newly imparted authority, but instead they backtracked to the lifestyle that sustained them before He came into their lives. "I will make you fishers of men", He said. The purpose of this third visitation is to complete that promise.

A NET THAT WON'T BREAK

As at the beginning, these men were having no success on their own, then the Lord comes on the scene with instructions that bring them success. "Caste your nets on the right side of the boat" - this time it is not "in the deep", but rather close to shore. This time the nets DO NOT BREAK. The fish are hauled onto the shore, they do not fill the boats to overflowing.

Matt 13:47-50

47 "Once again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was let down into the lake and caught all kinds of fish.
48 When it was full, the fishermen pulled it up on the shore. Then they sat down and collected the good fish in baskets, but threw the bad away.
49 This is how it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come and separate the wicked from the righteous
50 and throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

NIV

The Kingdom of God is like a net. That is why the nets did not break, these men are beginning to fish with supernatural nets. The haul is brought to shore because we are brought out Egypt (the power and bondage of sin) to be brought INTO the Promised Land. A spacious and prosperous land. Not to be hauled into our own wooden ministry boat to remain forever tossed to and fro by our particular doctrines, preferences, and fears.

Deut 11:10-12

10 The land you are entering to take over is not like the land of Egypt, from which you have come, where you planted your seed and irrigated it by foot as in a vegetable garden.
11 But the land you are crossing the Jordan to take possession of is a land of mountains and valleys that drinks rain from heaven.
12 It is a land the LORD your God cares for; the eyes of the LORD your God are continually on it from the beginning of the year to its end.

NIV

We are to be laboring to bring others into this awesome place where God is in control of every inch of land, every drop of rain, every need supplied, whether going up a mountain or down, His very own eyes are continually upon

all at each and every moment. It is the place where the knowledge of the Lord covers the earth as the waters cover the sea.¹ noah

All too often we find ourselves trying to haul the catch into our little boats. We brag about and compare our ministries on the basis of "fish counts" and "boat capacities". It might even be argued that we assess each other on the basis of boat (ministry) styles. Some take pride in their nearly sinking vessels, while others fear the loss of the boat AND the catch, especially if the seas become rough. Both these attitudes miss the mark. The completion of our work is to be the hauling in of all we "Catch" ONTO THE LAND. The LAND we are entering TO POSSESS

When the fish are brought in, the good and the bad are sorted out.

We come into the kingdom full of the pollution and the mind set of slaves raised in sin. The Word of God is sharper than a two edged sword that divides between what is Soul (Mind, Will, Emotions) and Spirit (Conscience, intuition, communion). As a result of this process, Spirit begins to rule and provide in all the right places, and Soul becomes satisfied, disciplined, and at rest. "Come to ME all you that are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." This takes time. To come into the place of rest, Shalom, completeness, the Sabbath of the Lord. Indeed, it is the LAST Day that is the Sabbath.

SORTING FISH AND FEASTING

John 21:7-16

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.

15 When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me more than these?"

"Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you."

Jesus said, "Feed my lambs."

16 Again Jesus said, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me?"

He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you."

17 The third time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?"

Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love me?" He said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you."

Jesus said, "Feed my sheep.

18 I tell you the truth, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go."

19 Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him, "Follow me!"

NIV

It is important to notice that Jesus was on the shore cooking His own fish and bread and then He invited the disciples to come share from their catch to complete the meal. This is the way it is in the Kingdom of God. There is the part that God has prepared and is preparing for us, and there is the part that must come from us. As with these disciples, the only reason we have anything to give in the first place is because of the grace we have already received. "Throw your net on the right side of the boat". Obedience to that grace and instruction produced a great catch of fish. Now Peter and the others are equipped to share a meal and fellowship with the Lord. Everyone bringing his part.

1 Cor 12:7-12

7 Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. 8 To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, 9 to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, 10 to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. 11 All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines.

12 The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ.

NIV

Most often, the Lord does not instruct and correct through a booming voice from the mountains or some other fantastic display of His power and glory. The Lord's instructions come as we share a meal together with Him. It is relational and natural, it is the consequence of simply sharing the routines and necessities of our lives together. There is no performance here, no robes or organ music, no one has to give an inspired offering message to pull new grace from the Lord, He is already ready to give, and as a matter of fact, this is the very reason that Jesus arranged this particular meal.

At this meal, Peter was challenged and confronted by the Lord. "Do you love me more than these?".... "Feed my lambs." He was given a warning concerning his future, "when you are old...". And later he was corrected and purged of pride and fear in ranking and comparing his walk with anyone else's. "Lord, what about him?" Jesus answered, "If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you? You must follow me."

(John21:21,22)

You must follow me.

When Peter and the others were first called away from these boats, Jesus told them to "follow Him" and He would make them fishers of men. He is still on the same mission with Peter and the others. Love never fails. Perfect love is full of correction, and Peter has just been blessed with some more discernment and wisdom. A few more "bad fish" that came into the Kingdom with the old Peter just got thrown away.

This is a pattern for our fellowship with each other and with the Lord.

Relational, supplying the needs of the present moment, correcting, exhorting, encouraging, rebuking, and training up into the purpose and call of the Lord, Jesus christ.

Rev 3:18-22

18 I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, so you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see.

19 Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest, and repent.

20 Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me.

21 To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne.

22 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

NIV

When we come together, we must realize, we must begin to know that it is not just a few abandoned disciples gathering together to maybe catch a few fish and make some kind of living at this. We must begin to see, and to know that when we come together as believers, the HE IS ALIVE and HE IS WITH US. Emmanuel. We sing it but we do not really know it sometimes, we forget. Or we allow it to be stolen away from us by the mundane thoughts, the old habits, those dead lies that have kept us thinking separately from the Lord. We must DISCERN THE BODY. We must see the good fish and the bad fish, and then just throw out the bad, and keep the good. It is not that hard unless you cannot discern the body.

1 Cor 11:29-34

29 For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself.

30 That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep. 31 But if we judged ourselves, we would not come under judgment.

32 When we are judged by the Lord, we are being disciplined so that we will not be condemned with the world.

33 So then, my brothers, when you come together to eat, wait for each other.

34 If anyone is hungry, he should eat at home, so that when you meet together it may not result in judgment.

NIV

Paul wrote these words to a church that went way out of balance and out of line. They had regular love feasts, meals that they shared together, but people were totally carnal and selfish in their behavior toward each other. He told them that it would be better for them just to eat alone at home than to come together and carry on like this and call it a "fellowship of the Lord". Because of their immaturity and carnal behavior, many were sick, some had even died from sickness because there was no maturing, no proper correcting and exhorting. No real equipping FOR SERVICE. No one was speaking those powerful words of wisdom and correction that Peter received at the Lake. Without those words of correction, Peter was headed for disaster. He would have had the "zealously jumping in the lake for Jesus" ministry, but he never would have preached that earth changing sermon in Jerusalem at the Feast of Pentecost (Acts 2). He would never have become a fisher of men.

Good fish and bad fish, sharing what we have been given by the Lord - bringing our part. Standing still and allowing the weakness and blindness in you to be separated and cast off. This is your healing, this is how the weak and sick among you become healed. This is the operation of discerning the body about which Paul spoke. This is the judgement of the Lord that is discipline and not condemnation.

By this you will know my disciples, they will love one another. They will wait on one another, they will sort the good fish from the bad, and they will bring what they have been given and come together in my name and they will continually feast at this table, My table, the table I have prepared in the presence of my enemies.

They will eat and be satisfied, with long life I will satisfy them and show them My salvation. This is my delight, my purpose and my plan to purge them, my Bride, till she has no spot or wrinkle, till nothing foreign or corrupting can be found within her.

YES I CAN, YES I CAN DO THIS, I have spoken and it is so. If you will believe, you can enter into this place that I have prepared for you. It is for you, for your good, our benefit, beyond what you have been able to imagine, but YES I CAN do this, who will prevent Me or give me counsel against My wisdom.

My Word is the very fabric of the universe, and I see every sparrow, I AM the ANCIENT ONE, I AM RIGHT NOW IN THIS SECOND, I AM PERFECT LOVE AND I DO NOT FAIL.

I DO NOT FAIL

COME TO ME NOW AND I WILL GIVE YOU REST.

DISCERN AND SEE - I AM IN THE WORLD, NOT IMPUTING THEIR TRESPASSES AGAINST THEM

THIS IS MY WORD OF RECONCILIATION - TAKE THIS AND EAT - FEAST ON THIS BREAD AND HAVE MY LIFE - IT IS GIVEN FOR YOU.

Have no other, and give no thoughts over to another, for I am jealous over you. My name is Jealous and I am for you for your good to give you the promise of my covenant forever my children and my Son.

SELAH

