

Who is Jesus?: Dearest Friend

John 21:1-14

Introduction

- **John 20:30-31** reveals why John's gospel exists. This is what the sovereign Spirit of God wants us to gain from our 2+ years in this gospel...Belief that Jesus is the Christ and that our believing is the saving (eternal) kind – sustained and increasing.
- So, remember that in its simplicity, John's gospel is a series of testimonies to the fact that Jesus is the Christ. Today's account is no different.
- **John 15:12-17**

Reveals Himself to His Friends in the Course of Life (vv.1-3)

- Matter of Fact
 - Sign of Sequence, but not necessarily immediacy (what's next...)
 - Sea of Tiberias (Sea of Galilee – only in John – 6:1) – Herod Antipas founded a city called Tiberias on the west shore of the lake. Common reference, but not until the latter half of this first century – speaks again to the nature of John's gospel
 - Going to the region Christ commanded they should go
 - An "in the mean time" kind of waiting – so it appears
- Another sign among His Disciples
 - Peter, Thomas, Nathanael, James, John (author), 2 others (unnamed).

Reveals Himself to His Friends with Words (vv.4-8)

- Where He said He'd be - asking questions, giving commands and making invitations
 - Unrecognized at first
 - "Do you have anything to eat, brothers?"

- The Sheep know His Voice
 - Recognition
 - When His word was obeyed and fruit bore
 - Authority
 - He gives them instruction (imperative "throw" to cast the net on the right side of the boat and they do (interesting given that they did not know that it was Christ...yet). They now had more fish than they could haul in.
 - Response
 - John said to Peter (they were very close it appears), that it is "the Lord!" Important designation and connection with recognition and signs, which John carefully connects that signs point people to the identity of Christ ("Lord" is pretty personal in this last accounts after the resurrection).
 - Peter puts on his outer garment and "threw himself into the sea." What a great statement of Peter's devotion.
 - The other disciples came in the boat. This does not necessarily reflect poorly on their passion. Could simply reflect the trust of John (for instance) that Christ will be there and that he wanted them to bring the catch for a reason.

Reveals Himself to His Friends in Community (vv.9-14)

- Some try to find symbols, but Christ is enough (number 7, total number of fish, especially)
 - About the strongest meaning in the text is that apart from Him they could do nothing
 - **John 15:5**
- Christ at the Center
 - Making provision
 - When they arrived on shore they saw that Jesus already had the cookout started with fish on the grill. Speaks to something of Christ not

- needing our hands to serve Him, and that He will provide regardless.
 - Commands (imperative “bring”) them to bring what they caught, which He had instructed them in how (giving them a miracle)
- Deepening the relationship with those who will feed His sheep, establishing the church – this relational intimacy seems to be the foundation of their following Christ to the point of suffering (Christ will care for their needs and be with them and have them with Himself one day)
- Interjection of “Come” and imperative of “dine”. Very emphatic. Having breakfast. Breaking bread. Examples of the kind of community gathering they would emulate in the early church. They were gathered together around the Lord (His teaching).
 - John is careful to point out that no one questioned what was already believed upon
 - General observation. In order to have authentic biblical community, you cannot lose the imperatives! Our abiding in community hinges on our abiding in Christ, which hinges on keeping His commands (**John 15:10-11**)
 - Christ is the center of biblical community, not the community itself. That’s like having hope in hope or faith in faith
 - The result of being with God’s people should be JOY in jointly keeping His commands. Our overarching feeling should not be relief that church is over! The Psalmist says that he was glad when they said let’s go to the house of the Lord, not glad when it was over so they could head to Chili’s and really have a good Sunday!
- Christ takes another opportunity to serve them. Beautiful friendship and lordship on singular display!
- This was the 3rd time Jesus was revealed to the disciples after the resurrection

Reveals Himself to His Friends for a Purpose (vv.15-19)

- To commission Peter and provoke the disciples to follow even unto death
 - We’ll look at this next week...

Application

- As for today, we must remember that this “fish story” is another testimony that Jesus is the Christ. The purpose in believing that truth is having eternal life in the redeemer of your soul!
- Believer, you may be reminded this morning that apart from abiding in Him you can do nothing. Are you reckoned to abide in the Christ (in His Word) to do all that He commands you do?
 - Practical example... Do you trust that He’ll take care of your physical needs in order for you to be a sent one to proclaim the gospel? Or are you going so hard after the things of this world (even calling it provision) and yet have not gone so hard after Him that you cannot help but tell others of Him?
 - Do you trust His Word enough to do the hard things He commands?
 - Do you claim to be sheep? Do you recognize the voice of your shepherd?
- Now, what about those of you who believe that you are believers, yet you are struggling with the idea of the church / biblical community?
 - Are you looking for your preferences or a sense that Christ is the central figure proclaimed and sought?
 - Are you complaining about what’s not your style?
 - Do you trust Christ’s provision or are your eyes set on a man to give you what you think you need?