

Saturday, April 3, 2021 | Easter Upside Down

John 21:1-19 | "The Campfires"

Announcement:

- If you're a guest with us today who was invited by one of our own, I want you to know how important it is to us--and especially to the one who invited you--that you're here today.
- Also, we have special easter egg kits for our parents today that you can take home with you today.
- And speaking of families, I hope you'll join us next week as we kick off a brand new four-week series called "What No One Told Us About Parenting."
- If you have not received a communion cup and cracker, please raise your hand, and our ushers will be happy to give you one.

In Easter Upside Down, we've explored scenes where Jesus flipped conventional understanding on its head. What the world considers right; Jesus considered wrong. What the world considered necessary; Jesus considered inconsequential.

When we read about Mary of Bethany, we learned that true worship has nothing to do with what others think of us and everything to do with what Jesus thinks of us.

When we read about how Jesus washed the disciple's feet, we learned that no task is too small, no job is too boring, no work is too basic, and no chore is too undignified when one considers that the God who made the feet of man also stooped to make them clean. Menial service is meaningful service.

Last week, when we talked about the traitor Judas, we were confronted with an uncomfortable truth: you can look the part but still be apart. In other words, you can look like a follower of Jesus without being a follower of Jesus. It is not enough to offer mere lip-service to the Son of God. The Messiah sees whether or not our words match our walk.

Today, on this Easter morning, we'll be looking at another traitor: Peter. As we all know, Jesus told Peter that he would betray him. In fact, we read about this interaction in John 13.

READ: John 13:36-38 (ESV)

³⁶ Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, where are you going?" Jesus answered him, "Where I am going you cannot follow me now, but you will follow afterward." ³⁷ Peter said to him, "Lord, why can I not follow you now? I will lay down my life for you." ³⁸ Jesus

answered, “Will you lay down your life for me? Truly, truly, I say to you, the rooster will not crow till you have denied me three times.

Let’s jump forward a bit to get to the actual scene.

READ: John 18:15-18 (ESV)

¹⁵ Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple. Since that disciple was known to the high priest, he entered with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest, ¹⁶ but Peter stood outside at the door. So the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out and spoke to the servant girl who kept watch at the door, and brought Peter in. ¹⁷ The servant girl at the door said to Peter, “You also are not one of this man’s disciples, are you?” He said, “I am not.” ¹⁸ Now the servants and officers had made a charcoal fire, because it was cold, and they were standing and warming themselves. Peter also was with them, standing and warming himself.

READ: John 18:25-27 (ESV)

²⁵ Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. So they said to him, “You also are not one of his disciples, are you?” He denied it and said, “I am not.” ²⁶ One of the servants of the high priest, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, asked, “Did I not see you in the garden with him?” ²⁷ Peter again denied it, and at once a rooster crowed.

Matthew’s account gives a little more information in that Peter didn’t only deny Jesus, he also cursed while he did it. Then, after the rooster crowed, Matthew tells us Peter remembered Jesus’ words and wept bitterly. Peter went through a lot of emotions that first Easter weekend. But rather than tell you more about how Peter felt, let’s let him tell you himself. <PLAY SKIT

GUYS VIDEO ILLUSTRATION: PETER>

Peter, like Judas, betrayed Jesus that night. But unlike Judas, Peter had always been a faithful follower of Jesus. And because of that, Peter’s mourning turned to rejoicing that Sunday.

READ: John 20:1-10 (ESV)

¹ Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. ² So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, “They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.” ³ So Peter went out with the other disciple, and they were going toward the tomb. ⁴ Both of them were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and

reached the tomb first. ⁵ And stooping to look in, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he did not go in. ⁶ Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen cloths lying there, ⁷ and the face cloth, which had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen cloths but folded up in a place by itself. ⁸ Then the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; ⁹ for as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that he must rise from the dead. ¹⁰ Then the disciples went back to their homes.

It is true. The crucifixion may have been the death of Jesus Christ, but the resurrection was the death of death itself. Some of you are in need of the stone to be rolled away in your life. You are living in discouragement, defeat, despair, and despondency. If Jesus could conquer the grave, he can conquer whatever torments you today.

Interestingly, in Mark's account of the resurrection, the angel tells the women who visited that empty tomb to tell the disciples **and Peter** that Jesus has risen. More than any other disciple, Peter needed the resurrection most. He was living in discouragement, defeat, despair, and despondency because of his 3-time denial. And, if the resurrection can give hope to a fallen Peter, it can give hope to every flawed human being.

After this, we're told about how Jesus appeared to the disciples not once but twice. Meaning, Peter not only saw the empty tomb, but he also saw and talked with the risen Christ. And you would think that would've been enough to completely transform their lives and set them on a journey to go and preach the Gospel to the furthest reaches of the world. But John records for us one more scene. It's important to note that this scene comes before the Great Commission.

READ: John 21:1-3 (ESV)

¹ After this Jesus revealed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias [Sea of Galilee], and he revealed himself in this way. ² Simon Peter, Thomas (called the Twin), Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples were together. ³ Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We will go with you." They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.

Now, admittedly, Jesus had told the disciples to go back to Galilee and wait for him there (cf. Mat. 26:32). However, it seems in this moment that John is portraying himself and his friends as slipping back into their old habits rather than disciples faithfully awaiting more instruction. If you'll remember, when Jesus first called the disciples, they were fisherman. Now here they were back to their old ways as if they hadn't walked with the Son of God for three years,

watched as He was crucified, and witnessed the resurrection. It seems Jesus knows that they're going back to their old ways because he visits them.

READ: John 21:4-19 (ESV)

⁴ Just as day was breaking, Jesus stood on the shore; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. ⁵ Jesus said to them, "Children, do you have any fish?" They answered him, "No." ⁶ He said to them, "Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some." So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in, because of the quantity of fish. ⁷ That disciple whom Jesus loved therefore said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment, for he was stripped for work, and threw himself into the sea. ⁸ The other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, but about a hundred yards off.

⁹ When they got out on land, they saw a charcoal fire in place, with fish laid out on it, and bread. ¹⁰ Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish that you have just caught." ¹¹ So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, 153 of them. And although there were so many, the net was not torn. ¹² Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast." Now none of the disciples dared ask him, "Who are you?" They knew it was the Lord. ¹³ Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and so with the fish. ¹⁴ This was now the third time that Jesus was revealed to the disciples after he was raised from the dead.

¹⁵ When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." He said to him, "Feed my lambs." ¹⁶ He said to him a second time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." He said to him, "Tend my sheep." ¹⁷ He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, "Do you love me?" and he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep. ¹⁸ Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were young, you used to dress yourself and walk wherever you wanted, but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will dress you and carry you where you do not want to go." ¹⁹ (This he said to show by what kind of death he was to glorify God.) And after saying this he said to him, "Follow me."

Not unlike when Peter denied Jesus three times while next to a charcoal fire, here we find Peter confirming his allegiance for Jesus three times while next to a charcoal fire. Jesus used this

moment by the seashore to mirror Peter's darkest moment. If you'll remember, in that moment of darkness when Peter disavowed Jesus, he went away from Jesus and wept bitterly. Now here in this moment of renewal, when Peter reaffirmed Jesus, he would never again betray the Messiah but would follow Jesus till his last days.

So, what's the takeaway?

Jesus thrice-asked Peter, "Do you love me?" But the first question was different than the other two. Jesus asked Peter, "Do you love me more than these?" What, exactly, were the "these" Jesus was referring to? Was it the other disciples seated around the campfire? Or was it the 153 fish he had just hauled up onshore? The answer is both. Jesus asked if Peter loved him more than his companions and if he loved him more than his career.

Your old life will suffocate your new life when you lose the wonder of the resurrection.

Immediately after the resurrection, we find Peter marveling at what he saw.

READ: Luke 24:12 (ESV)

But Peter rose and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; and he went home marveling at what had happened.

The resurrection sparked amazement in Peter's heart, but somewhere between an empty tomb and sandy shoreline, Peter lost his wonder at what occurred. He became the seed that fell on good ground but was choked by the thorns (cf. Lu. 8:4-15). He fell back into old habits. He went back to his old life. He returned to his old job. He loved his friends and his fishing more than he loved his risen Savior.

So, what's the takeaway?

Your old life will suffocate your new life when you lose the wonder of the resurrection.

INVITATION

- To the **believer**: The resurrection is a motivation for us to follow Jesus. Have you placed your companions or your career above Jesus? It's time to repent. It's time to stop following your friends and following your livelihood and to start following Jesus.
- To the **unbeliever**: The resurrection is an invitation to accept Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior. If you have not done so, you will not have peace, you will not have joy, you will not have everlasting life.

But there's hope. Romans 10:9-10 says, "...if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." If you want peace, if you want joy, if you want everlasting life, I want you to repeat the sinner's prayer with me:

"Dear God, today, I recognize the need for your resurrection power in my life. I come to you just as I am, broken, hurting, doubting, and empty. I believe that Jesus died on the cross, in my place. Today, I call on him as My Lord and Savior, in Jesus Name, Amen."

VIDEO DESCRIPTION

Easter Upside Down | Week 4 | "The Campfires"

TEXT: John 21:1-19

On a sandy shoreline, Jesus thrice-asked Peter, "Do you love me?" But the first of those three questions. Jesus initially asked Peter, "Do you love me more than these?" What, exactly, were the "these" Jesus was referring to? Was it the other disciples seated around the campfire? Or was it the 153 fish he had just hauled up onshore? The answer is both. Jesus asked if Peter loved him more than his companions and if he loved him more than his career.

Jesus asked Peter this question for several reasons, but His primary motivation was to keep Peter from falling back into his old life. You see, initially, the resurrection sparked amazement into the heart of Peter (cf. Lu. 24:12). But somewhere between an empty tomb and sandy shoreline, Peter lost his wonder at what occurred. Essentially, he became the seed that fell on good ground, which was promptly choked by the thorns (cf. Lu. 8:4-15). In John 21, Peter fell back into old habits. He went back to his old life. He returned to his old job. By doing so, he showed by his actions that he loved his friends and his fishing more than he loved his risen Savior. This is why Jesus brings the issue to the forefront and pointedly asked Peter to choose whether he loves his old life in Galilee more than he loves his new life in Christ.

The choice is the same for us. Your old life will suffocate your new life when you lose the wonder of the resurrection. More than anything, we mustn't lose our amazement for that first Easter morn.

Pastor's manuscript can be found here: