

John 21:1-19 // Come and Have Breakfast

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Preacher: Simon Attwood

[0 : 00] Great. Our reading this morning is John chapter 21 and verses 1 to 14.

And you can find that on page 1090 of the Bibles in front of you. So it's John chapter 21 on page 1090.

Afterwards, Jesus appeared again to his disciples by the Sea of Galilee. It happened this way. Simon Peter, Thomas, also known as Didymus, Nathaniel from Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two other disciples were together.

I'm going out to fish, Simon Peter told them. And they said, we'll go with you. So they went out and got into the boat.

But that night they caught nothing. Early in the morning, Jesus stood on the shore. But the disciples did not realize that it was Jesus.

[1 : 30] He called out to them, friends, haven't you any fish? No, they answered. He said, throw your net on the right side of the boat and you will find some.

When they did, they were unable to haul the net in because of the large number of fish. 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 round him, for he had taken it off, and jumped into the water. The other disciples followed in the boat, towing the net full of fish, for they were not far from shore, about 100 metres.

When they landed, they saw a fire of burning coals there with fish on it and some bread. Jesus said to them, bring some of the fish you've just caught.

So Simon Peter climbed back into the boat and dragged the net ashore. It was full of large fish, 153. But even with so many, the net was not torn.

[2 : 46] Jesus said to them, come and have breakfast. None of the disciples dared ask him, who are you? They knew it was the Lord.

Jesus came, took the bread, and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. This was now the third time Jesus appeared to his disciples, after he was raised from the dead.

This is the word of the Lord. Brilliant. Thanks, Amy. Well, good morning, everyone. This is a family service.

So if you are a young person, why don't you come to the front? Maybe you can bring an older person with you if you'd like to. That'd be brilliant. And let me add my welcome to Andrews whilst you are coming forward.

My name is Simon. I am a training minister here. Now, we are one week after... Thank you, Andrew. Excellent. We are one week after Easter Sunday when we celebrated the resurrection of Jesus.

[3 : 50] And we celebrate Jesus beating sin and death forever. However, the whole big reason that we meet together every week is to worship God because of those facts. We worship him for sending Jesus to take away our sin and give his eternal life by rising from the dead.

So you might wonder why, even though it's a week after Easter, we're still talking about the resurrection. Hiya, come on in. Well, we're talking about it because even after Jesus is raised to life, John gives us another chapter of his gospel about what Jesus continues to do and how he treats his friends after he comes back to life.

So we're going to ask for Jesus' help as we go through that this morning. So let's pray together. Lord Jesus, thank you that you have been raised from the dead and that you are with us.

Help us to learn more about you this morning. And we ask that in your name. Amen. Now, boys and girls and older and younger people, I want you to imagine something with me.

Imagine you're one of the disciples. You've traveled with Jesus for three years, so your feet are covered in blisters for walking all the time. And you've been with Jesus even at that last week of his

life.

[5 : 03] You've seen everything that led up to the cross. You've seen him killed but then risen again three days later. It's the most amazing thing that's ever happened in your life. It's the most amazing thing that's ever happened in history.

And the question is, what do you do now if you're a disciple? What does it mean to be a friend of Jesus after he's risen again? What do you think you would do after the amazing event?

I don't know what you would do after the day after a party or the day after a wedding. But actually, one thing, you just keep celebrating. Celebrating the thing that happened. And for the disciples, while they follow Jesus' instructions, they go to a place called Galilee.

And whilst they wait for Jesus, they do what they normally do. They went fishing. Now, a lot of Jesus' followers had been fishermen before they followed him. So they're just going back to what they know.

Seven of Jesus' disciples come together and go on a fishing journey. Now, they go overnight because if in the heat of the day it's too hot to go fishing. But they don't catch anything.

[6 : 09] So what we have here is an empty net. Can you make a good meal with no fish? Some of you are thinking that's the only good meal.

It can never have fish in it. But actually, if you have no fish, there's nothing to eat. It's not great. So the disciples are about to come back. But in the morning, they see someone on the shore.

And he shouts, Lads, have you caught any fish? They shout back, No! And so he says, Well, throw the nets over the other side then. And so they do.

And they start to catch more fish than they can remotely understand. But you see, the thing is, boys and girls, there's no fish on our board, is there? So I think we should go find some fish.

So boys and girls, do you want to try and find some fish? And Robbie and Andrew are going to help us stick them on the board. So run around the church. Adults, help the kids find the fish. Give them to the kids. And we'll try and collect all the fish here.

[7 : 11] You'll find them. They should be absolutely everywhere. Bring them back when you've found them. Adults, if you'd like to bring any fish up yourself, you are very welcome to do so.

That's how many fish you can find. Well, one fish is not a very good breakfast. Come on, we can do better than that. How many fish have we got? Three fish.

We've got to feed all the disciples. That's not very many. Excellent. Thank you. We've got a few more. Any more? Keep going. We can probably find some more fish.

Oh, that's looking like it could be a good breakfast. Excellent. Should we start sticking them up? Okay. You've got five more seconds to find fish.

After we count down, you'll have to come back. So five, four, three, two, one. Okay. Bring them back and come and take a seat while Andrew and Robbie come and stick our fish up for us.

[8 : 13] Excellent. Lots and lots of fish. Right. If you drop the fish here and Robbie and Andrew are going to stick those up for us and grab a seat. That is a lot of fish for breakfast.

Some good fish finger sandwiches in the making. Now, the disciples have caught so many fish that they know it's a miracle. It's something that they would never normally get. But then that reminds them this is not the first time that they've seen fish like this.

The very first time that Peter and the disciples met Jesus, he showed them his power by the miraculous catch of fish that was so big that all their nets tore in two.

And their boats began to sink because there were so many. But here, all the fish are kept in the nets and begin to be dragged ashore. The first time Peter saw Jesus do a miracle like this, he bowed down to him and worshipped him.

And Jesus said, don't be afraid. From now on, you will fish for people. Now, that doesn't mean there's going to be lots of people in the lake and they're going to go fishing for people. That would be weird. But they're going to go and find people and tell them about Jesus.

[9 : 23] Jesus is reminding his friends about the first time they met. And so the second this big catch of fish comes in, John says, it's the Lord. And naturally, Peter, being the fastest one there, jumps in and swims all the way to land just so he can see Jesus.

Now, I don't know what you think the resurrected Jesus would say in a conversation. You might think he might say big and mighty and powerful things, and he does.

But here, Jesus says some really unexpected words. Jesus says, come and have breakfast. Come and have breakfast. The Lord of glory who reigns over the universe returns from the dead, having

beaten death and sin, and he says, let's have breakfast.

Isn't that a wonderful surprise? That even after he's resurrected, Jesus is treating his followers like they are his friends. And you can imagine them sitting there with their bread and their fish thinking, oh, this reminds me of that time he fed 5,000 people.

This really is him. Jesus is showing these fishermen that he is with them, and he will give them everything they need to be fishers of men. He will provide more than they can even imagine.

[10:35] See how long it's taking Andrew and Robbie even to stick up these fish. Imagine trying to take in 153 fish from a net. And so that's our first big thought this morning. Just how much Jesus provides for his friends as they seek to do what he says.

Isn't it amazing that Jesus knows and remembers everything about us? He knows when we need encouragement and when we need help. And because he's the one who has absolutely everything, he's the one who can give us what we need.

Let's face it, the disciples only really need a couple of fish for breakfast, but instead they bring in 153. So much more than they needed. And so when we are friends of Jesus, we can ask him for what we need.

When we're afraid, we can ask him for courage, knowing that he is with us. When we are tired, we can ask him for rest from a confusing world. When we're sad, we can come to him in prayer, knowing that he listens to us.

When we need to say sorry for our sins, we can come to him knowing that he will forgive us. When we are a friend of Jesus, he provides absolutely everything that we need for a life with him.

[11:48] Not everything we want, but everything we need. And isn't that amazing that even though Jesus is powerful, that he's the Lord, that he is resurrected from the dead.

He isn't far away and distant, but close with his followers. A true friend has been with them before. Loving, personal, and close. And though he's not here with us physically, he's even closer with us because we have the Holy Spirit.

That means that Jesus is our friend with us all the time. It's so good to be a friend of Jesus. Well, we're now going to have our all-age song.

So I'm going to invite Ailey and the band back up. And after that, we're going to have a second part of our Bible reading. So kids, you can go back to your chairs after the song. And then I will come back up and do another part of this.

Jesus reign states Peter. When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?

[12:50] Yes, Lord, he said. You know that I love you. Jesus said, feed my lambs. Again, Jesus said, Simon, son of John, do you love me?

He answered, yes, Lord, you know that I love you. Jesus said, take care of my sheep. The third time he said to him, Simon, son of John, do you love me?

Now, 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. Very truly, I tell you, 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.

Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him, follow me. This is the word of the Lord. Great.

[14:02] Thanks, Alan. Well, in the first half of our Bible passage, we looked at how being a friend of Jesus means that he provides so much more than we need that we can be confident and happy, that we can do what he's called us to do.

And the second part of our passage today shows us what it's like to be a friend of Jesus when things go wrong. Peter seemed so excited to see Jesus, he throws himself off the boat to swim all the way just to see him.

But I wonder what's been going through Peter's mind since the resurrection. Because they're all sitting around a fire having bread and fish together. But the last time Peter was around a fire like this, Jesus was at a trial and he was outside.

And he was asked three times whether he knew Jesus. And three times he said he didn't know him. Peter betrayed Jesus. And since Jesus' resurrection, Peter has heard Jesus say to a whole crowd of disciples, peace be with you.

But I wonder if the memory of his worst failure, the worst night of his life, still haunted him sometimes. The night where instead of acting like a friend of Jesus, Peter acted like an enemy of Jesus.

[15 : 18] So after breakfast, Jesus and the disciples are talking and Jesus says to Peter, Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?

Now I find this passage really weird to read because I'm Simon and my dad is John. So it's quite odd for me. But if you're getting confused, Simon here is Simon Peter. Jesus has given him the name Peter as a gift.

He is, Peter just means rock. And Jesus has said that Peter is the rock on which he will build his church. It's a title of honor. But here, Simon, son of John, this is very personal, says, do you love me more than these?

And Peter naturally responds, yes, Lord, you know that I love you. Peter isn't being proud in saying that. He's just showing his devotion to Jesus. And so Jesus says, feed my sheep.

I command you to go and look after Jesus' followers. I imagine Peter is probably quite happy about that. But then Jesus says again, Simon, son of John, do you love me? And I wonder if the second time Peter is confused.

[16 : 25] He's just been asked that question. And so he says again, yes, Lord, you know that I love you. And Jesus says, take care of my sheep. But it's when Jesus asks him a third time that the penny drops, Simon, son of John, do you love me?

And all of a sudden, Peter is hurt. Why does Jesus ask Peter this three times? Well, it's not to hurt Peter that he does it because Jesus loves Peter. But it's a tender moment that reminds Peter of the betrayal that Peter did the night of Jesus' crucifixion, the night before Jesus' crucifixion.

But it's also an invitation to be his friend again, knowing that he really is forgiven for that betrayal. So Peter responds, Lord, you know all things.

You know that I love you. Peter might have sinned against Jesus and betrayed him, but that's not the end of the story. And Jesus doesn't just forgive him in general.

He carefully and personally gives Peter back the friendship that he had rejected. Peter is forgiven and loved by Jesus. But even that's not where the story ends.

[17 : 36] Jesus goes one step further. He says in verse 18, Feed my sheep, truly I tell you. When you were younger, you dressed yourself and went where you wanted, but when you're old, you'll stretch out your hand and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go.

Follow me. Peter isn't just getting his friend back here. He's getting his job back too. As I said before, Jesus is saying to Peter, the rock on which he will build the church, I want you to do what I called you to do.

I want you to go and serve me. And we're told here by John that even in his death, Peter will be serving Jesus. And not just serving Jesus, but serving like Jesus served, giving his life for Jesus' followers.

Peter's being called from being a fisherman to being a shepherd to express his love for Jesus in his love for Jesus' people. This friend of Jesus is being told to care for Jesus' friends.

Follow me, says Jesus. Shepherd my flock. Follow me and care for my friends. From the failure of betrayal to the responsibility of honoring Jesus with his whole life, Peter receives back the love of Jesus in a wonderful and personal way.

[18 : 57] Instead of being left as a betrayer, Peter is reinstated as Jesus' friend, as a disciple who would give his life in Jesus' service. And we know this is true because in Peter's own words from the book that he wrote, he said, To this you were called because Jesus suffered for you, leaving you an example that you should follow in his steps.

And so Peter knows that his life will be one where he suffers for Jesus and for Jesus' followers. Now, we aren't Peter, but we're all people who fail just like Peter did.

People who totally fluff it when we come to living for Jesus. We know there's times when we lack courage to speak up about Jesus at school or at work. We know that we choose the wrong thing so often even when the right thing is so easy.

We're people who so often fail to live for Jesus in our actions and in the words that we say. We don't act like friends of Jesus and we don't love Jesus' friends. So how does Jesus treat failures like us?

Well, with a forgiveness like Peter's. When we say sorry to Jesus, our forgiveness is not only free, but it's really personal. Jesus doesn't say, I forgive you, but stand over there, I don't like you.

[20 : 19] Stay away from me. No, for those in Jesus' kingdom, Jesus goes to them, gathers them in and shows them a personal, loving forgiveness, welcomes them back home and makes them useful again, sending them out to feed his sheep, to go and love his friends.

We have to ask ourselves, when we've failed, when we've sinned, and we go and say sorry to Jesus, is the Jesus in our minds like the Jesus in this story? Do I think that I can come and be forgiven and wonderfully welcomed back?

Or do I think that Jesus is holding me at arm's length and saying that I'm not really his friend anymore? Well, forgiveness from Jesus means that we are his friend and he's never away from us. He will always be with us even when we fail and picks us up because he loves us and cares for us and wants us to go and care for his sheep. People who love Jesus go out and love the friends of Jesus because Jesus loves his friends.

So we've seen today how good it is to be a friend of Jesus, how much he provides for us, how much he loves us, and how personal the forgiveness that we have for our sin is.

[21 : 32] And it's really, really good to be a friend of Jesus. I think it was a chance to think about that. There's going to be some questions that are going to come up on the screen and if you're a family, you should have received a sheet on the way in with some questions for you and your kids together.

If you don't have one of those, if you talk to a member of the welcome team, they'll be able to give you one and some pens. But if you're here and you're not with family, you're just with friends, why don't you chat through these questions?

And if you're new and you don't know anyone you're sitting around, that's okay. You can use some time. Just reflect on what you've heard this morning. Let's have a few minutes to discuss these questions. Lord Jesus, thank you so much that because of your death and resurrection, we can have our sins forgiven and call you our friend.

Thank you that anyone who puts their faith in you can be forgiven and welcomed into your family.

Thank you that you give us so much more than we need at every moment. Thank you for the task that you've given us to do to go and show your love to your friends and to everyone we meet.

Help us to know that when we fail, you forgive us so kindly and so personally. and every single day to trust that you are with us in all that we do. And we pray these things in your name.

[22 : 52] Amen. Wonderful. Please stand as we sing what a friend we have in Jesus. Do you know him? I'm sorry.

There you go. But still have it in Jesus. I'm sorry. Amen. You know, the reason why you're■■■ ■■■■ and made you in his way in Jesus is the perfect name in Jesus is he that the frosty that is the Father Son