

# John 21

The Jews chose the physical kingdom over the spiritual. Man over God.  
And so Jesus was crucified.  
Put John in charge of his mother.  
Then when everything had been fulfilled, he said "it is finished," and gave up the ghost.

Buried him close by, because the next two days were sabbath days.  
On the third day, first day of the week, work day.  
Mary Magdalene went to the grave early, but he wasn't there.  
He had gone to gather some of his blood, to take when he ascended to his Father.  
But she went and told John and Peter. And they went to the grave.  
John saw and believed.

And later Jesus appeared to 10 of the apostles while they were together.  
Told them that they would receive the Spirit and speak the word.  
And that if they didn't, nobody would.

But Thomas wasn't there.  
And when they told him, he wouldn't believe.  
But Jesus appeared to them again, when Thomas was there.  
"Blessed are those who have not seen, and yet have believed."

**John 20:30** And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book:

31 But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

And that sounds like the end of it.

## Verse 1

**John 21:1** After these things Jesus shewed himself again to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias; and on this wise shewed he himself.

The disciples didn't just see Jesus once or twice after his resurrection.  
He appeared to them many times. At different locations. While they were doing different things.  
And this is one of those events.

## Verse 2-3

**John 21:2** There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, and two other of his disciples.

3 Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing. They say unto him, We also go with thee. They went forth, and entered into a ship immediately; and that night they caught nothing.

It has been a few years, and it seem like they've lost the knack.

## Verse 4

**John 21:4** But when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore: but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus.

This is important.

A skeptic might try to discredit the idea that the disciples actually saw Jesus after he died. Here they had just been up all night, they were just hallucinating or something.

But there's a problem with the idea that the disciples just *thought* that they saw Christ at different times.

And that is that they didn't think that they saw Christ.

They didn't just look up and see Jesus standing in front of them.

They looked out and saw some strange man walking along the shore.

They didn't know who he was. He was just some guy. He didn't look like Jesus to them, they didn't recognize him.

He was just this man standing by the sea.

## Verse 5-6

**John 21:5** Then Jesus saith unto them, Children, have ye any meat? They answered him, No.  
**6** And he said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes.

You see, these guys are now supposed to be fishing for men.

And how are they going to do that?

They can't do it without him.

"Without me ye can do nothing."

They've got to continue in his word. Keep following his commandments.

He'll show them how to fish, when to fish, where to fish.

He knows where the fish are. He knows his sheep.

He'll supply the catch.

They just need to follow his word.

## Verse 7

**John 21:7** Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord. Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his fisher's coat unto him, (for he was naked,) and did cast himself into the sea.

So suddenly John realizes, that must be Jesus.

You can see how this is no hallucination. The disciples have just caught a net full of fish, that they didn't expect to catch, but there they are. They are taking them to land. They are going to sell them in the market. Take some home to eat.

It is undeniable that this event has actually happened to them.

And it only happened because this strange man showed up.  
And it is only because this happened, that they know that man must be the Lord.

## Verse 8-12

**John 21:8** And the other disciples came in a little ship; (for they were not far from land, but as it were two hundred cubits,) dragging the net with fishes.

9 As soon then as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread.

10 Jesus saith unto them, Bring of the fish which ye have now caught.

11 Simon Peter went up, and drew the net to land full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty and three: and for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken.

12 Jesus saith unto them, Come and dine. And none of the disciples durst ask him, Who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord.

They still don't really recognize him, but they have no doubt who it is.

And as another proof that this is real, they are going to come and eat a meal with him, and warm themselves by the fire.

## Verse 13-15

**John 21:13** Jesus then cometh, and taketh bread, and giveth them, and fish likewise.

14 This is now the third time that Jesus shewed himself to his disciples, after that he was risen from the dead.

15 So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.

Here they are, they've eaten a meal, and now they're warming themselves by the fire. And it is kind of a familiar scene. After the Passover meal, Peter warmed himself by the fire. But it wasn't with Jesus and his disciples. It was with the servants of the high priest at Christ's trial.

And Peter denied Christ three times.

So Jesus is going to use this as an opportunity to kind of give Peter a shot at redemption, to confess three times, instead of denying three times.

And he has something very important that he wants to tell him, and this is going to help hit it home. It is going to help it to really sink in.

So Jesus asks Peter an interesting question. Kind of unusual.

He asks him, "Peter, do you love me more than these, the other apostles?"

Why is he asking that?

Has Peter been showing more love toward the other apostles than he has toward Christ?

Well, not exactly.

But you see, God has a ministry for Peter, that is no dependent on what the other apostles do.

It isn't something that he is called to do jointly. There are some things that he is going to have to face alone.

And so, the question is, is he willing to do that?  
Is he willing to follow Christ, follow God's will for him, regardless of what the others do.  
Regardless of what God's will for them is.

He said before that he would die for him. But then he denied him three times.  
Is he willing to leave the other apostles, and go to be with the Lord?  
Is he willing to be brought to judgement alone, and die for Christ?  
Because that is what is going to happen to him.

So he asks him, "do you love me more than these?"  
And Peter says he does.  
So Jesus tells him what his focus is, what his job is going to be.  
"Feed my lambs."

Peter's job is not going to be that of the high and mighty one, who rules the other apostles.  
Not the bold one who give them orders, and tells them what they should do.  
He's not going to be their head.  
Often he is going to be sent fishing without them.  
His job, is to feed God's lambs.  
Not to sit in state and give counsel among the old and wisened rams of the flock.  
But to speak the simple gospel, to simple people.  
To teach simple and pure doctrine, to the least of the flock.

To follow Christ on a mission for him, apart from the other apostles.

## Verse 16-17

**John 21:16** He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep.  
17 He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

Peter denied three times, so Christ asks him to confess him three times.  
And Peter is grieved by that. He knows that Jesus is making a point.

## Verse 18-19

**John 21:18** Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not.  
19 This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me.

So Peter is going to have this ministry of feeding God's lambs, feeding God's sheep.  
And then when he is old, he is going to be put to death.

And so Jesus gets up, and beckons to Peter, saying "Follow me."

## Verse 20-21

**John 21:20** Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following; which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee?  
21 Peter seeing him saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do?

So Jesus begins walking along the shore, and told Peter to follow him, so he is, and he turns around, and sees John following too. Voluntarily.  
And so Peter asks, "What's going to happen to him?"

## Verse 22

**John 21:22** Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me.

Jesus's message to Peter is very simple.  
Don't follow the other disciples. Don't worry about them. I've got my plan for each of them. But don't let that distract you. You need to just concentrate on my plan for you. You need to just follow me.

"If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?"

What difference does it make, if he's not going to be martyred, and he's going to live until I return? That doesn't change your calling.

## Verse 23

**John 21:23** Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die: yet Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die; but, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?

So some of the brethren thought that maybe Jesus's will was that John would tarry until he came. That maybe he was giving a hint there.

And so they thought that might mean that John wouldn't die.

But that wasn't what Jesus said.

Not that he wouldn't die, but "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?"

Now, I think that in fact Jesus was giving a hint there.

But these aren't mutually exclusive.

You'll notice that John still didn't deny that he would be here when Christ returns.

Just that Jesus didn't say that he wouldn't die.

And so if you read Revelation, you'll find that John is told that he has to prophecy again before many peoples and nations and tongues and kinds, during that time of the tribulation.

And so, although the witnesses and many other people will be martyred, John is not going to be martyred. He'll tarry, until Jesus comes.

## Verse 24

**John 21:24** This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his testimony is true.

So when this gospel was written down, and sent out into all the world in every language, it was testified to not only by John, but by other brethren. They set to his seal that God is true.

## Verse 25

**John 21:25** And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen.

So as John said before, he didn't tell everything. This isn't the exclusive gospel. He makes that clear. If something isn't in here, that is in the other gospels, that doesn't mean it didn't happen. John affirms them as well. But he didn't include everything here. But he did include these things, that ye might believe.

## Conclusion

Some people say Paul invented NT Christianity. Grace.

What can we learn from the book of John. Jesus was speaking the first century Jews.

This is now fulfilled. Grace for grace.

You say, that sounds too good to be true. No, it is too good to be anything but true. This dark world won't even attempt to give you anything like that.

It will just nibble around the edges a little bit. It'll just try to help you get the most out of this world. Folks, this is to get *you* out of this world. out of darkness into light.

The importance of the word. The book of John presents the gospel as something for people who want to get out of the darkness and into the light.

It doesn't present the gospel as for people, who just don't want to go to hell. The gospel it preaches isn't for people, who just want someone up in heaven to fall back on in their time of need. The gospel it preaches isn't for people who just want the best of both worlds. The gospel it preaches isn't for people who just want to feel like they have a more fulfilling life. The gospel it preaches isn't for people who just want to be materially blessed. The gospel it preaches isn't for people who just want to be part of a religious club. The gospel it preaches isn't for people who just want some rules to follow, some life principles. The gospel it preaches is not for people who just want to appease their conscience. Who just want to feel loved, who just want to live a better life.

The gospel it preaches is for people that hate the darkness and sin of this world, and love the truth, love light, love righteousness, love God, and are seeking for the grace of God to come to them. For light. For his life. For his salvation. For his truth. His righteousness. His grace. That want to be freed from sin, and walk in holiness. That want to be freed from this dark world of man's philosophies and religions, and know the truth of God. Who want to escape this world of wicked men, and live with a holy God forever. That's what this gospel is about.

And when you think about it, that is not the way at all that the gospel is usually presented today. Focus on darkness. Rather than proclaiming the light. "you're a sinner." "and you need to repent" The term repent is never used in the book of John.

"You're miserable, and you need Jesus to make you happier." Folks, everybody would like to have a happier more fulfilled life in this world. But that is not what the gospel is about.

You can find some of that in the other gospels, but the other gospels are about the material kingdom and physical salvation. The other gospels are not presenting this message. The other gospels are not about preaching the word of truth. The gospel of John is all about it. And the word that it presents stands in contrast to a lot of christian preaching today.

The book of John tells us that Jesus knew all men. He knew that everybody wants to believe in a messiah who is going to make their life better. But he did not commit himself to those people. He wasn't coming just to make people's life better. He was coming to free us from darkness and sin and condemnation.

And that is something that you believe on, not just with the desire of the flesh and of the mind. That is something that touches your spirit. That you must believe on from the heart.

And so although Jesus also ministered to people's physical needs, he contrasted that with what they really needed. Their spiritual needs. He was careful to preach a word that was about delivering us from darkness and sin. A word that was the pure truth, spoken to the heart. Not that would touch people's flesh in any way. Not that would play to their earthly desires. It was a message for people who are sick of this world, who are sick of sin, and want to love God, and walk in righteousness by his grace. It's a message where the flesh is crucified, but we are given life by being filled with the Spirit of God.

And Jesus understood that when you mix that message, when you dilute it, when you preach it in a way that appeals to the flesh, then you are going to get a lot of false followers, false converts.

You are going to get a lot of people who think they want what you are offering, even though they don't actually want freedom from sin, and to walk in holiness, having the knowledge of the truth, knowing the Father.

They don't care to know the Father. They don't actually love God.

But they think they want what you are offering.

Because it sounds to them like what you are offering will appeal to the lust of their flesh, the lust of their eyes, and the pride of their life.

They think they are going to see cool things, and get to do cool things, and that they'll be cool.

And who doesn't want that?

But you see, when that happens, you've probably been preaching the wrong gospel.

Or you've been preaching it in a manner that has allowed a completely incorrect message to get across.

Now, there will always be people who get the wrong message.

But like Jesus, we have to keep preaching the truth, preaching the true gospel, until they get offended, and quit, and leave the faith. Stop following Christ.

And when that is not happening, then you know you have a real problem. You know that you are apparently engaging in false advertising of the gospel, because people are thinking that it something that can help them get the most out of the darkness, rather than understanding that it is about getting them out of the darkness and into the light.

It seems today that many people think that folks would believe if they could just see God do a miracle. If they could just experience something like that.

Well, I'm not going to say that nobody ever got saved because they witnessed or heard about a miracle.

But I can tell you this: nobody ever got born again by believing that God does miracles.

Everybody knows that.

People get born again because they believe on the name of Jesus Christ the Son of God, that he can save them from sin and death and condemnation, and make them children of God.

And so that is what needs to be preached. That is what is effectual.

The grace of God in Jesus Christ, grace for grace.

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

2 The same was in the beginning with God.

3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.

8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

9 That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not.



12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

15 John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me.

16 And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.

17 For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

18 No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.