

## Chapter 23

## GONE FISHING

*John 21:1-14*

***"But when the morning had now come, Jesus stood on the shore, yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus." v.4)***

.....

Gone fishing!!

The enormity of the recent events of their Master's crucifixion would, at times, have left Peter and the other disciples filled with grief and bewilderment, resulting in much anguish of heart and mind. No doubt feeling forlorn, Peter announced 'I am going fishing' and six of the other disciples said, 'We will go with you'.

So, that night, they returned to the familiar labour of bygone days, days that now seemed a lifetime ago, days before they had met the Master and forsaken all to follow Him. Now things were different, He was no longer with them. Perhaps they saw fishing as a solace that would help them in their sense of great loss and uncertainty as to what the future held for them; but;

*"When the morning had now come, Jesus stood on the shore, but the disciples did not know that it was Jesus" (v.4)*

Why, we may wonder, did they not recognise Jesus? It could be that it was still not light enough; Jesus was there early in the morning (21:4), or that their minds were distracted as they sought consolation in the familiar activity of bygone days. The figure standing on the shore had not caught their attention. We just know they did not recognise Jesus.

Maybe we too can become distracted; losing sight of Him in the daily cares of life, and looking for solace in other activities and relationships to distract from discouragement or disappointment that we might be experiencing. Or, do we cling to Him, watch for Him and trust that He will meet with us as we look to Him,

- Jesus was WAITING

- He was CALLING;
- He gave DIRECTION;

The result of that direction was success where there had been failure in that they had fished all night and caught nothing, but now their nets were full. This success came as they chose to obey His instructions and without delay. Their own reasoning would have intimated that having caught nothing in a long night's fishing it would be useless to lower their nets again! But, they chose to discard natural observations in favour of obedience to the word of Christ.

Have we not found that our own reasoning, based on only outward appearance of the circumstances, can conflict with God's word to us? At those times, do we remind and encourage ourselves that His word and His way is perfect, His judgments altogether right? Scripture repeatedly speaks of the smallest obedience resulting in far-reaching results.

- Jesus came at the right moment; He came to be present with them in ordinary daily activities;
- He watched and waited for them to recognise He was there
- He was aware of their disappointment, their weariness and their hunger as well as their grief and concerns;
- He came to commune with them, calling them to breakfast with Himself on the shore, in compassionate understanding providing the refreshment needed, spiritually and practically.

As Jesus spoke to them, He called them 'children'. He turned their unsuccessful toiling into abundant success as they obeyed the word spoken.

We too have the privilege of being His 'children' and knowing that He is present with us also in ordinary daily activities. He cares about the ordinary necessities of our lives; He knows and cares when we are weary. May we more and more 'recognise' that His presence is constant, and He is ever working; He shows us that in our disappointments, we can be assured that He has a purpose in them, and that all His actions are for our good in the maturing of our faith.

For these 'children', Jesus changed:

- Barrenness into bountifulness, and
- Hopelessness into fullness of hope.

*"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever"* (Hebrews 13:8)

As He waited then, so He waits now - right where we are, to do the same for us.