

TODAY’S ORDER OF WORSHIP

Welcome by: Don Taylor / Opening Prayer by: Craig Girard
Morning Assembly Song Leader: Brooks McKelroy

#611 Heavenly Sunlight
#470 Victory in Jesus

Scripture Reading by: Parker Balch
Communion Devotional by: Ken Coleman

#349 Ten Thousand Angels
Lord’s Supper and Contribution
#589 Leaving on the Everlasting Arms
Sermon “Living Together”
Philippians 1:27-2:4

#The Old Rugged Cross
#535 The Glory-Land Way
Closing Prayer by: Brooks McKelroy

Our Small Groups will meet tonight.
Don Taylor’s group will meet at the
building at 5:00 p.m.

Other Opportunities For Spiritual Growth

Sunday: 9:00am — Bible Study Classes, 10:00am — Worship, 5:00pm — Worship
Wednesday: 6:30pm — Bible Study Classes

Feb. 18, 2024

“Stand Firm in...Liberty”

Galatians 5:1

What Now?

Last week, as many of you know, we held a Valentine’s Day banquet here at the church building for the first time since before the pandemic. Events like this are a good marker, I think, of trying to get back in a regular rhythm of life and become more active. It is essential that we keep striving for that, because—like a lot of churches, and a lot of aspects of life more generally, for that matter—it is no secret that we are, in many ways, still rather spiritually lethargic in the aftermath of the tumultuous events of the last several years. There seems to be a general sense of fatigue and a lack of engagement compared to just a few years ago. And underneath that there lurks a sense of, “what now?”

Interestingly, that is not unlike the experience of the disciples after the resurrection. Think about the familiar story John tells of one of the post-resurrection appearances:

After this Jesus revealed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias, and he revealed himself in this way. Simon Peter, Thomas (called the Twin), Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples were together. 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.

Just as day was breaking, Jesus stood on the shore; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to them, “Children, do you have any fish?” They answered him, “No.” 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. 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. 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.

When they got out on land, they saw a charcoal fire in place, with fish laid out on it, and bread. Jesus said to them, “Bring some of the fish that you have just caught.” 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. 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. Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and so with the fish. This was now the third time that Jesus was revealed to the disciples after he was raised from the dead. (John 21:1-14)

Family News & Notes

WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH YOUR CHURCH FAMILY

Our Sick

Ricky Lucas is recovering from surgery at home.

Gayle Coleman will be having a procedure on Thursday, Feb. 22nd.

Danny Miller is in the hospital with complications from a kidney stone.

Continued Prayers

(Need cards, phone calls & visits)

Steve Ward, Oscar Cantu, Caitlin Smith, Virginia Cole, Ken Coleman, Joe Edd Stiflemire, Donna Wilson, Jo Ella McKewen, Kelly McCain, Wayne Noonkester

Shut Ins

(Need cards, phone calls & visits)

Jim Smith, Winona Angelle, Catherine Parker, Peggy McIntosh, Lois Watts, Willo Dean Ellis

Our Missionaries

Aaron & Marisa Bailey in Montepuez, Mozambique, Rod Kyle in the South Pacific

Upcoming Activities

No Elders, Minister this week.

Youth Night, Thursday, Feb. 29th from 6-8 p.m. in the family life center. We will have food, games, and a Bible Lesson. For more information, see River Lucy or Brooks McKelroy.

We will have a Houston Food Bank truck on Tuesday, March 5th at 8:00 a.m.

Food Bank

We served 121 families on Thursday, Feb. 15th at our food bank. That equals to 391 individuals. We had 15 volunteers.

Sympathy

We extend our sympathy to the family of Ava Peters, a former member. She passed away Friday.

<u>Elders</u>	<u>Deacons</u>	<u>Minister</u>
Ken Coleman	Zach Arthur	Bryant Perkins
Bobby Rader	Daniel Balch	
Don Taylor	Danny Balch	
Robert Ward	Walden David	
	Gus Tristan	

There are a few practical points we can draw from this particular incident:

1. **The importance of obedience.** We think sometimes of what the church needs to do to be more effective; usually it is in terms of bigger programs, projecting ourselves better in the community, just doing more and in different ways in general. Maybe we lament the fact that recently we are not doing as many things like that. But this story reminds us that what God requires of us is obedience. He does not ask for us to be good fishermen or have a fancy boat or be skillful in throwing out the net. He demands faithfulness; he puts the fish in the net.
2. **God provides.** I imagine if I had been throwing a net in the sea all night long, my stomach would be in rebellion. Despite everything else that was going on, Jesus knew they were hungry, and he took the time to feed them. Doesn't that remind us that our Lord is aware of our needs, whatever they are? Whatever we are experiencing—when we are hungry or hurting or in need or lonely—the risen Lord is there to minister to us.
3. **God does not give up.** The story that follows in the next several verses to the end of the chapter is a beautiful story of restoration. Jesus asks Peter the question, *Do you love me?* time and time again. You see, Peter had given up—that is what is meant by him going fishing. But God did not give up on Peter. He kept reminding Peter of His great love for him and encouraging him to love and serve in return. Sometimes we act as if God is looking for a reason to kick us out of the boat. In fact, it is quite the opposite.
4. **God gives direction.** We all know that old aphorism, “If you want to make God laugh, tell him your plans.” We have all likely experienced that in our lives. Here we are with our neat little plans: we know where the fish are and how to catch them; we have it all figured out! But then God says, “Have you listened to my plans?” We need to be more attuned to what his will is and take it into account when making our plans.
5. **God wants us to start fishing for men.** There is a similar sign in **Lk 5**, where Jesus calls Peter, Andrew, James, and John to be apostles. Their nets are filled after a miraculous catch, and Jesus tells them from now on they would fish for men. That is what God calls us to do: our mission is to make disciples, people who follow Jesus. That could be those out in the world, yes. But could it be some among us need to be brought to maturity? Could it be that others of us could help guide them in that? That is a big part of what our small groups program is about, for instance (I am not going to stop plugging that!).

We might wonder what has to be done to overcome our sense of malaise. As we try to get back in the regular business of life, what now?

The Lord's message is to start fishing for men: make disciples. Thankfully, he does not ask us to do this alone: he gives the direction and the provision. He requires us to carry out his will in faithful obedience. That is our mission. My prayer is all of us, myself included, will endeavor to rise to that challenge.

Bryant Perkins

“Stand Firm in...Liberty”

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