

The Final Days of Jesus
STRANGER ON THE SHORE

Thursday, April 9

Reading: John 21:1-14

John 21:4 *Early in the morning, Jesus stood on the shore, but the disciples did not realize that it was Jesus. 5 He called out to them, "Friends, haven't you any fish?" "No," they answered. 6 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.*

During His ministry, Jesus had told the disciples He would meet them in Galilee after His resurrection (Mark 14:28). The angels at the tomb reminded the women of Jesus' words (Matthew 28:10). But because of their doubt and fear the disciple did not leave Jerusalem, so Jesus had to appear to them there first. Now they finally return to the Sea of Galilee.

While waiting for Jesus, Peter and the others fall back on the familiar and decide to go fishing. Jesus had called Peter away from his boats to become a "fisher of men" but in this confusing time, he goes back to old habits. After fishing all night, they had caught nothing.

Suddenly they hear a voice on the shore asking if they have caught anything. They are told to throw their nets to the right side of the boat. When they do, their nets are filled with fish. Of all the disciples, John remembered that this had happened once before (Luke 5) and recognized the Stranger on the shore was the Lord. On hearing this, Peter dove into the water to swim to Jesus – so excited was he to be with his Master and Savior. Jesus already has breakfast for them and invites them to add some of their fish to the fire.

LESSON ONE: "I'm Going Out to Fish." Perhaps Jesus' delay caused Peter and the others to get discouraged. It is easy to fall back into old habits and patterns during these times. But Christ has called us to a new life! This second miraculous catch of fish reminded Peter of Jesus' original call to "Follow Me and I will make you a fisher of men." When are you likely to fall back into old habits and patterns of life? How has Christ reminded you of His call on your life? Memorize the following verse to help you remember not to lose heart.

I would have lost heart, unless I had believed that I would see the goodness of the LORD
In the land of the living.
Wait on the LORD; Be of good courage, And He shall strengthen your heart;
Wait, I say, on the LORD!
(Psalm 27:13-14 NKJV)

LESSON TWO: "None of the Disciples Dared Ask Him, 'Who Are You?'" Like Mary Magdalene and the Emmaus' disciples (Luke 24:13-35), Jesus was not immediately recognized by these men who were closest to Him. Even as they sat eating with Him, they knew it was Jesus and yet He was different somehow. This was because He now had a resurrection body – ready for heaven. The New Testament tells us that one day we too will have a body ready for eternity (Read 1 Corinthians 15:42-57). How does this promise of a changed body help us cope with the sickness, pain, and death we experience in the world right now? How should the thought of an eternity with Jesus change the way we live today?