Jesus said to them, "Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some fish." (John 21:6)

Majestic Lord, you sent Jesus into the world to bring new life and salvation. After his resurrection he sent his disciples into the world on a mission to share the good news of eternal life. We thank you for this amazing gift of new life and ask that you would send us also into the world you love to feed and tend your flock. We pray this in Jesus' holy and blessed name. Amen.

Introduction

After Jesus died, his disciples went back to their old lives. One day, while they were fishing, a man appeared to them on the shore and provided an amazing catch of fish. Then the disciples knew that it was Jesus, risen from the dead!

Read: John 21:1-19

On reading these verses, what are some of your initial impressions and questions? What stands out to you?

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The Biblical Context

Though Jesus had told his disciples many times that he would rise from the dead, and the risen Lord had revealed himself to them several times, it appears that the disciples still did not understand what Jesus was asking of them. They returned to fishing.

In today's story, we see the risen Jesus not only appear to his followers but also make it clear that he had given them a calling. As assistant shepherds working for the Chief Shepherd, they were told by Jesus to feed and care for his sheep. We are all lambs in Jesus' flock, and through our love of one another, we share the love of Jesus.

Jesus sent his followers out to make disciples of all nations and teach all that he had commanded. Forty days after his resurrection, he ascended into heaven to be seated at the right hand of the Father.

Discussion Questions

1. Which disciples were gathered together in today's Bible story? Where were they at the time?

2. What did Simon Peter decide to do in verse 3? Did anyone join him? Were they successful in what they set out to do?

3. When the disciples were on the water, who did they see standing on the shore? Did they recognize this person at first? What happened?

4. In what way is this story similar to another miracle that happened *prior* to Jesus' death and resurrection, as described in Luke 5:1-11? On this occasion, how did Jesus use the image of "catching fish" to describe the disciples' true calling? What did he want them to do? How is this *our* calling as well?

5. Do you remember any other time in the Bible when Jesus miraculously produced bread and fish for his followers? (Can you find this story in your Bible?) What were the circumstances and setting of this miracle?

6. What do all these stories tell us about Jesus? How do these stories give us confidence that we, too, can carry out the calling Jesus has given us?

7. In verses 15-19, what point was Jesus making to Peter? Why do you think Jesus repeated this point three times? How can you do this in your life?

8. Read 1 Peter 5:1-4. Who is Jesus' flock? What is a shepherd's relationship with the sheep? What is our relationship with the Chief Shepherd?

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