

THE FIRST 15

Monday, June 3, 2024

Today is Monday, June 3 and we are completing our study of the Gospel of John.

OPENING PRAYER

Holy and Loving God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, I come to this quiet space at the dawn of a new day and seek your presence. I quiet my mind, center my thoughts and slow my breath. As I inhale, I breathe in your love, joy and peace and as I exhale I release any negative thoughts, worries or concerns. Come, show me how to live the Resurrection life. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

Afterward Jesus appeared again to his disciples, by the Sea of Galilee. It happened this way: Simon Peter, Thomas (also known as Didymus), Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two other disciples were together. "I'm going out to fish," Simon Peter told them, and they said, "We'll go with you." So they went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing. Early in the morning, Jesus stood on the shore, but the disciples did not realize that it was Jesus. He called out to them, "Friends, haven't you any fish?" "No," they answered. 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. John 21:1-6

REFLECTION

When the Risen Jesus appeared to his disciples in the Upper Room, he invited Thomas to touch the nail marks in his hands and the wound of his pierced side. Later he appeared on the shores of the Sea of Galilee. There were seven disciples gathered together on the rocky coastline - Peter, Thomas, Nathanael, James, John and two other disciples whose names were not recorded. Following Peter's lead, the seven men decided to return to their favorite pastime and frequent occupation - fishing.

The disciples return to a familiar activity. They likely found comfort in the warm sunshine, the salty sea air, the rock of the boat on the waves, and the rhythmic tossing of the net. They fished all night and caught nothing. Now it is early morning. I also find life's routines comforting, my morning coffee, the opening of my Bible, my favorite prayer chair, the quiet of the dawn stillness. But have I caught anything during my times of prayer? Is my net continually coming up empty? Perhaps I have failed to recognize Jesus standing upon the shoreline of my heart, calling my name and inquiring of my failure or success. Maybe I am going through familiar devotional motions but fishing on the wrong side of the boat.

There is something God wants to reveal to me through the Holy Spirit as I study his sacred Word. Whatever image or phrase that stands out to me - I jot it down in my journal and carry it with me throughout my day. Perhaps God wants me to recognize what I am fishing for in the course of my life. Maybe God wants to guide me to try a new approach. Perhaps God is encouraging me to fish for something else. Maybe there is a relationship or circumstance in my

life in which I continually “come up empty.” Where might God want to help me discover a treasure that is lying close at hand that I cannot see?

Ask: How close have I felt to Jesus this week? How often have I recognized his presence?

Pause and Pray

CLOSING PRAYER

Blessed Lord Jesus, I scan the margins of my daily life and search for you on the horizon. Help me see you standing in the midst of my routines. Enable me to hear your voice calling me above the busy waves of daily activity and numerous conversations. You know what it is I am seeking. Guide me to find what my heart longs for. Show me where to cast my net and bless me with an abundance. Reveal the places where I am lacking your peace, joy, love, hope, forgiveness, or power. Help me realize the emptiness of my fishing net despite my endless solitary efforts. Teach me a different way to cast my net. Amen.