



Come and Have Breakfast

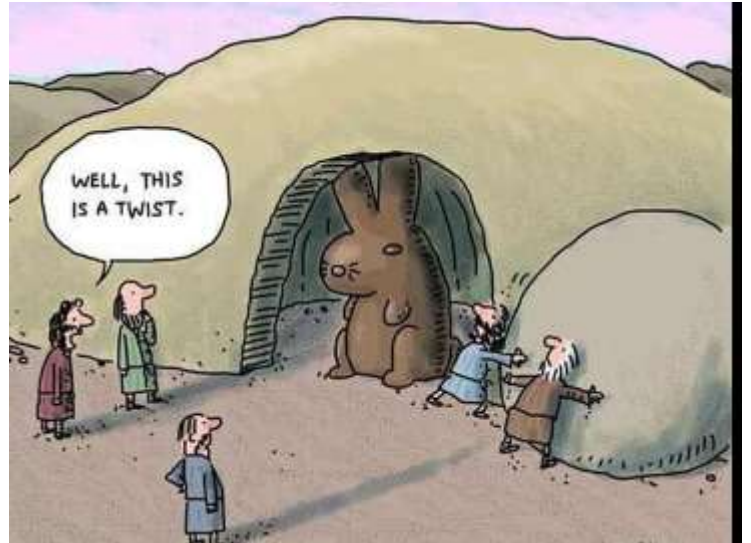
Vienna Presbyterian Church

Rev. David Jordan-Haas

John 21:7-14

May 7, 2017

A joyously good morning to you! Can you believe it? We're still in the Season of Easter. This is the fourth Sunday of Easter, and today we're going to study another Easter appearance by Jesus, another "post-resurrection" appearance. In 2010, the Barna Survey Group found that two out of every three Americans (67 percent) identified Easter as a religious holiday. But here's the kicker, less than half of all Americans (only 42 percent) said that the resurrection of Jesus was the real reason for Easter. In other words, while many enjoy Easter Sunday, this statistic suggests that fewer than two out of every four Americans believe that Jesus actually rose from the dead on Easter morning! Apparently, Easter is more about the chocolate bunny than a Risen Savior!



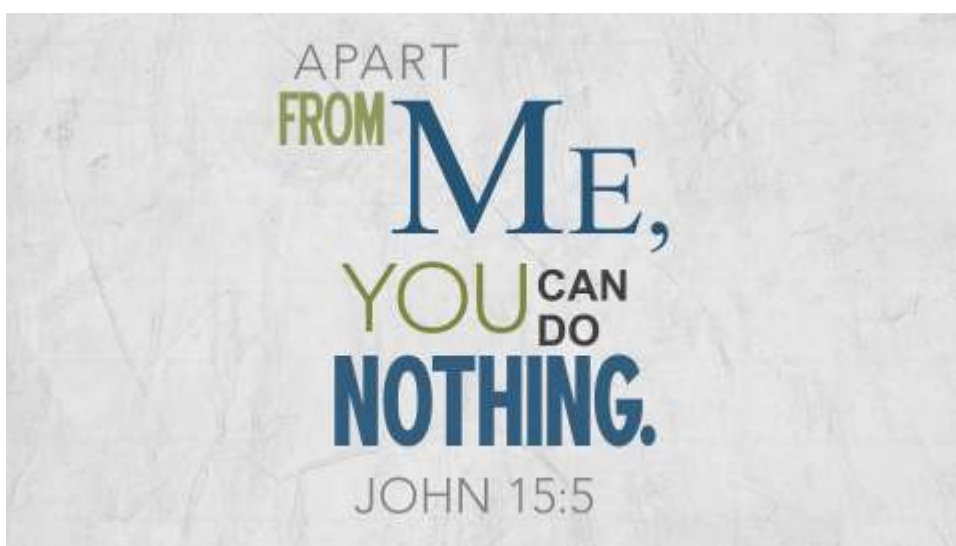
Before I get into John's Gospel let me give you three arguments *for* the proof of the Resurrection. **Reason One:** the **Empty Tomb**. If there were a dead body, the chief priests and Roman soldiers would have definitely displayed it publicly in order to silence the mounting evidence in favor of the Resurrection. There's no evidence of Jesus' body being left behind. If only Herod had had a CSI squad in Jerusalem!

Reason Two: the **Eyewitnesses**. The first eyewitnesses, women, were considered just a little above kids and cattle in 1st century Palestinian patriarchal society. Mary, Joanna, Salome and Mary Magdalene's testimonies: none of their testimonies would have been heard or allowed in a Jerusalem court of law. It was not advantageous for the early church to highlight these eyewitness accounts unless what they saw on

Easter morning was true. Also, there were hundreds of other eyewitnesses. In 1 Corinthians 15, Paul reports that all at the same time “more than 500 brothers and sisters” saw the Risen Jesus!

Reason Three: the costly sacrifices of those eyewitnesses. As 16th century physicist, philosopher, theologian Blaise Pascal put it, “I believe those eyewitnesses who got their throats cut (for following Christ).” Paul was beaten and imprisoned countless times, in the name of Jesus; Stephen was stoned to death; James put to death by the sword, in the name Jesus; even consider 2nd generation Christians (who weren’t ever face-to-face with Jesus) who were tortured and killed by the Emperor Nero. Would any of these sacrifices by Jesus-followers happened for the purpose of supporting a hoax or ruse?!

Three reasons - the Empty Tomb, the Eyewitnesses, the martyrdom of the first Christians. Almost 2,100 years later, and over a third of the world’s population, some 2.4 billion, wonder “Is the Resurrection real?” Without it there would be no Christian faith, no letters from Saul-turned-Paul, there’d be no Church, no Vienna Presbyterian, no worship here.



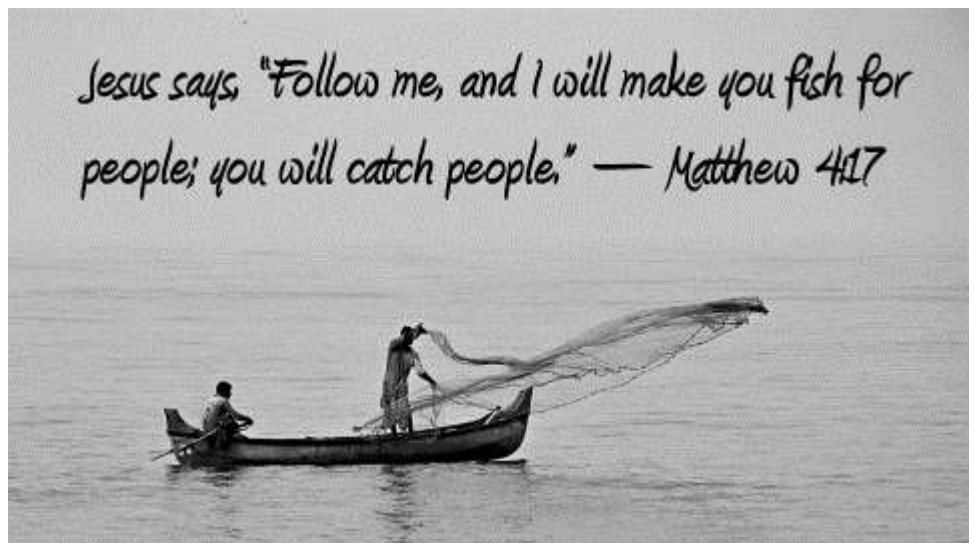
Okay, from John’s eyewitness vantage point, this is the third and final resurrection appearance of Jesus – this one between Jesus and seven of His disciples. It’s several days after discovering the Empty Tomb. It’s still kind of dark at the break of day, and

Jesus shows up on the beach at the Lake of Galilee. The disciples are back doing what they know best – fishing; but they’ve caught nothing—zilch, not a one. In the Upper Room, the night before He dies on a Roman Cross, Jesus warns His disciples that, “apart from Me you can do nothing” (John 15:5). Sure enough. When nothing is going right for us, when we are failing, that is when Jesus is best at meeting us, at being with us. When we find ourselves in nothing but crisis or trouble, *this* is when Jesus is able to bring His strength and guidance.

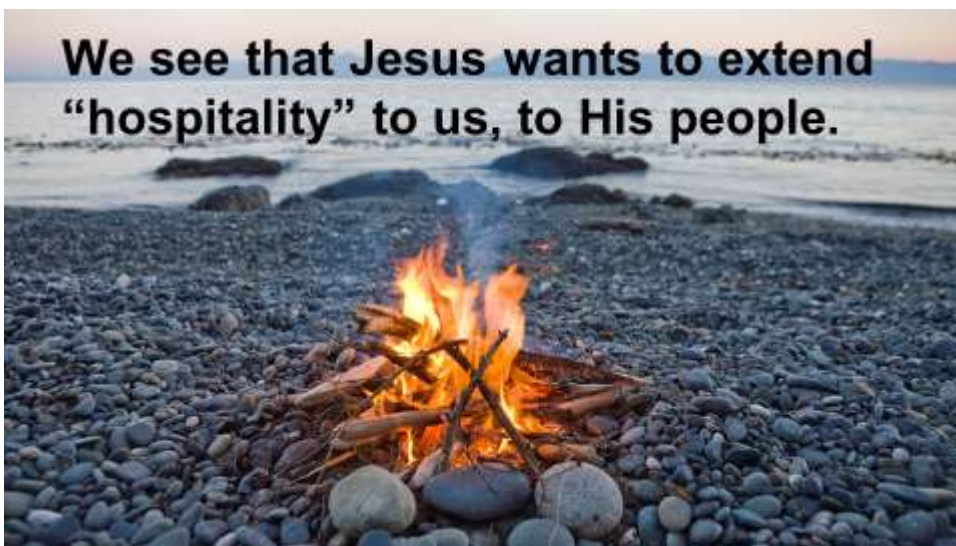
Jesus shows up on the beach, about a football field’s length from the disciples fishing. He tells them to cast their nets to the starboard side – the forward right side. Their catch is *huge*, 153 big fish; it’s an over-the-top catch! The point: the Risen Lord is constantly showing up for His people, making things happen. Jesus shows up wherever you and I happen to be: on the lake fishing, in the car driving children hither and yon, in your office dealing with a client, in the doctor’s waiting room, in the store striking up a conversation. Jesus is constantly showing up, and when He shows up, Jesus wants *us* to come along! Jesus says,

“Follow me, and I will make you fish for people” (Matthew 4:17). He wants us to show up and catch people for Him, to bear much fruit for Him, Jesus

wants us to show up for others, with compassion and love (Bruner, p.1206).



This Easter story gets better. “It’s the Lord!” John shouts. “It’s the Lord!” Then it’s Peter’s turn: it’s where we pick up the story, Dale Bruner’s translation, John 21:7-14: *When Simon Peter heard these words, ‘It’s the Lord!’ he put on some clothes (because he was practically naked) and jumped into the lake. But the other disciples came in by boat; you see, they were not far from shore (they were only about a hundred yards away), dragging the net of fish behind them. So when they got to the shore, they see a charcoal fire sitting there with some fish on the grate and some bread.*



We see that Jesus wants to extend “hospitality” to us, to His people.

Think about this: when he sees the charcoal fire on the beach, do you think Peter remembers sitting around another charcoal fire, in

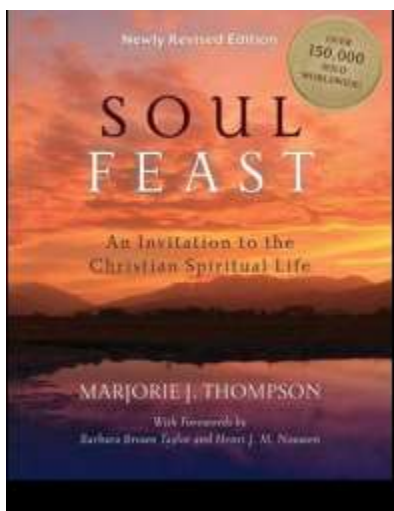
Caiaphas’ courtyard – there, denying ever knowing Jesus, three times? (Bruner, p.1211)

Jesus says to them, ‘Bring some of the fish you just caught!’ So Simon Peter went aboard the boat and dragged the net ashore, filled with one hundred and fifty-three huge fish; and even though there were so many fish, the net didn’t split. Jesus says to them, ‘Come and have breakfast.’ And not one of the disciples dared ask Him, ‘Who are you?’ because they knew – It’s the Lord! Jesus comes, takes the bread, and gives it to them, and some of the fish as well.

This was now the third time that Jesus revealed Himself to the disciples after He had been raised from the dead.

“Come and have breakfast,” He says. A meal with His friends, with His people – this means everything to Jesus!

And for me, this is the heart of this Easter story. It's a great lesson in discipleship. Jesus not only wants to teach and train His disciples to be His disciples, to imitate Him, but also, Jesus literally, simply wants to eat with them! Perhaps the disciples being at the table and eating with Him is the greatest training of all. Eating with Him at His table we see that Jesus wants to be our friend, our companion. We see that Jesus wants to extend "hospitality" to us, to His people. Jesus wants to teach us, disciple us to *be* hospitality to others.



Marjorie Thompson is the author of a classic book on spiritual practices titled *Soul Feast*. She tells the story of when she and her mom were on a trip-of-a-lifetime among the primrose and heather of the Scottish Highlands. It was pouring rain the night they arrived at an arranged Bed-and-Breakfast, but as it was already full-up, Marjorie and her Mom were turned away. More rain, very late and very cold, the taxi dropped them off at another last attempt at lodging. A surprised couple answered Marjorie's knock on the door. The couple apologized, saying they, too, already had a boarder for the night. But seeing their dejected, worried faces, the couple asked Marjorie and her mom to wait inside the door. A few moments later the couple ushered them into a cozy, pleasant room. Grateful and relieved Marjorie and her mom fell, exhausted, into a deep sleep in a comfortable bed.

The next morning, the woman had prepared an exquisite Scottish breakfast for them: fruit juice, eggs, kippers, toast with marmalade, and tea. It was not until Marjorie and her mom were packed and ready to leave that they realized that

that night the couple had given up their very own bedroom (Soul Feast, p.119-120).

Jesus makes it clear that whatever kindness we show to “one of the least” of our brothers or sisters, we do to Him (Matthew 25). In the first 50 to 200 years of the early church, Christian hospitality turned the Roman world upside down. They’d never seen anything like it! There was something so irresistibly enticing or threatening about a community whose mission was to see Christ in every “friend and stranger alike.” Into the 3rd and 4th centuries many were inspired watching those “little Christs” doing acts of hospitality offered to widows, orphans, to friends and strangers – offering up food and drink, shelter and rest, peace and celebration, care and protection!

And so, the “so what”? “Come and have breakfast,” Jesus invites us. Lakeside, Jesus prepared a “hospitable space” for His disciples to encounter Him as their friend and companion; Jesus provided a place for His disciples to recognize Him as their Lord and Savior! So for us, Jesus beckons us to prepare a space – around a fire pit, or kitchen table, around a conference table, or café counter. Jesus is calling upon us to provide a place for others to encounter Jesus, to recognize Him as a friend and as a Savior. Jesus is asking you and me to *be* hospitality. Even with, or because of the fullness of your life – the

errands,
appointments,
groceries, the
texting and taxi-
ing – Jesus is
calling upon you
to invite and wel-
come others into a

**Jesus is asking you and me to
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place of hospitality. He shows up and wants you and me to *show up* for that restless worried teen-ager, for example; or the demanding parent, the insensitive employer, or hesitant neighbor, the impatient clerk, the lonely person in the pew. It is in that hospitable place where someone just might encounter Jesus as a friend, recognize Jesus as a Savior, just as the disciples did that Easter morning (p.128).

“Come and have breakfast.” On the shores of Galilee, or in a home in the village of Emmaus, or right here at Table in Vienna, our Risen Savior makes Himself known, by His Word and His Meal, in the breaking of the bread. Jesus *is* “divine hospitality” Himself! Jesus (God-in-the-flesh, dwelling-among-us), He’s the One wanting to be with us, serving His meal to us, bread and fish, body and blood. (Bruner, p.1222)

Benediction - 1 Peter 4:8-11: Above all, maintain constant love for one another, for love covers a multitude of sins. Be hospitable to one another without complaining. Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received. Whoever speaks must do so as one speaking the very words of God; whoever serves must do so with the strength that God supplies, so that God may be glorified in all things through Jesus Christ. To him belong the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.

3 Reasons for the Resurrection:

- o The Empty Tomb**
- o The Eyewitnesses**
- o The Costly Sacrifices**