

Don't Fish Alone

Even professional fishermen have bad days.

The disciples wandered aimlessly for a time following the crucifixion of Jesus. Some returned to their life of fishing.

"Simon Peter said to them, 'I am going fishing.' Then they said to him, 'We will go with you.' They went out and immediately entered the boat. But that night they caught nothing" (John 21:3).

It's hard for us to walk a mile in their sandals. We can't possibly feel what they must have felt after watching the crucifixion. Their personal memory of the words of Jesus still echoed. But their leader was killed. Their hearts longed for Him. Their minds raced with questions and few answers.

One of the disciples must have asked, "What are we going to do?"

Peter had the great idea to go fishing. I suspect it was an occupational option rather than an escape to ponder while enjoying nature.

While I wish to escape to a dusk-lit, weeping-willow-lined pond in Mayberry, the disciples launched their boat into the darkening Sea of Tiberius. It's important to note that the personal flotation device wasn't invented until the early 1800s.

Their fishing trip was a bust. Can't you just hear Peter whine? "How can things get any worse? I can't even catch a fish."

Jesus appeared and helped the fishermen:

When the morning came, Jesus stood on the shore. But 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, "Throw the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some." So they threw it, and now they were not able to draw it in because of the abundance of fish.

—John 21:4-6

They caught 153 large fish. Thankfully, there was someone in the group who liked accounting.

Jesus reminded the group of their continuing need to depend on Him. The fishermen were skilled but perhaps mindful of their previous independence. Their empty net was a sharp reminder of their dependence on Jesus.

Even in our strength, we must remain dependent on the provision of the Lord. When we begin to think that "we've got this," we will surely be reminded that our net is empty.

Love leaders ask penetrating questions. "Children, have you caught any fish?"