

“Jesus Stood On The Shore”



B. Kirkland

The Disciples Walked Away:

John chapter twenty-one, is one of the most remarkable chapters in all of the Bible. Here we find the disciples literally turning their backs on Christ and walking away from Him, leaving Him standing alone on the shore of the sea of Galilee.

We will look at...

- a. The **context** of this chapter.
- b. The **choice** the disciples made.
- c. The **consequences** of those choices.
- d. The amazing **compassion** of Christ.

The Context of The Meeting On The Shore:

John 21:1-2,

“After these things Jesus shewed himself again to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias; and on this wise shewed he himself. There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, and two other of his disciples.”

“After these things”

The meeting took place after the resurrection. Christ had met with these men on the two previous Sundays (See Ch.20:19,26) and now they were meeting at the “*the sea of Tiberias*” (Galilee). The reason they were there was Christ had commanded them to meet Him there (See **Matthew 28:16**).

“On This Wise”

Verse one continues, “...*on this wise shewed he himself,*” referring to what took place during their meeting. **Matthew 28:17** tells us they “*worshipped Him,*” however, when they heard what He had to say we read some, “*doubted*” (Strong’s Concordance - “*some wavered*”).

Hypocritical Worship:

By worshipping Him they acknowledged they were meeting with the Son of God, however, doubting Him shows that they simply didn't like what He had to say. Before we get too critical concerning their attitude we would do well to realize our churches are filled with many people who do the same thing week after week.

“Jesus Shewed Himself”

We read here that “*Jesus shewed himself again...*” Verse fourteen tells us that, “*This is now the third time that Jesus shewed himself to his disciples, after that he was risen from the dead.*”

The word “*shewed*” has been translated...

- “*Make manifest*” - 19 times.
- “*Manifest*” - 9 times.
- “*Be manifest*” - 2 times.
- “*Manifestly declare*” - 1 time.

The first time the word *manifest* is used in the New Testament is in **Luke 8:17** where Jesus said, “

“For nothing is secret, that shall not be made manifest; neither any thing hid, that shall not be known.”

Jesus was telling His disciples what was next concerning His plan for their lives and they did not like what they heard.

The Cause of Their Attitude And Their Actions:

The cause of their *attitude* that led to their *actions* had to do with God's will for their lives. In **Matthew 28:16** Christ said,

“All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have

commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”

They Literally Walked Away:

When Christ gave them these orders they “*immediately*” turned and walked away. Verse three tells us “*Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing.*” We read the disciples said, “*We also go with thee...They went forth, and entered into a ship immediately.*”

They Wanted The Kingdom:

Preaching or pastoring churches was not what they wanted to do. They had their focus on a literal kingdom and the power that would come with it. The disciples thought that Christ was going to boot out the Romans, set up His kingdom and the disciples would each have a throne. **Luke 19:11** tells us “*...they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear.*”



Not Prestige - Preaching:

His plan for them...

“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”

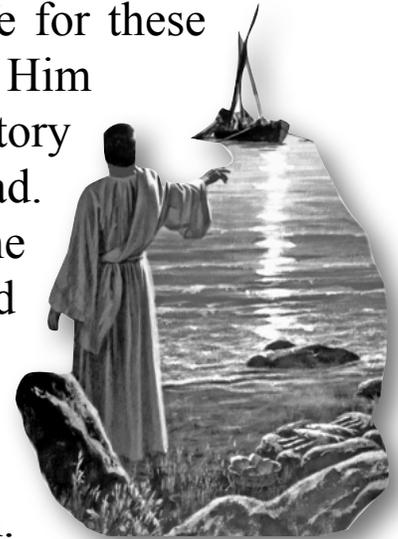
Instead of their coveted throne, representing *power*, they would face *persecution*. Rather than a *position* of authority, they would be *pastors* who would be held in contempt and finally crucified like Christ was. Instead of being *served*, they would *serve*.

Gone Fishing:

Peter's response was, well you can just forget that plan. "*I go a fishing.*" The rest of the disciples said, "...*we also go with thee.*"

The Compassion of Christ:

For over three years the Lord had given His life for these men. They had heard Him preach. They watched Him calm the storms on the very sea in which this story takes place. They witnessed the raising of the dead. They witnessed the miraculous feeding of the multitudes with a handful of food. They watched as He healed the blind, the deaf and others who were sick. They had recently witnessed the scene in the garden when He was arrested, they watched the horrible beatings and the crucifixion.



Christ did it all for them.

Their Response:

They "*immediately*" turned their backs on Christ, and went back to their old life. They cared nothing about how Christ felt. They left Him alone. "*Jesus stood on the shore.*" Get the picture, see Christ standing alone, watching them all walk away.

Where People Stand:

"Judas stood" with those who came to crucify the Son of God.

John 18:5, "*Judas...which betrayed him, stood with them.*" Sadly, within a very short period of time, we read Peter also "*stood with them.*" The officers that arrested Christ stood at their campfire warming themselves. **John 18:18** tells us, "***Peter stood with them.***" Peter stood with the officers who had bound Christ, and later mocked Him, whipped Him, crowned Him with thorns and crucified Him.

John 18:25,

“And Simon Peter stood and warmed himself. They said therefore unto him, Art not thou also one of his disciples? He denied it, and said, I am not.”

Jesus Stood On The Shore All Night:

The word “*stood*” in **John 21:4**, “*Jesus stood on the shore,*” is an interesting word. It has been translated “*established*” five times. It has been translated “*stand still*” four times. We read in verse four, “*But when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore.*”
Jesus stood there all night.

Choices And Consequences:

We read, “*...they caught nothing,*” and verse four tells us they saw Jesus, standing on the shore; however, “*the disciples knew not (perceived not) that it was Jesus.*”

Two Consequences of Their Choice:

First we see it was time wasted, “*they caught nothing.*” The second consequence, having turned their backs on Christ, they lost all spiritual perception. When we choose to turn our backs on God we turn our backs on all spiritual understanding.

He Called Them Children:

In verse five Christ referred to them as “*Children.*” This is a term of endearment, and it also refers to someone below the age of full development. Spiritually, these men had some growing up to do. Let us be patient with Christians who have still some growing up to do. May it be the testimony of those that God has entrusted to our care that we stood on the shore for them. In verse eighteen and nineteen Christ made a striking comparison of Peter’s spiritual status comparing where he was at that morning, and where he would be later.

He said to Peter,

*“Verily, verily, I say unto thee, **When thou wast young,** thou girdest thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: **but when thou shalt be old,** thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God.”*

Casting:

To cast is to *“throw forcibly in a specified direction.”* Verse six reads, *“And he said unto them, **Cast** the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They **cast** therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes.”* In verse seven we read Peter, *“**cast** himself into the sea.”*

When John told Peter it was Christ on the shore he immediately made for shore. Verse eight tells us it was a 350 foot swim. (two hundred cubits). While the other disciples were focusing on the great catch of fish (v.8), Peter was focusing on Christ. In his heart, Peter knew what direction he wanted to go and he was not ashamed to let everyone know it.

The Fire of Coals:

John 21:9,

*“As soon then as they were come to land, they saw a **fire of coals** there, and fish laid thereon, and bread.”*

The phrase *“fire of coals”* is only found one other time in the Scriptures. Prior to the crucifixion of Christ we read in **John 18:18**, *“And the servants and officers stood there, who had made a **fire of coals**; for it was cold: and they warmed themselves: and Peter stood with them, and warmed himself.”*

It was at this fire of coals that “*Peter stood*” with the officers who, in verse twenty-two had “*struck Jesus*” in the face. In John chapter twenty-one Peter stood at a fire of coals with his Saviour. Peter never really *failed*. He *faltered* the night of the crucifixion, and he *faltered* that night on the shore, however, he never *failed*. **Proverbs 24:16** says, “*For a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again.*” To quit is to fail!



Perhaps Peter was thinking back to the time recorded in **Luke 5:1-11** that records the time when these men were called to follow the Lord. At that time, “*Peter and all that were with him were astonished at the draught of the fishes which they had taken, Jesus said unto him, Fear not, from henceforth thou shalt catch men.*” The command was plain. “*Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men*” (Matthew 4:18,19).

Come And Dine:

Here we have a twofold invitation. First to come and second to dine. To come is to move closer to a pre-determined place or person, to dine is yet another decision. How few Christians there are that make the second choice. There is nothing recorded concerning what was discussed while they dined.

Perhaps it was a time of silent contemplation. In verse fifteen we read, “*So when they had dined...*” Jesus again spoke and He spoke specifically to Peter and He spoke openly before all the others.

It Was Time For Peter To Make Things Right:

In verse fifteen, in the presence of all the others, we read, “*Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than*

these? Peter thought he loved the Lord more than any of the rest of the disciples did. Peter had previously said, *"Though all men shall be offended because of Thee, yet will I never be offended"* (Matthew 26:33).

Was it because of this that Jesus publicly asked Peter if he loved Him more *"than these?"* Or was Christ referring to Peter loving Him more than the big catch of fish and the money that it represented?

Peter's answer; *"Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee."* Peter ignored the *"more than these"* part of the Lord's question. Christ answered, *"Feed my lambs."* Peter needed to get his focus off a throne and focus on the many **children** who need to be taken care of in a spiritual way. **Isaiah 40:11** says, *"He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young."*

Peter had deeply wounded the Lord by his actions and hurt his own standing among the rest of the disciples. For this reason as well as for his own sake, Peter needed to publicly express his sin of walking away from the Lord that night and leading the rest to follow him.

Verse sixteen says, *"He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep."* The word *"feed"* here is different than to simply feed carrying with it the command to tend as a shepherd.

In verse seventeen we read, *"He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved..."* The word grieved has been translated...

- *"Be sorrowful"* - 6 times.
- *"Make sorry"* - 6 times.
- *"Be sorry"* - 3 times.
- *"Sorrow"* - 3 times.
- *"Be in heaviness"* - 1 time.

It was very important that Peter should be sorry for his actions and that everyone should understand that he was, if he was to be used of the Lord in the future. The Bible says, “*For godly sorrow worketh repentance...*”

Peter Are You In Or Out?

Christ made it plain. To follow Christ was not going to be a bed of roses. There would be no fancy palace with a throne. Christ said,

*“Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdest thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, **Follow me**”* (Vs. 18,19).

If Peter was going to follow Christ it would mean a complete *sacrifice*, and a total *surrender* to the will of God, even if no other person would join him. This was the last time Christ would say “*follow me.*” It was God’s final call for Peter. “*...choose you this day whom ye will serve*” (Joshua 24:15).

Peter Publicly Chose To Follow The Lord:

He rejected the way of the world and faced the tests, trials, tribulation and torture that came from being a true follower of Christ. In **Acts 1:15** we read, “*Peter stood.*” In **Acts 2:14** we see “*Peter standing.*” In **Acts 12:16** we read, “*Peter continued.*” Peter is mentioned fifty-eight times in the Book of Acts and had the privilege of writing two Books in the Bible that the Lord put Peter’s name on.

Compassion But No Compromise:

The phrase “*Jesus stood on the shore*” perhaps shows the compassion of Christ more than any other verse in the Bible.

Christ *found* His sheep, and when they had a godly sorrow unto repentance He *forgave* His sheep, which once again made *fellowship* with His sheep possible, and He could then *feed* His sheep.

We read, “*Jesus stood on the shore.*” **We do not read that He sat in the ship with them, and we do not read that He met them halfway.** To do that would be to compromise.

How we need to learn this lesson in this age of compromise. We are living in an age when preachers are compromising God’s standard of separation in hope of influencing other preachers. The Word of God is plain. “*Jesus stood on the shore.*” If the Lord had sat in the boat with them He would have put His stamp of approval on their rebellion in turning their backs on Him. To fellowship with known error is to participate in their sin.

C.H. Spurgeon said,

"There are many that are deceived by this method of reasoning. They remain where their conscience tells them they ought not to be, because, they say, they are more useful than they would be if they went 'without the camp.' This doing evil that good may come, can never be tolerated by an enlightened conscience. If an act of sin would increase my usefulness tenfold, I have no right to do it; and if an act of righteousness would appear likely to destroy all my apparent usefulness, I am yet to do it. It is yours and mine to do the right though the heavens fall, and follow the command of Christ whatever the consequences may be."

Jesus was filled with *compassion*; however, He did not *compromise* to reach the men He loved.

“Jesus Stood On The Shore”