



Grace upon Grace

A FISHY STORY?

Dear Friends,

How would you like to wake up to the aroma of grilled fish and bread for breakfast? Maybe it is just our luck that Jesus didn't say after this, "Do this in remembrance of me." Church every Sunday could be filled with the sweet smell of grilled fish and fresh baked bread. Surely people would line up to partake in such a heavenly banquet. A naked fisherman, charcoal fish, bread and repeated questioning give this resurrection story a flare of something different.

John is working very hard to show that Jesus is not just a spirit-like being but is physically present. The movement within the story serves to reinforce John's focus. It forms the foundation of what is to follow. Peter will step into the middle of his teaching, and like him we will be confronted with this ageless biblical question Jesus asks of us in every generation, 'Do you love me?' While 'Yes' is always the appropriate answer Jesus desires a response that comes from both our lips and our hearts. In the book "Your Church Can Thrive" by Canon Harold Percy, he asks us to consider what we can do within our Sunday morning congregation to show that we love Jesus and we love each other. How can we build a stronger more vibrant congregation? He asks us what we can do for the visitor, the newcomer and the seeker to reach out and connect with them as a friendly and loving people. He asks how we reach out to the community with the same message. The answer seems to lie in feeding and following, or fishing and shepherding. These mixed metaphors can help us see the directness and simplicity of the message and no doubt the challenge contained in a response to follow Jesus. Loving Jesus among ourselves, loving Jesus in welcoming visitors and loving Jesus in reaching out should be a challenging and exciting journey realizing that we depend on Jesus' power and strength working in us to follow.

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