

“Come and See: Encounters with the Risen Jesus” (4)

Breakfast on the Shore — Restoration After Failure

(John 21:1-17)

Introduction: Contrary to popular belief, failure does not disqualify us from Christ’s call; His grace restores us to purpose. John 21:1–17 depicts the risen Jesus restoring Peter and his fellow disciples after their failure and recommissioning them into service.

I. Reluctant return (John 21:1–3)

A. Background (John 21:1–3a)

- Jesus appears again to the disciples (*John 21:1*)
- Peter, discouraged, says: “I am going fishing” (*John 21:3*)
- Others follow him – we never backslide alone

B. All-night failure (John 21:3b)

- “They went out... and that night they caught nothing”
- Reminder: “Without Me you can do nothing” (*John 15:5*)

C. Reflection

- In uncertainty, we drift back to what is familiar
- R.C. Sproul often taught that in moments of uncertainty, people “default to what is known rather than what is true”*
- Question: Where have I gone back instead of forward?

II. Resurrected provision (John 21:4–14)

A. Unexpected Helper (John 21:4–5)

- Jesus stands on the shore, unrecognized (*v.4*)
- Sometimes the Lord stands close by us** in our daily lives, but we can’t or don’t Him and give him the place that he deserves.
- “Children, have you any food?” (*v.5*)
- Dr. Scott calls this – the failure of the experts.*

B. Obedience yields bounty (John 21:6)

- “Cast the net on the right side...”
- Result: abundance (153 fish)

Jesus has the words of wisdom for His own – He has a direction for our lives, It is our job to hear, trust and obey!

C. Recognition and response (John 21:7)

- John: “It is the Lord!”
- Peter jumps into the sea

D. Fellowship and provision (John 21:9–13)

- Charcoal fire, fish, and bread prepared
- “Come and eat breakfast” (*v.12*)

God often uses emptiness to draw us back to dependence on Him.

III. Repeated love (John 21:15–17a)

A. Grace before correction (John 21:15)

- Jesus feeds them before confronting Peter

Notice the order; He fills their stomachs before He speaks to their souls. That’s always how restoration begins.

B. Gracious confrontation (John 21:15–17)

- “Simon... do you love Me?” (asked three times)
- Corresponds to Peter’s three denials
- Each response followed by:
 - “Feed My lambs”
 - “Tend My sheep”
 - “Feed My sheep”

Each response comes with a fresh commission

C. Grace for commission

- Restoration begins with love, not guilt
- Love leads to obedience and service

Restoration is never just a feeling—it’s a return to serving.

IV. Reinstated commission (John 21:17b–19)

A. Renewed purpose (John 21:19)

- “Follow Me”

The same words that began Peter’s discipleship now restart it.

- Peter’s calling is restored

B. Servant leadership

- “Tend My sheep” (*John 21:16*)
- Leadership defined by service
- See also:
 - *Mark 9:35* — greatness = servant
 - *1 Peter 5:2* — shepherd willingly

C. Hope after failure

- Failure is not final
- Jesus restores and reuses broken people

Conclusion: Jesus meets us at the place of failure. He restores us through grace, not condemnation

He invites us “Come and dine... follow Me” (*John 21:12, 19*) Repent, recommit, and return to Christ

- Where have I drifted back to “old nets”?
- Am I trying to succeed without Christ?
- Do I love Jesus enough to obey and serve Him?