



TEEN TREE OF LIFE

John's Purpose in Writing His Account of Jesus' Life

Part 2 - February 14, 2021

Before you begin, ask yourself a very important question: Do you believe that Jesus Christ died on The Cross for all of your sins? If you answered yes, you will need to be sure that you are filled with The Holy Spirit. How do you do this? You name your sins to God The Father in His Son's Name. This is called Rebound. As a Christian, you must rebound any time you sin. This is taught in 1 JOH 1:9: *If we confess [name] our sins [directly to God], He [God] is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* Now, if you have never believed that Jesus Christ died on The Cross for all of your sins, all you have to do is say to yourself that you believe in Him and you are saved! The Bible verse which teaches us this is ACTS 16:31: *"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved."*

In his account of Jesus's Life, John presented abundant evidence to prove that He is The Messiah – whom the Old Testament prophesied would come to redeem His people. Anyone seeking after God could believe his evidence and place their faith in The Lord Jesus Christ and by doing so, receive Eternal Life. With that message complete, **The Book of John** could have ended with chapter 20. But there was more that John wanted us to understand, because gaining eternal life, through faith in The Lord Jesus Christ, is not the end of the Christian Walk. Life in Christ has a purpose. And John uses **Chapter 21** to present that purpose.

John 21 begins with at least seven of the disciples back in Galilee, probably at Capernaum where Peter, Andrew, James, and John had homes. Jesus had appeared and given instructions to Mary Magdalene (and to someone he refers to as "**the other**

Mary). His instructions were to tell His disciples to wait in Galilee for Him: **After the Sabbath, as the first light of the new week dawned, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to keep vigil at the tomb. Suddenly the earth reeled and rocked under their feet as God's angel came down from heaven, came right up to where they were standing. He rolled back the stone and then sat on it. Shafts of lightning blazed from him. His garments shimmered snow-white. The guards at the tomb were scared to death. They were so frightened, they couldn't move. The angel spoke to the women: "There is nothing to fear here. I know you're looking for Jesus, the One they nailed to the cross. He is not here. He was raised, just as he said. Come and look at the place where he was placed. "Now, get on your way quickly and tell his disciples, 'He is risen from the dead. He is going on ahead of you to Galilee. You will see him there.' That's the message." The women, deep in wonder and full of joy, lost no time in leaving the tomb. They ran to tell the disciples. Then Jesus met them, stopping them in their tracks. "Good morning!" he said. They fell to their knees, embraced his feet, and worshiped him. Jesus said, "You're holding on to me for dear life! Don't be frightened like that. Go tell my brothers that they are to go to Galilee, and that I'll meet them there."** (MATT 28:1-10 The Message Bible)

Now, you might wonder who Matthew was referring to as **"the other Mary."** Comparing scripture to scripture, we learn that in **MATT 27:5**, Matthew describes her **as "Mary the mother of James and Joseph."** According to **MATT 13:55**, two of Jesus' brothers were named James and Joseph. So, all likelihood, **"the other Mary"** is Mary, Jesus' mother. Though Matthew's decision not to identify her explicitly as Jesus' mother may seem odd, the effect is to emphasize her role as His disciple, not her biological relationship to Our Savior. The apostle is teaching us that Mary's relationship to Jesus Christ, as her teacher, is more important.

We learn about Jesus Christ's appearance to the disciples assembled in Galilee in **JOH 20:19-22: On the evening of that first day of the week, the disciples were together. They had locked the doors because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders. Jesus came in and stood among them. He said, "May peace be with you!" Then he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples were very happy when they saw the Lord. Again Jesus said, "May peace be with you! The Father has sent me. So now I am sending you." He then breathed on them. He said, "Receive the Holy Spirit.** What do you think it was like for those men who had been so close to Our Lord to see Him again but this time, in His Resurrected Body??!! Can you imagine what was going through their minds?

In the last chapter of **The Book of Matthew**, we read Matthew's account of Jesus Christ's meeting with in Galilee. Matthew's account includes The Resurrected Jesus Christ instructing His disciples to spread The Gospel to all the nations of the world: **Then the disciples went to Galilee. They went to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. When they saw him, they worshiped him. But some still had their doubts. Then Jesus came to them. He said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. So you must go and make disciples of all nations. Baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Teach them to obey everything I have commanded you. And you can be sure that I am always with you, to the very end."** (MATT 28:16-20 New International Reader's Version)

John's account of our Savior's Life also includes the story of Jesus and the Miracle of the Many Fish. This story, found in **JOHN 21**, is part of the additional information that John wanted us to learn about the purpose of our lives in Christ: **Simon Peter and Thomas, who was also called Didymus, were there together. Nathanael from Cana in Galilee and the sons of Zebedee were with them. So were two other disciples. "I'm going out to fish," Simon Peter told them. They said, "We'll go with you." So they went out and got into the boat. That night they didn't catch anything. Early in the morning, Jesus stood on the shore. But the disciples did not realize that it was Jesus. He called out to them, "Friends, don't you have any fish?" "No," they answered. He said, "Throw your net on the right side of the boat. There you will find some fish." When they did, they could not pull the net into the boat. There were too many fish in it. Then the disciple Jesus loved said to Simon Peter, "It is the Lord!" As soon as Peter heard that, he put his coat on. He had taken it off earlier. Then he jumped into the water. The other disciples followed in the boat. They were towing the net full of fish. The shore was only about 100 yards away. When they landed, they saw a fire of burning coals. There were fish on it. There was also some bread. Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish you have just caught." So Simon Peter climbed back into the boat. He dragged the net to shore. It was full of large fish. There were 153 of them. But even with that many fish the net was not torn. Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast." None of the disciples dared to ask him, "Who are you?" They knew it was the Lord. Jesus came, took the bread and gave it to them. He did the same thing with the fish. This was the third time Jesus appeared to his disciples after he was raised from the dead. (JOH 21:2-14 New International Reader's Version)**

So, in the midst of Jesus Christ's appearances in His Resurrected Body, Peter decided to go fishing and six other disciples joined him!!! They should have been continuing to spread The Gospel – trying to catch men instead of fish – because Jesus was Resurrected and they had that wonderful news to proclaim!!! But instead, they had returned to their previous business of fishing. They got completely out of God's Plan for their lives. Now, think about this for a minute. What happened? These men who had spent all that time with Our Savior, had followed Him and studied directly under Him – went back to their old way of life, once He died on The Cross. They got out of His Plan for their lives. And this could easily happen to you at some point in your Christian Walk. So, beware!

Well, the disciples fished all night, but caught nothing. When Our Lord asked, **"Friends, don't you have any fish?"** – the question was phrased to point out their failure. At this point, they were too far away to recognize Jesus, but they answered, **"No,"** and then the stranger directed them to cast their nets on the right side of the boat. They followed the stranger's suggestion (for whatever reason) and ended up with a catch too large to haul in. John then realized that the stranger was Jesus and told Peter, who then jumped into the sea and swam to shore to meet Him. The rest of the disciples brought in the boat, hauling the catch of fish behind them.

When they reached the shore, they found that The Lord had prepared them a breakfast of fish and bread on a charcoal fire. This breakfast, and the large catch of fish, demonstrated that Jesus would always provide for His disciples. And He will also

always provide for you! As followers of Christ, we will find ourselves out of His Plan for our lives, but He will always be there for us, no matter what.

Like the disciples, we are commanded to follow Jesus and trust Him to supply our needs. That was the command He gave in **MATT 6:30-33 (The Message Bible):** ***“What I’m trying to do here is to get you to relax, to not be so preoccupied with getting, so you can respond to God’s giving. People who don’t know God and the way he works fuss over these things, but you know both God and how he works. Steep your life in God-reality, God-initiative, God-provisions. Don’t worry about missing out. You’ll find all your everyday human concerns will be met.”*** This command is so important to us today. God wants our focus to be on Him and His Kingdom and not the mundane matters of life. Let the unrighteous be worried and anxious about these things. Christians, like you, have more important things on which to focus.

{to be continued}