

April 26, 2020 James Gallaheer The Kingdom – Jesus Final 40 Days and Famous Last Words

Last words can have an impact on people and the world. So let's look at Jesus' last 40 days and His words. Jesus conquered death and purchased our salvation. These words are few but we need to see what God is offering through these words. What is God offering to you and me today? The last 40 days of completion and yet it was the beginning of the church.

John 20 seems to end the book of John. **Verse 31** *but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.* Then **John 21** seems like an addendum to the book. Jesus shows up in the midst of a group of disciples that were hiding in fear, but Thomas was not there. Jesus says, "Shalom" or "peace." As Jesus came in this way, would it possibly create more anxiety?

John 11:16 *Therefore Thomas, who is called Didymus, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go, so that we may die with Him."* Yet after Jesus' resurrection, Thomas finds himself apart from these disciples and would not believe their account. Then in **John 21:2**, it seems that Thomas wanted to be mentioned so others would know that he was there. Was it FOMO - fear of missing out? Was Thomas afraid of missing out? In our hearts, do we become fearful of missing out?

Community Matters. What we do to maintain community matters. Where will we find ourselves on the other side of this pandemic and time of separation? It matters. We can't have Kingdom without community. Community is the most basic part of who we are as a body of Christ. When we are separate by physical places then we feel like we miss out on the blessing. Now, even though we are not together, we are still a part of each other. God's Word includes practical things for us and is written for our instruction, our guidance, and our understanding. **John 21:3** Peter says, *"I'm going fishing."* The disciple's reply is, *"We will also come with you."*...community matters. The day will come when it will be available to us and it matters.

John 21:3–11 These same men had left everything at the beginning and had been with Jesus for 3 ½ years. They see Jesus in and out of their lives during these 40 days. The Word doesn't say how He comes and goes, but the disciples found themselves separated from Jesus. **Matthew 28:10** Jesus told them to go to Galilee. So they wind up back in Galilee in a boat – doing what they knew. It seems they were following Jesus' leading.

Does Peter become stir crazy? Wondering what to do? What do we do when called and then don't know what to do? Are we asking that today in our situations? Are we asking "Now what, Lord?" Sometimes we try to read into scripture things that will make us feel better about our situation or our own life. Like so many of us, the disciples got antsy. Peter was not good at doing nothing and made the suggestion to go fishing.

Know Your Purpose. **Psalm 37:23** *The steps of a man are established by the LORD, and He delights in His way.* Why one step as the Psalm says? Jesus only gives enough to know where that next footprint is going to go. Would we be satisfied with the next step? Can we trust the outcomes? He will be faithful as we take the next step. He will be faithful to provide the provision and the outcome. Just like Abraham was told to go but didn't know where he was going. The call of God in our lives comes in footsteps and moments instead of a full picture of what God is doing.

The disciples are in this same place - so they make themselves busy. In the absence of God's presence, they found comfort in their profession. As we feel a failure, do we find comfort doing things on our own? Do we fall into this trap? Do we get caught up throwing ourselves into a job or a hobby? Does our passion then become our pastime? Were the disciples doing that?

They fished all night and caught nothing. Jesus comes to this place at the edge of the sea in the early morning and does what others are doing – calling out to see if they had caught anything. Did the disciples feel like they failed Jesus? He said to go to Galilee and Jesus was not there so they do that one thing they felt qualified to do and yet caught nothing. Then the call to cast nets on the other side – just like the first encounter that they had with Jesus. John then recognized the voice of Jesus. **John 21:7** Peter *threw himself into the sea*. Maybe Peter was trying to reconcile himself from the past. He was known for throwing himself out of vessels. For all of Peter's seeming missteps, there was a passion that could not be quenched. John records that Peter threw himself giving the impression of desperation. With no care for his own well being, he thrust himself in the direction of Jesus – to the presence of the Messiah – then everything would be ok.

Next, there is fish and bread, then Jesus says in **verse 12**, *Come and have breakfast*. No one questioned Him. What were they thinking knowing they had failed? Do we do the same? We question whether we did something to deserve this? Are you punishing me? Could I have done something more? Where were you?

Love Like Crazy. John 21:15 *Do you love Me more than these?* Peter didn't feel like a rock, he felt like a failure. Then the question, *do you love Me more than these?* What are "these"? the nets? the boat? the sea? the fish? the places of success for Peter? Was Jesus looking around to see what Peter found comfort in and success in?

Isn't that the struggle for us? We want it to be love – plus. Yet, Jesus stops with love – He doesn't want our promises to do better next time. Jesus says in **verse 18-19** *"Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were younger, you used to gird yourself and walk wherever you wished; but when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands and someone else will gird you, and bring you where you do not wish to go."* Now this He said, signifying by what kind of death he would glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He said to him, *"Follow Me!"*

The call at the beginning of Peter's calling was the same as the call at the end. The gifts and call of God are irrevocable. Peter identified himself – unworthy, unable, the opposite of a rock. Then Jesus calls him the same now as he was in the beginning. There is a call placed upon our own lives. No matter what we have seen or done – it is irrevocable. The challenge for us is to not disqualify what God has qualified in us. It is only required for us to love Him. Love is enough. Do you love Jesus, today? Do you love how He cares for you? Do you love what He has done for you?

Remember these final words of Jesus:

1. Fight for community – reach out, call someone, reach out for prayer, call to hear someone.
2. Know your purpose – your call. Jesus tells Peter what he was called to be.
3. Love like crazy – so the world will know.

Take time to make Jesus your Lord and Savior. Jesus died and was raised to life for you and me. We can be convinced of eternity by saying this prayer... ***Dear Lord Jesus, I believe You are the Son of God. I believe that on that cross You took my guilt, my sin, and my shame and You died for it. You faced hell for me, so I wouldn't have to. And You rose again to give me a place in Heaven, a purpose on Earth, and a relationship with Your Father. Today, Lord Jesus, I turn from my sins to be born again. And now, God is my father, Jesus is my Savior, The Holy Spirit is my helper. And Heaven is my home. Amen.***

1. How are you like Peter? Stir crazy? Relying on what you know how to do?
2. What in your life is like a footstep that you have taken but are waiting on the next step to be revealed?
3. What does the word "these" mean for you from *John 21:15 Do you love Me more than these?*