

lives. We can feed them with the very love, grace and mercy that Jesus has feed us on.

After this encounter Peter doesn't go back fishing, for fish at least. His heart has been caught by Jesus, he now goes fishing for people, seeking to catch their hearts with the loving person, Jesus, just as his heart had been caught.

Peter's 'what now?' had been answered. His way was clear, he applied Jesus' grace and mercy telling his story of life with Jesus. Peter went and fished for people using Jesus'

network of loving relationships.

A network that caught us. What now? What will we do?

Jesus has invited us to catch people living out this network of love that he has created, seeking to catch people's hearts. So they too have a heart to heart relationship with Jesus, trusting him with their lives, joyfully living with him as their king.

What are we going to do now?

Let us pray. Jesus I thank you from the bottom of my heart for giving your life that I might be set free to know your love for me and for all people. Thank you for forgiving me, and sending me to be your ambassador of reconciliation. Jesus fill me with the Spirit that I hear your answer to the 'what nows' of life. I invite you to show me the people you want me to share life with this week, making your love for them down-to-earth through me.

5 May 2019
WHAT NOW?
John 21:1-19



When you are not sure what to do, what do you do?

Peter is in that situation; he's seen the risen Jesus, but he is unsure what to do next, so he does what he knows. Peter goes fishing.

Have you ever noticed that nothing changes if you simply keep on repeating what you have done in the past? Peter goes back fishing, goes back to what he knows.

Is that where Jesus is calling us to live; doing what we know, what we can reason out? What we have always done in the past?

Of course there isn't anything necessarily wrong with repeating what you've done in the past. When

things work, why change? We can learn from the past, building on our experiences.

But Peter was faced with a very different situation; he was facing something he'd never done before, so how could he know what to do? Have you ever been asked to do something you've never done before?

Jesus had appeared to the disciples. They knew he was alive; but what now? Jesus had breathed on them and said; 'Receive the Holy Spirit, if you forgive the sins of anyone they are forgiven, if you don't forgive them they're not forgiven.' But what now?

Unsure of his next move Peter goes

back to what he knows; he goes fishing.

That reminds me of another encounter Peter had with Jesus, and it was right at the start of their relationship. Jesus again had asked Peter if he'd caught anything, and his response was the same. The story is recorded in Luke; "Master,' Simon replied, 'we worked hard all last night and didn't catch a thing. But if you say so, I'll let the nets down again.' And this time their nets were so full of fish they began to tear!" (Luke 5:5-7)

Jesus uses this incident to re-direct Peter's life; "Jesus replied to Simon, 'Don't be afraid! From now on you'll be fishing for people!'" (Luke 5:10)

Christ Church Lutheran

Worship Times - 9.00am & 10.45am
Pastor: Tim 0427326553



Jesus' disciples multiplying disciples

But now in the reading from John we find Peter, going fishing! Not fishing for people, just fishing. He's lost his way.

Have you ever felt like you've lost your way? Not sure of what to do, let alone what the next step might be? Peter has lost his way, so he goes back to what he knew; fishing!

But that's not where Jesus leaves Peter.

Jesus again comes to Peter and the other disciples and repeats that incident. That incident where he gave Peter a whole new direction for life.

But at that point in time Peter totally missed it. There was just too much of Peter's ego, too much of Peter's ideas of how things would work out. Peter saw fame and fortune glittering before his eyes. A renewed nation of Israel, with

Jesus as king and Peter right alongside.

Peter could see it all, the only problem was Peter interpreted Jesus' words through the lens of power and influence. Through the lens of wealth and position, and he was going to be one of the top dogs.

Nothing changes if you simply keep on repeating the past.

But now we have a very much humbled Peter. He knows that Jesus knows of his denial. Peter had caved in; what good is he now? A failure; he'd been such a coward, especially after all his boastful words.

Maybe Peter was hoping to hide away in the obscurity of fishing. Peter was no doubt feeling guilty, regretting what he'd done. How could Jesus use him now; such a failure?

Do you notice the self-assured Peter, the Peter who knew it all, the bold Peter is gone? Now Peter is humble, broken, unsure of the next step. But now Peter is able to hear Jesus' words through Jesus' way of looking at the world.

Gone is the ambition to rule the world. Gone is the ambition to kill the Romans and dominate his enemies. Peter is broken; what now?

And then Jesus comes and pricks those memories; reminding Peter that he has been called to go and fish for people. And then Jesus asks; 'Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?' Three times Jesus asked; 'Simon do you love me?' Not to condemn Peter, but to heal him, to point Peter back in the right direction.

Peter is healed by an amazing act of love, of grace, of mercy. He doesn't deserve it, but that's who Jesus is.

What a change; Jesus doesn't give Peter a picture of kings in royal robes lording it over others, forcing them to do their bidding and disposing of those who don't please them. Jesus let's Peter experience the wonders of his gracious, loving nature.

What a change; Peter won't fish for people using power and influence, but by telling his story. His story, which lives out Jesus' mercy and forgiveness, the very mercy and forgiveness that Jesus lived out for all of us on the cross.

Jesus has caught Peter's heart.

Jesus is saying; 'Peter this is how you fish for people, with my undeserved grace

and mercy, with my forgiveness, that you might catch their hearts. That when I say, "Follow Me!" they'll come because they know me, because they trust me, because I've caught their heart.'

Peter has gone from building an Empire through dominating

Jesus has come to build a net of relationships.

his enemies; killing them if need be. To proclaiming the Kingdom of Heaven, that through his words people catch Jesus, catch his love for them, catch the forgiveness he has won, catch the hope he brings, catch the new life Jesus offers in his kingdom.

Jesus has come to build a network of relationships, relationships based on his loving grace and mercy. A network of

relationships that flow from the relationship all his disciples share with him.

For Jesus comes building a kingdom, not of winners and losers, not of the haves and the have nots, but a kingdom of loved people, loving one another; as Jesus does.

Notice we don't love because the other person deserves it; Peter knew that only too well. He didn't

deserve it. We don't love people because they're perfect; Peter was anything but, he suffered from terminal foot-in-mouth disease. But it was Jesus love that healed Peter.

If we wait to be perfect before we act, we'll never act. Jesus has loved us, forgiven us, breathed his new life into us. The healing comes from Jesus, and then we can step out and feed the people Jesus places in our