

JOHN 20-21

July 29, 2012

Today we'll be discussing **chapters 20 and 21** of the Gospel of John.

In chapter 20 we discover the purpose of the book of John; what is it?

- It was written so that people might believe in Jesus and have life in His name (20:31).

20:1-18 Who can tell us what takes place in **verses 1 to 18**?

- Mary Magdalene discovers that the stone had been rolled away from the tomb on Sunday morning and runs to tell Peter and John (the *disciple whom Jesus loved*). The two disciples come, look into the empty tomb, and see the grave clothes that remain. Mary had followed them back to the tomb and remains there after Peter and John leave. Looking in, two angels are in the tomb and speak to her. She hears a voice behind her and eventually realizes that it is Jesus. He tells her to tell the others that He is alive and is going to return to the Father.

Matthew 28:1-8, Mark 16:1-8, and Luke 24:1-8 indicate that other women went to the tomb of Jesus with Mary Magdalene. Why did John only mention Mary?

- It appears that Mary Magdalene ran ahead of the other women and was the first to see the empty tomb. She was there looking in while the others were on their way to the gravesite wondering how they could move the stone to anoint the body of Jesus. John focused on Mary's story here.
- This is not unusual in the Gospels. In the story of Jesus healing blind **Bartimaeus** (*barr-tih-MAY-us*), **Mark (11:46-52)** and **Luke (18:35-42)** only name Bartimaeus, but **Matthew (20:29-34)** mentioned that there was another blind man with Him. **Bartimaeus** was the prominent character in the minds of Mark and Luke.

The accounts in Matthew and Mark say that Jesus did this miracle after leaving Jericho; Luke says that He did it as He was going to Jericho. Is this an error in the Bible? If not how do you explain it?

- Archaeologists have discovered that there were two Jericho sites. The town had been relocated. Jesus did this miracle between the two sites; He was coming to Jericho and had departed from Jericho.

20:19-29 Who can tell us what takes place in **verses 19 to 29**?

- Later on that first Easter (20:19), the disciples are behind closed doors and Jesus stands before them without using the door...He just materializes. Jesus shows them His nail-pierced hands and the hole in His side. Thomas wasn't there and announced that he would not believe unless he put his finger into the nail prints and his hand into the side of Jesus; this is where the phrase "doubting Thomas" originated. Jesus reappears in the same manner **8 days later** when **Thomas** is present. Jesus asks Thomas to touch Him and Thomas declares Jesus to be His Lord and God.

20:21 What do we learn in **verse 21**?

- We are to do what God sent Jesus to do: proclaim God's truth and make disciples. **See Luke 4:43 and 19:10.** [43 But he replied, "I must preach the Good News of the Kingdom of God in other towns, too, because that is why I was sent."] [10 For the Son of Man* came to seek and save those who are lost.]"

20:22 Didn't the Holy Spirit come in the book of **Acts (1:8 & 2:1-6)**? What did Jesus do in **verse 22**?

- This was apparently a symbolic gesture Jesus gave to the **11 disciples**. He had told them that a Comforter was coming (**John 14 & 16**). They clearly had not received the Spirit in **Acts 1** because they were still fearful and in hiding. Once the Spirit came, they were bold as lions and ready to suffer and die for their Lord.

20:23 Look at verse 23; do we have the power to forgive sins or is that done only by God Himself?

- We don't *dictate* to God what He must then do, we *cooperate* with what God is doing or has done. The Greek verb tense makes it clear that we grant forgiveness *after* God has forgiven that person. We "express" God's forgiveness, but we are not even to express His forgiveness unless that person has repented and, therefore, has been forgiven already by God. Look at **Matthew 16:19**. This is the same principle and verb tense as in **John 20:23**. We *bind* or *loose* what God has already *bound* or *loosed* in heaven. The King James and the New International versions both do a poor job translating the verb tenses here. God does not "get in line" and act on the basis of what we do; we "get in line" and act on the basis of what God does and has done.

20:29 Who are the blessed that Jesus speaks of in verse 29?

- Us!

20:30 What do we learn about the Bible from verse 30?

- The Bible reveals to us what God wants us to know about what took place. It does not always record every word or everything that took place in a story or event. See **John 21:25** [25 Jesus also did many other things. If they were all written down, I suppose the whole world could not contain the books that would be written.] & **Deuteronomy 29:29**. [29 "The Lord our God has secrets known to no one. We are not accountable for them, but we and our children are accountable forever for all that he has revealed to us, so that we may obey all the terms of these instructions.]

21:1-14 Who can tell us what takes place in verses 1 to 11 in chapter 21?

- Peter and several of the other disciples were fishing on the Sea of Tiberias (*tie-BEER-ee-us* - which is the same as the Sea of Galilee). They fish all night and catch nothing. Jesus is standing on the shore in the morning and tells them to cast their nets on the right side of the boat. Their net is completely filled with fish and then Peter realizes that it is Jesus. He jumps in and swims to shore and the others follow in the boat. Jesus is at the shore already cooking fish and bread over a fire.

There are several unusual things about this story. How many can you find?

- Jesus was "disguised" in some way because they didn't know that it was Him until the big catch.
- The big catch came after a night of catching nothing.
- The big catch was right at their boat.
- These professional fishermen took the advice of a "stranger" and cast their net one last time after getting nothing all night.
- It apparently was their biggest catch ever.
- It was unusual that such a catch didn't tear the net.
- Jesus had fish and bread over a fire. Where did He get the fish and bread?

What lessons might we learn from this story thus far?

- Jesus knows what we don't know, in this case where the fish were. Jesus is THE expert on *all* matters, not "earthly" experts. When Jesus acts, He blesses (the enormous catch of fish). Jesus knows our needs and meets them. They had fished all night and had to be very hungry.

21:9 Is there anything significant about the kind of fire Jesus built?

- It was a "charcoal" fire. The only other charcoal fire mentioned in the New Testament was at the place where Peter had denied the Lord three times.

21:15-17 In **verses 15 to 17** Jesus asks Peter three times “Do you love Me?” The first two times, He asks if Peter *agape* (*uh-GOP-pay*) loves Him and Peter replies that he *phileo* (*full-EH-o*) loves Him...“likes” Him. Jesus uses *phileo* on the third time and Peter concurs that He “likes” Jesus. What is significant about Peter’s answer?

- Peter is now a humble man. God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble (**1 Peter 5:5**). When we humble ourselves, God will exalt us (**1 Peter 5:6**). God exalted Peter at Pentecost and used Him to reach thousands of people.

What is the point for us in Jesus telling Peter to “feed His sheep”?

- We love Jesus in two ways. First, we love Jesus by obeying Him (**John 14:21**). Second, we love Jesus by doing what God created us to do. In Peter’s case, he was made to feed people the Word of God.

21:18-23 What takes place in **verses 18 to 23**?

- Jesus foretells the fact that Peter would one day be arrested, imprisoned, and would die for his faith. Then Jesus reminds Peter to “follow” Him. Peter then asks Jesus about what would become of John. Jesus told Peter that what would become of John should be no concern of his and that Peter was to follow Him.

What principle do we learn here and why is it so important?

- Here we learn the W.I.T.T.Y. principle: *What Is That To You?* We are to live out God’s will for our lives, not to be so concerned about how God uses others. Probably the greatest barrier to knowing and doing God’s will in our lives is to want God’s will for someone else’s life for ourselves (we want *their* mate, kids, job, income, talents, ministries, etc.). We are to FOLLOW HIM regardless of what others do or don’t do. This includes our parents, our mates, our children, our friends, our enemies...everyone; we are to walk with and serve the Lord and it has nothing to do with whether or not anyone else is doing the same.