

Unit 33, Session 3: Jesus Served Breakfast by the Sea

John 21:1-19

Christ Connection:

Preschool: When Jesus was arrested, His friends ran away. Jesus did what He came to earth to do—rescue people from sin. Jesus showed His friends that He still loved them and wanted them to follow Him. Sometimes we make mistakes as we follow Jesus too. Jesus rescued us from sin. We know He forgives us and wants us to continue following Him.

Kids: Jesus called the disciples to follow Him. He promised to make them fishers of men. Instead of catching fish, they would tell people about Jesus (Luke 5:1-11). The disciples left Jesus when He was arrested, but Jesus still wanted to use them in God's plan. Jesus is a Lord who forgives us and makes things right again.

Adult Connection Point:

Read John 21:1-19.

Despite their abandoning of Him at the time of His arrest, Jesus extends peace and fellowship to His disciples. Why? They repented. While the text does not state this explicitly, we see their repentance expressed in how they approached Jesus, turning from their former trade of fishing to learning from Him and eating with Him once again. Peter's repentance and restoration is highlighted further by his abrupt diving into the water and Jesus' conversation with him (John 21:7, 15-19). Even though the disciples had left Jesus' side at the time of His arrest and trial, Jesus was willing to receive them once again. Jesus will always honor true repentance.

When the idea of repentance gets isolated from its biblical context, people tend to think of a would-be prophet holding a sign that says, "Turn or Burn!" But if we take our cue from Jesus, who just got through teaching about how the Old Testament pointed to Him, we will take a step back and see the meaning of repentance from within the biblical story line.

The word *repent* means "to turn around" or "change directions." The reason repentance is needed (and called for) is because Adam and Eve, in the garden of Eden, made a choice to live apart from the love and goodness of God. In their rebellion, they sinned. Then they ran and hid from the God who made them. But God came to find His wayward creatures, and though He knew where Adam was hiding, still He asked, "Where are you?"

Where are you? Repentance is a heartfelt response to the kindness of a God who grieves the lostness of His people and aches for us to be rescued, to be with Him once again, giving Him praise and honor forever. Sin and selfishness lead us to hide from God in the dark. But the God of the gospel asks, "Where are you?" (Gen. 3:9). Repentance is about turning around and coming into the light.

To call people to repentance is not to say, "Change your life," but to invite people to run to the God who changes us. It means we plead with people: "Please come out from the darkness of your hiding into the light of His love. Please believe that He is not here to condemn you but to save you. Please turn away from (repent of) trusting in yourself, and turn to the gracious arms of the only Savior who can forgive your sins. Believe that He wants to give you abundant life rather than eternal destruction." When the church proclaims repentance, it should be with tears and pleas reflecting the heart of a loving God.