

After the Resurrection of Jesus one of the angels told the disciples to go to Galilee where Jesus would reveal himself to them (Matthew 28:7). It was significant evidence for Jesus to manifest himself in a different location and at a later time. The disciples had gone to Jerusalem and had experienced a tumultuous series of events. They saw the triumphal entry of Jesus as he rode into Jerusalem on a donkey with the expectation of a new kingdom; they saw the betrayal of Jesus by Judas, the denial of Jesus by Peter, the agonizing crucifixion of Jesus on the cross, the resurrection and the manifestations of the risen Lord. All this was too much for the disciples to take as so much had happened in a short time and did they did not have the time to understand. They were confused and unsure of the future.

Peter went back to fishing which was his old profession and probably did not see any future for himself. He was very disappointed at all the events that had turned out in a way that was completely different to what they had expected. Peter also had his own sense of failure because of denying the Lord three times. The other disciples also do not have any clue as six of them were with Peter. Simon Peter had told them he was going to fish and six other disciples also accompanied him. So they went out and got into the boat but caught nothing the whole night.

Early in the morning Jesus stood on the shore but the disciples did not realize it was Jesus. "Friends haven't you any fish?" "No!", they answered. He said, "Throw your net on the right side of the boat and you will find some." When they did they weren't able to haul the net in because of the large number of fishes. Jesus gave them a clear sense of direction and when they obeyed him they were unable to haul the net in because of the large number of fish. Jesus had done a similar miracle earlier on and so the disciples immediately recognized Jesus.

As soon as it dawned on the disciples who it was, John the disciple whom Jesus loved said: "It is the Lord!" The revelation of Jesus and his power dawned first to John; he was the one who also discerned the significance of the grave clothes which were wrapped up. As soon as Peter heard that it was Jesus he jumped into the water and swam to the shore. This is typical of Peter's nature and reinforces the historical reliability of John's eyewitness testimony.

Jesus asked them for some fish and prepares breakfast for them. Then he invites them saying, 'Come and have breakfast.' None of the disciples dared ask him who he was as they knew it was the Lord. We notice that both Mary Magdalene and the two disciples at Emmaus also took some time to identify that it was Jesus. Yet the identification was so certain, that all the disciples knew it was Jesus. The meal together stamped an indelible impression on their minds. Years later in his preaching Peter spoke of himself as a reliable witness who ate and drank with Jesus after his resurrection. (Acts 10:41).

All the disciples were witnesses to the resurrection. It was the resurrection event that transformed their lives. Peter who denied Jesus three times became the leader of the disciple group and preached the good news of Jesus Christ boldly and with confidence. So also James the brother of Jesus who was skeptical about the ministry of Jesus, but the post resurrection appearance of Jesus transformed his life (1 Corinthians 15:7). This James went on to become a key leader of the church and was martyred in Jerusalem. Take Thomas for example., a man who wanted empirical evidence, proof of a scientific mind. Thomas refused to believe what the other disciples told them and only when he himself met the risen Lord he said "My God and My Lord!" All these disciples were witnesses to the resurrection. If the resurrection was a lie, the church would not have survived a thousand years. The Resurrection of Jesus is of primary importance to the Christian faith. "If Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless....we are of all men to be piled." (1 Corinthians 15:17,19). May we trust to the resurrected Lord in our daily lives.