

## ***“IT IS THE LORD!”***

*(John 21:1-14)*

This Gospel narrative recounts our Lord's third appearance to His disciples as the resurrected Christ. Initially, the disciples did not recognize their risen Master until the Lord Jesus provided them with a miraculous catch of fish. It was then that the Apostle John declared, “It is the Lord!” Jesus' resurrection appearance to His disciples not only demonstrates Christ's miraculous power. His appearance to them also manifests His glorious attributes which portray the depth and sweetness of Jesus' love for His people. These wondrous characters of our Lord should remind us of one crucial lesson we learn from the life, ministry and teaching of the Lord Jesus: Relationship matters most in the heart of God (Matt. 22:37-39; John 13:34-35).

### ***1. Jesus'***

Instead of faithfully waiting for their risen Lord, the disciples became impatient and decided to go fishing (John 21:1-3; Matt. 26:32; 28:16; Mk. 16:7). Their decision to go fishing turned out to be a restless and fruitless endeavor for they caught nothing. Instead of reprimanding them, our Lord Jesus showed His marvelous love to His disciples by being patient with them. Instead of pouring out His frustration and disappointment with His impatient disciples, Jesus asked a question to convict them and help them realize their emptiness and helplessness apart from Christ (John 21:3; 15:5). Furthermore, Jesus performed the same miracle when He first called His disciples to follow Him (Lk. 5:1-11). Our Lord provided a miraculous catch of fish for His weary disciples (John 21:4-8,11). What a perfect display of God's patient love! Christ's patient love is this long-suffering attitude of God which refuses to unleash His anger, but rather chooses to bless and exercise love and compassion (Psalm 103:8-11). This is the same patient love we are called to extend to others as we pursue to be like Christ (1 Thess. 5:14; Eph. 4:2; 1 Tim. 1:16; Phil. 4:13).

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### ***2. Jesus'***

Jesus' love for His people is not only patient. Jesus' love for us is also kind. His kindness to His disciples is manifested through His miraculous provision of fish and His preparation of breakfast for His exhausted disciples. Instead of withholding His affection and care for them, Jesus took time to serve His weary and heavy-hearted disciples (John 21:9-14). God's loving kindness, simply put, is His compassionate deeds of serving the needs of His people (Isaiah 54:8; 63:7). Moreover, Christ's invitation to His disciples to eat with Him signals His gesture of fully restoring them into a loving fellowship with Him. In the Scriptures, the sign of God's covenant kindness is a meal (Matt. 26:28; Rev. 19:9). This communion meal is a beautiful reminder of God's eternal fellowship with His people whom He has graciously forgiven in Christ and lovingly accepted to belong to His family (Titus 3:4-7).

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