

John 21:1-14  
May 5, 2019 – THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER

# *Trust Our Risen Lord*

- ✦ Coming up short (vv.1-5)
- ✦ Going long (v.6a)
- ✦ Living in His bounty (vv.6b-14)

In the name of Jesus, our risen Lord and Savior, dear rejoicing Christians:

Something has been happening since Christmas in our Gospel readings which you really don't want to miss. All the miracles Jesus performed to prove He is God during Epiphany, all the suffering He endured during Lent, all the glory He got back as the risen Christ of God – He did all this for you to find comfort and to receive guilt-free living as His Easter gift. Last week Jesus told Thomas to touch the nail marks with his finger and stick his hand in Jesus' side where the Roman spear pierced Him. ***“Stop doubting and believe,”*** Jesus says to us too. ***“Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”*** (John 20:27,29 NIV84) For you and for everyone you know, even those hard hearted unbelievers whom God surely wants to reach through you, it's all about, ***“Peace be with you!”*** With the fishing opener fast approaching isn't it timely that Jesus meets us fishing today? Of all places to beat back our doubts and fears and free us from guilt! On the lake with Jesus: **Trust Our Risen Lord.**

## ✦ Coming up short (vv.1-5)

Maybe you've really been embarrassed because these words came out of your mouth: “Pastor, I'll put you onto fish. I guarantee it.” So said one friend on the Mississippi years ago when our best bite all day was that fish that jumped for my line as we pulled away to find a better fishing hole. So said a retired pastor, a super fine fisherman, who did his best to beat the wind and the river. Now imagine how Peter and his fellow disciples felt when they had been wealthy professional fisherman.

Recall why they went fishing. On Easter morning Jesus had personally appeared first to Mary Magdalene. He gave her a message for the disciples who had deserted Him on His way to the cross. Jesus told Mary Magdalene, ***“Go...to my brothers and tell them, ‘I am returning to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’ ”*** (John 20:17 NIV84) Calling them ***“brothers”*** at that point was huge with comfort and forgiveness. But Jesus wanted to give them more, and us with them! Jesus also said to the other women hurrying away ***from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy..., ‘Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me.’ ”*** (Matthew 28:8,10 NIV84)

To Galilee they went. Passing the time, Peter naturally said, “I'm going fishing.” No surprise, the rest said, “We'll go with you.” Talk about **Coming up short**. All night – nothing! You work hard all your life. Notice how advertisers play on fears of **Coming up short** raising kids or retirement?

## ✦ Going long (v.6a)

A stranger yelling from the shore would be especially annoying with a question like, ***“Hey, boys, you don't have any fish, do you?”*** And worse, telling you something ridiculous like, ***“Throw your net on the right side of the boat and you will find some.”*** Natural reaction? Sarcasm: “Oh, that'll work!”

Sarcasm in our ranks? Older members and pastors can crush the enthusiasm of youth to reach out with the Gospel: “We tried that. Didn’t work.” Or: “Too expensive. Won’t be worth it.” Tired says so!

Poor Ananias in today’s First Reading (Acts 9:1-19a EHV). A house call to Saul of Tarsus? Knees shaking! *“Lord, I have heard from many people about this man and how much harm he did to your saints in Jerusalem. And he has authority here from the chief priests to arrest all who call on your name.”* It’s **Going long** when the Lord answers, *“Go! This man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the people of Israel. Indeed, I will show him how much he must suffer for my name.”* That flaming persecutor, God’s missionary to us Gentiles? And he’ll suffer?

God puts you among your circle of friends, relatives, associates and neighbors – FRANs – and you feel terrible sometimes, **Coming up short**. Then our Lord puts you in a sweaty palmed, heart racing situation where you have to speak up. He wants you **Going long** because with His command He gives a promise: *“Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it.”* (Psalm 81:10 EHV) Do you **Trust Our Risen Lord**?

Christ sets congregations in His harvest field with all the gifts we need. He gives *pastors and teachers* (Ephesians 4:11), *fruits of the Spirit* (Galatians 5:22,23), at least one spiritual *gift* for every Christian (1 Corinthians 12:7), plus the *mina* of the Gospel (Luke 19:11-27). **Going long** means investing time, talent and treasure in order to share the Gospel. Do we **Trust Our Risen Lord** as a congregation? Every spring we study ministry needs. Our budget is Christ’s: *Throw your net on the right side of the boat.* Faith obeys...

#### ✦ Living in His bounty (vv.6b-14)

Something similar happened before to Peter. He’d fished all night and caught nothing. Then Jesus told him, *“Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch.”* (Luke 5:4 NIV84) It took two boats to pull in that catch. This time after nothing all night it’s the right side of the boat. Recognition! *The disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, “It is the Lord!”* Peter jumps in, swims to shore while the others tow the bulging net back. Jesus has breakfast ready, then says, *“Bring some of the fish you have just caught.”* Now these eye-witnesses must count: *large fish, 153, but even with so many the net was not torn. Jesus said to them, “Come and have breakfast.” None of the disciples dared ask him, “Who are you?” They knew it was the Lord. Jesus came, took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. This was now the third time Jesus appeared to his disciples after he was raised from the dead.”* (John 21:7-14 NIV84) Twice before Jesus had appeared to His frightened disciples behind locked doors, making sure Thomas was included. Now right after our text Jesus will reinstate Peter and free him from the guilt of his denials. But before we close today Jesus wants us **Living in His bounty**.

What’s different for us Christians raising kids? They belong to God! Years ago a crowded orphanage had the breakfast table set, children seated, but no food. They prayed and waited. A knock on the door by the baker: “I was up early just thinking your children might need some bread. Next knock, the milk man: “My wagon broke down. I need to empty it in order to fix it.” God’s children they are!

Can you **Trust Our Risen Lord** in retirement? He’s already there, living in the eternal present, providing breakfast for us too. Plus coffee? Think of the process from mountain farm to your cup: pack mules, trucks, roasters, packaging machines, grocers, money from your work to buy – already being provided for your enjoyment by our bountiful Lord. **His bounty** means an overflow because He wants you to have more than enough to share with others. And we sweat a church budget? Or family budget?

Your calendar and bank ledger tell if you **Trust Our Risen Lord** enough to enjoy **Living in His bounty**. No **Coming up short** on forgiveness in Christ. His forgiveness enables us to let down the nets, **Going long** again. *“He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.”* (2 Corinthians 9:10-11 NIV84) Jesus wants others to know the pure joy of faith that **Trusts Our Risen**

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**Lord!** all the way to **Living in His bounty.** And that, my dear friends, is no fishing tale! Amen.