

Try The Other Side

Most people are creatures of habit. Whatever you are used to doing is what will feel natural to you. It will be your go-to thing to do or choose because it's comfortable. Or maybe because you know what you're getting, maybe it isn't great but at least it's not bad.

When you are pressured to choose you choose what's comfortable. When you don't want to choose, you choose what is easy. It's just how we are wired.

It's easy to choose the natural over the spiritual. It's easy to trust what you see instead of what you believe. It's easy to do what you're used to instead of what God tells you to do.

But what if something better is on the other side? What if getting out of routine and choosing easy unlocks something amazing that we're missing out on?

Today we're going to look at what it's like when you Try The Other Side.

John 21:1-3 (NKJV)

After these things Jesus showed Himself again to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias, and in this way He showed Himself: 2 Simon Peter, Thomas called the Twin, Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of His disciples were together. 3 Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing."

They said to him, "We are going with you also." They went out and immediately got into the boat, and that night they caught nothing.

In John chapter 20, these men got born again...if you've ever heard that the Holy Spirit lives in every believer when they are born again but always think of Acts Chapter 2, this is the verse where we see Jesus breathed on them and said "receive the Holy Spirit".

He reveals Himself as the risen Lord before He ascended to heaven. Tells them to forgive others, to believe, and receive the Holy Spirit. You'd think they'd be dancing in the streets.

They had a spiritual encounter and very quickly went back to their natural comfort.

This is what people do. This is our "side of the boat"...we're going to call it the left side. What should happen in our lives is that our spiritual life should lead our natural life...but we have these encounters with God and before you know it, we're back to our natural life leading our spiritual life.

We gravitate to the left side of the boat. Because it's our side. It's comfortable. It's familiar.

And oftentimes we're successful on the left side of the boat. That's why we keep going back. We have some comfort, some control, and a history of success. But there's one big issue we forget: the success we have there, on the left side of the boat...it's all temporary.

It doesn't last long. If we're fishing for fish, what about once we eat them? They are gone. We are full, yet we'll be hungry again.

This is what happened to these expert fishermen who had just left "church", they just had this encounter with Jesus and should have been glowing with the Holy Spirit newly dwelling in them!

John 21:4-5 (NKJV)

But when the morning had now come, Jesus stood on the shore; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. 5 Then Jesus said to them, "Children, have you any food?"

They answered Him, "No."

Church, the left side of the boat is not meant to drive our lives.

I know it's comfortable and you like it there but it's the natural side, it's opposite of the spiritual side and what happens when our human efforts fail? What happens when you are out all night and catch nothing?

The disciples went fishing because they didn't see Jesus. At some point He had left between chapter 20 and 21. Once He wasn't present, they took their focus off of Him and fell back on what was natural, what they knew, what they liked...the left side of the boat.

And it was a failure. They failed at the one thing they were always good at before. The thing they "didn't need Jesus for".

John 21:6 (NKJV)

And He said to them, "Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some." So they cast, and now they were not able to draw it in because of the multitude of fish.

Jesus tells them to try the other side, the right side of the boat. His side, the spiritual side. It's on the right because He's always right.

In High School when my class was taking driver's ed. We had Mr. Denton for an instructor. A friend of mine was driving and was told to take a left, he turned right. Mr. Denton said "that was left, I said turn right". So we tried it again. He took a left again. Mr. Denton said "don't you know right from left? Here's how you can remember, I'm on the right because I'm always right!" My classmate never forgot that again!

Jesus' side is the right side because the spiritual side is the right side.

What does the right symbolize in the bible? Power and authority.

If you are living on the left side of the boat you are constantly looking for your needs to be met by the world and you are giving the power and authority of your life over to the temporary side where people fail, and fall short, and there is no lasting peace.

If you are going to the right side, you are looking for Jesus to meet your needs and you give all power and authority to the One who actually died for the right to have all power and authority for all of eternity. The One who has everlasting peace.

What happens when you listen to Him? The same thing that happened to the disciples. If you cast on the right side...you'll find some! And by some, it's more than enough!

Have you ever seen one of those wind machines where you can have all the dollar bills you can catch and hang on to? That's what it's like on the right side of the boat. You can have whatever you can grab. And there's more than what you can hold!

Casting on the right side is trusting Jesus. Do you trust Him?

Success may be very close, but we will never truly find it until we obey Jesus!

John 21:7-8 (NKJV)

Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment (for he had removed it), and plunged into the sea. 8 But the other disciples came in the little boat (for they were not far from land, but about two hundred cubits), dragging the net with fish.

John, the one whom Jesus loved, the one who rested His head on Jesus at the last supper, the one who Jesus asked to take care of Mary when He was on the cross, the one who outran Peter to the tomb, recognized Jesus first.

Can you imagine how tired these guys were? They had been out all night. They had been unsuccessful all night. And even with the mass of fish all of the sudden, they had to try and pull it in but it was so much that they couldn't. So they are mentally worn, physically worn. But when John says "It is the Lord!" Peter dives into the sea.

Jesus, the name above all names, gives you hope when you are hopeless and strength when you are weak.

Here the disciples have been blessed with more than they could ask for. Jesus has worked a miracle in their natural lives. He does that, you know? My God is a miracle working God!

But what happens after the miracle? What do we run to? What do we want the most?

Peter once he hears that it's the Lord...he didn't even SEE that it was Jesus, He just heard it. He was a fisherman trying to haul in a mass of fish. He wasn't looking around. He was fully engaged in the miracle...until He heard the name of Jesus.

Then it was an automatic redirection. The head fisherman abandoned the fish and dove into the sea...Peter wanted to get to Jesus!

This is the real test in life. When we live a life of going to the left side of the boat...if we would try the other side...on the right side, the spirit led side...we will see signs, wonders, miracles...we will have provision beyond what we need...

But at the end of the day, when you've worked hard, when you've got what you wanted, you've met your goals, are you willing to leave it all for Jesus?

Is His presence really worth more than everything else? Now, we don't need a canned answer to that this morning. Don't say yes just because you're supposed to. We're not trying to impress anyone here today except Him...and He knows your heart!

If we really believe His presence is worth abandoning all, we've got to be willing to dive in. Take our spiritual walk a little further. I don't know if you caught it or not but v8 said "they were not far from land"

You may not be far from land. You may already be fishing on the right side of the boat and you may already be close to Jesus. But most will take a look and see that the boat is close enough and decide to just enjoy the ride, the thrill of the moment, and ride the boat to shore.

Others will see Jesus and dive right in. But I promise you that when you get there, He's got so much more for you than what you had in the boat.

John 21:9-14 (NKJV)

Then, as soon as they had come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid on it, and bread. 10 Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish which you have just caught."

11 Simon Peter went up and dragged the net to land, full of large fish, one hundred and fifty-three; and although there were so many, the net was not broken. 12 Jesus said to them, "Come and eat breakfast." Yet none of the disciples dared ask Him, "Who are You?"—knowing that it was the Lord. 13 Jesus then came and took the bread and gave it to them, and likewise the fish.

14 This is now the third time Jesus showed Himself to His disciples after He was raised from the dead.

When they get to shore dragging their 153 large fish, Jesus already has fish and bread on the fire.

Jesus had done a huge miracle when they decided to obey His word and try the other side. But Jesus is not just a “big miracle” God.

Jesus didn't have a boat or a net or a fishing rod. But He had a fish on the fire! And He tells the men “Bring some of the fish which you have just caught.”

He doesn't need what we have to offer, but it's His joy to include us, to use us.

It's a picture that even our human efforts are of value to Jesus when they are paired with obedience to His word because when they are paired with obedience to His word they are backed by His power...this is life on the right side of the boat.

Today it's time to Try The Other Side.

Are you relying on what's comfortable, what's natural?

Are you missing out on the power that's on the other side?

He has miracles for your life, right here, right now. But will you obey His word?

At the end of the day, what is your heart's true desire? Is it His presence? Are you willing to dive in?

What He has waiting for you there is all you need for today.