

# John 21:1-22

## “Jesus: Do YOU Love Him?”

**Scripture:** John 21:1-22

**Memory Verse:** John 21:22b “*You Follow Me!*”

**Lesson Focus:** This passage gives us an excellent follow-up to our celebration of Easter last weekend. The personal encounter the disciples have with the risen Jesus shows us all how we can appropriate our belief in the resurrection of Jesus Christ into daily activity and a living reality. We will insert ourselves into the story here and challenge the kids to personalize Jesus’s question to them, “*Do YOU really love Me?*”

**Activities and Crafts:** Love Jesus with Your All Coloring Picture, Word Search of different terms from lesson, Bring It Home Discussion for 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>.  
Craft for 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> grades: I love Jesus Cross

**Starter Activity:** Imagine If You Were There

To begin we want to have the kids try and imagine themselves in world-changing historical scenarios that they are familiar with. Have them pretend to put on glasses for each scenario or enter a time machine to make it more fun. A few ideas:

- 1) On the boat with Christopher Columbus when they discovered the Americas
- 2) One of Noah’s family members building the ark as the flooding rains started coming down
- 3) With Moses and the Israelites when God parted the Red Sea

Q: If you were there to experience this, how would your life be different the next day?

A: It would never be the same!

We just celebrated Easter where we remember and celebrate the amazing death and resurrection of Jesus. Let’s now place ourselves in Jerusalem 2000 years ago among the disciples who walked with Jesus, saw Him work wonders, saw Him brutally die on the cross, and then three days later suddenly rise again! \*

**Read John 20:27-28** which is Thomas’s reaction to seeing the risen Jesus Christ.

Q: If you were there to see all of this, if you actually touched Jesus’s pierced hands and knew that He actually was risen, how would your life be different the next day? \*

The “next day” is what we will read about today. \* Let’s see what life looked like for the disciples shortly after Jesus Christ rose from the dead!

**Bible Study:** This first section (v. 1-14) reads like a story. Immerse the kids into the story and use modern-day activities (Mario \* for boys and gymnastics for girls were my ideas, but feel free to come up with your own) to make the story more relevant to them!

**John 21:1-3:** Fishing? This should baffle us a little bit. How could they return to such an ORDINARY activity after they have seen and experienced such EXTRAORDINARY things?

If you and your friends were there and saw these things, I think it would be a little bit like you waking up the next morning and you and your friends saying, “Let’s just play Mario today” (or go back to our gymnastics class, etc.). REALLY? \*

And notice that the disciples caught nothing! So, it would be a really BAD Mario day \* (or bad gymnastics day) where nothing was going your way.

**John 21:4-6:** So here are the disciples having the most embarrassingly bad fishing day ever and then some mysterious Dude shows up and everything changes! \* They suddenly catch more fish than they were able to haul in!

Back to your story: So, you’re playing Mario and you keep losing and losing and losing but then some mysterious Dude shows up and tells you what moves to make and as you follow His instructions, you start miraculously dominating! (or gymnastics you start doing perfect flips, twists, etc.)

**John 21:7-11:** They finally recognize this mysterious Dude as Jesus! Peter was so excited that he dove into the water! Notice they drop what they were doing because they wanted to be with Him!

Q: Can you think of anyone that you would be so excited to see that you drop everything you are doing and go and RUN to see them? \* That is what it was like for the disciples at this point!

So, if you were playing Mario, or in the middle of your gymnastics class, or doing whatever ORDINARY thing you like to do and realized that the risen Jesus was there with you, wouldn’t you also drop whatever you were doing and run to be with Him? I sure hope so!

**John 21:12-14:** Wow! I bet these were the best fish sandwiches ever since they were cooked by Jesus! \* Notice He doesn’t directly criticize their return to the ordinary (fishing), but simply invites them into relationship to have a meal with Him. It is in a personal relationship setting like this where Jesus will then give them the instructions they need.

In the same way for us, Mario, gymnastics, or whatever ordinary things we like to do aren’t necessarily wrong. But is Jesus more important? And will you accept Jesus’s invitation to come, listen, and learn how you are to live now that He is risen?

**John 21:15a:** Now Jesus has some business to take care of with Peter. He asks Peter first “do you love Me more than these?”

The Bible doesn’t tell us what Jesus was referring to when He said “these”. He could likely be referring to the other disciples, but I wonder if He was also referring to fishing.

If you were there, Jesus may ask you the same question: Do you love Me more than you love Mario, or gymnastics, or whatever? Think about that for a second!

**John 21:15b:** Simon Peter answers “yes”, but then Jesus tells him how he can show it: “Feed My lambs.”

Q: Who do you think Jesus’s lambs are? \*

A: Believers and followers of Him. Perhaps specifically the littler people!

Jesus is setting Peter up to be a leader, a shepherd of the people who believe in Him. A good shepherd/leader feeds his sheep.

Q: What do you think Peter is supposed to give to or feed these lambs?

A: The Bible, the Word of God! (**Matthew 4:4**) \*

**John 21:16-17:** Jesus repeats the question a total of three times!

Q: Who knows what Peter did to Jesus three times right before He was crucified? \*

A: He denied Jesus! Jesus even predicted that before the rooster crows, Peter would deny that he knows Jesus three times....and it happened exactly as Jesus had predicted.

To be denied by someone close to you is some of the most hurtful of pain. \*

Yet notice that Jesus doesn’t hold a grudge, but restores Peter into relationship with Him! That is the heart of our God! We may turn our backs on Him like Peter did, but He is ALWAYS ready to receive us if we would only humbly come back to Him like Peter did.

**John 21:18-19:** Jesus then tells Peter that he is going to die a martyr’s death. This is indeed what happened, but not before he lived a life that was glorifying to God! If you turn to the next page of your Bible, you will see the book of Acts. This book records all of the great things that God accomplished through Peter in the early church before he was martyred for his faith.

**John 21:20-22:** After Jesus is done with Peter, Peter seems to get his eyes off of Jesus and onto John. “What about him?”, he asks.

Q: Isn’t that like us too? How often do you get instructions from your Mom or Dad and the first thing you say is, “What about brother or sister”? \*

Jesus says “None of your business!” YOU FOLLOW ME!

**Key Point:** And Jesus says the same thing to us: YOU FOLLOW ME! Here we are a week after celebrating and remembering Jesus's death and resurrection for our sins. If this really happened, how can we possibly be satisfied to pursue only ORDINARY activities as if His resurrection didn't matter?

Do YOU really love Him? Does Jesus really matter to you more than Mario, or gymnastics, or whatever ordinary things you are into? If so, then FOLLOW HIM!

**Read John 14:15.** Jesus says that if you love Him, you will keep His commandments.

Q: How can you follow Jesus today after you leave church? (Some ideas)

- 1) Spend time reading John 21 yourself and thinking/praying about it.
- 2) Tell your parents/guardians you want to discuss the "Bring It Home" with them.
- 3) Spend time in prayer for people you care about.
- 4) Help your family by doing chores you normally don't do.
- 5) Shock your brother and sister with an act of kindness.

Q: How can you follow Jesus this week at school? (Some ideas)

- 1) Make a new friend by reaching out to someone new at school.
- 2) Invite someone at school to come to church.
- 3) Be kind to the kid that doesn't seem to have any friends.
- 4) Ask someone what they believe about Jesus.
- 5) Be respectful of your teachers even when you might be pressured to do otherwise.

Kids: You don't do these to earn Jesus's love. No, you come to Him just as you are (remember Peter!). Rather, you do these BECAUSE He loves you, BECAUSE He died for your sins and rose again, and BECAUSE you want to show Him that you love Him!

# BRING IT HOME

Read John 20:27-28

How do you think Thomas's life changed after this?

Parent Signature:  
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Parent Challenge:

What does it look like for you to follow Jesus?

Read John 21:15-19

How would Jesus have you show that you love Him this week?

