

RUSSELL SANDERS

1-9-2024

A PURPOSE

After Jesus' resurrection, He showed himself to the apostles twice as they hid themselves behind closed doors. He breathed upon them and told them to receive the Holy Spirit. Even so, he gave them no specific direction as to what they should be doing thereafter.

With no given purpose, they resorted to what was familiar to them. Seven of them went fishing at their old fishing grounds on the Sea of Galilee. (John 21:1-2.)

Jesus then showed himself a third time while they were fishing. (John 21:3-17.) He spoke to them from the shore. They had not caught any fish. He told them to cast their nets again, which they did, and they caught 153 fish. As they brought the fish to shore, they discovered that Jesus had already prepared fish and bread for them.

While they were still in the boat, only John recognized it was Jesus. Once on land, they all became aware who He was, but apparently not by his physical appearance which had been marred from the crucifixion. They knew Him in Spirit. He told them in verse 12, ***"Come and dine."***

After sharing the meal, Jesus asked Peter if he loved Him. Jesus told Peter to feed His sheep. As the other six witnessed the conversation, they seemed to realize that this instruction was for all of them. Jesus chose Peter to be the lead apostle, but they were all to help feed the Master's sheep.

Now they had a purpose. In the coming days leading to Pentecost, Jesus would expand that commission. He told them they were to go forth to all the lands and spread the gospel and feed His sheep.

That commission still applies to us today, not just to the apostles. Let us all do our part to build the kingdom of God (of Christ).