

Prayer and Study Guide

Daily Scripture Readings – 5/5/19

Monday – Read Luke 22:31-34, 54-62 and John 13:36-38; 18:15-18, 25-27. **Peter's Failure.** *"Lord, I am ready to go with you to prison and to death!"* Peter proclaimed at the Last Supper, but when Jesus was arrested, Peter followed at a distance. And when a servant girl and two others claimed that Peter was one of Jesus' disciples, three times he denied even knowing Jesus. *At that moment, while he was still speaking, the cock crowed. ⁶¹ The Lord turned and looked at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said to him, "Before the cock crows today, you will deny me three times." ⁶² And he went out and wept bitterly.* This was the low point of Peter's life and his greatest failure. When have you denied knowing Jesus and not wanted to be known as one of his disciples? Spend some time confessing your sins to Jesus, and know that he will forgive you and lift you up.

Tuesday – Read John 21:1-3. **Returning to the Old Life.** Two times, Jesus appeared to these disciples after he was raised from the dead, but they still returned to their old lives as fishermen. So, Simon Peter, Thomas, Nathanael, James, John, and two other disciples went fishing, but that night they caught nothing. In those moments in our lives when we can no longer sense Jesus' presence with us and when we can no longer hear his voice in our ears, we may be tempted to return to the old life. We lose our sense of purpose and mission. We abandon the call to ministry, and we experience fruitlessness. In these times, we find some comfort in being with our brothers and sisters in Christ. It can help to know that you are not alone. Spend some time praying for the people in your Sunday school class or small group. If you are not part of a small group, consider attending one of our small groups.

Wednesday – Read Luke 5:1-11 and John 21:4-8. **It is the Lord!** *Just after daybreak, Jesus stood on the beach.* When we have caught nothing all night, when we have felt alone in the darkness, Jesus, the Light of the world, comes to us and leads us back into his abundance. When John, the beloved disciple, saw the abundant catch of fish, he recognized that the stranger on the beach was Jesus, and he said, *"It is the Lord!"* At that moment, Simon Peter was caught between his desire to greet Jesus with proper respect and his eagerness to greet him immediately, so he put on his clothes and jumped into the sea. Think of a time when you experienced Jesus' presence in your life. It may have been in a worship service, on a mission trip, or at a church camp. Spend some time in prayer thanking Jesus that he is *Emmanuel, God with us*, and ask Jesus to draw close to you today.

Thursday – Read John 2:1-11; 6:1-14; 21:9-14 - **Come and Have Breakfast.** ¹² *Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast."* It was the same meal, fish and bread, that Jesus had offered them when he fed the five thousand. Jesus is the giver of gifts and the source of life-sustaining nourishment. Just as he did when he turned water into wine and when he fed the five thousand, Jesus has provided for his disciples abundantly. With 153 large fish, there is more than enough. And just as he had done so many times before, Jesus took the bread, blessed it, broke it, and gave it to his disciples. The disciples recognized Jesus both in the abundant catch and in his hospitality at this breakfast on the beach. We see Jesus with us when we share the peace of Christ in worship and when we gather around the Lord's table to share in Holy Communion. Where do you see Jesus in your life, in our church, and in our community? As you pray, thank Jesus for his abundant blessings.

Friday – Read John 13:34-35; 21:15-19. **Do You Love Jesus?** Peter had denied knowing Jesus three times, so Jesus asks he three times, *"Simon son of John, do you love me?"* Each time, Peter responds, *"Yes, Lord; you know that I love you."* And each time, Jesus tells him, *"Feed my sheep."* In this conversation, Jesus is lifting Simon Peter up from his failure and recommissioning him to be a shepherd, a pastor, for Jesus' flock, his followers. Jesus is reminding Peter of his commandment, ³⁴ *I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. ³⁵ By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."* Jesus calls Peter to put his love for Jesus into practice by feeding and tending his sheep. Then Jesus simply said, *"Follow me."* Ask Jesus to help you follow him and minister to his people.

Saturday – Read John 20:30-31; 21:18-25. **Follow Me!** Jesus tells Peter that he will die a martyr's death to give glory to God. ²⁰ *Peter turned and saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following them. ²¹ When Peter saw him, he said to Jesus, "Lord, what about him?"* Jesus tells Peter to mind his own business and commands him, *"Follow me!"* In following Jesus, Peter would fulfill his statement at the Last Supper that he was willing to go to prison and to death for Jesus. Peter would be crucified upside down to give glory to God. John would give glory to God by writing the Gospel *so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of the Living God, and that through believing you may find life in his name.*

Lectionary Readings: Acts 9:1-20; Psalm 30; Revelation 5:11-14; John 21:1-19.

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