

THERE YOU WILL SEE HIM

Lessons: Mark 16:1-20; John 21:1-14

When the Lord was on earth He told His disciples many things about Himself. Among the things He told them was that men would rise up against Him and try to put Him to death, but that He would rise again on the third day and show Himself to them. But in those last terrible days, when they saw the Lord seized, and brought to trial and condemned on the testimony of false witnesses, and when the mob shouted to Pilate to crucify Him, crucify Him, threatening to riot if He weren't, and when they saw Him crucified with thieves and the crowds jeering at Him, the disciples forgot all that He had told them. All that they still knew was that they loved Him. So when He seemed to die on the cross, they reverently took His body down and buried it in a new sepulcher. This was on Friday, the day before the Sabbath. On the Sabbath itself they had to stay at home; but on the next day, the first day of the week which we call Sunday, very early in the morning, the women went to the sepulcher with spices to be near the Lord and to minister to His body.

When they got to the sepulcher, they found the stone rolled away from the entranceway, and, looking in, they saw that the Lord's body was not there. They also saw angels, and they grew very much afraid. But, as you remember, the angels told them not to be afraid; that the Lord had risen on the third day as He said, and that they were to go and tell the disciples about this. Among the things the angels told the women was to tell the disciples to go to Galilee, and that there the Lord would show Himself to them (Mark 16:7). It is this appearance of the Lord to the disciples in Galilee that our first Lesson from the Word describes, and that is the main subject of this talk.

In the Lesson, as you will remember, it is said this was the third time Jesus showed Himself unto the disciples. By this is meant that it was the third appearance of the Lord to His disciples that is mentioned in the Gospel of John. The Lord appeared after He had risen at other times as well.

The first time He had appeared was to Mary Magdalene just outside the sepulcher. As you may remember, when the angels told the women to go and tell the disciples, most of them went off right away; but Mary lingered behind, and, as she turned to go, she saw the Lord, but mistook Him at first for the keeper of the garden. But when the Lord said her name, she immediately recognized who He really was. We are also told that the Lord appeared to the women on the way. This must have been the second time He appeared to those who loved Him. And then later on, on the same day, He appeared and revealed Himself to two disciples who were on their way to the village of Emmaus, and also to Peter, who was probably in Jerusalem. These were the third and fourth

appearances of the Lord after He had risen. Then on the evening of that first Easter Sunday, when all the disciples except Thomas Didymus were together in a house, the Lord appeared in the midst of them. This was His fifth appearance; and, you remember, Thomas wouldn't believe what the disciples told him—he just couldn't believe that so wonderful a thing as the Lord's being risen could really be so. A week later, again in a house in Jerusalem, when all the disciples, including Thomas, were gathered together, the Lord appeared to them for the sixth time. It was after this that they made their way to Galilee where they had been told that they would see the Lord.

They went to that part of Galilee on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee where they had often walked and talked with the Lord, and where they had seen Him heal the sick and perform other miracles. As this part of the Sea of Galilee is near the city of Tiberias, it was often called the Sea of Tiberias.

The disciples who were there were Peter, Thomas, and Nathaniel, John and James whose father was Zebedee, and two other disciples whose names are not given. There were seven in all. Now, in the Word, "seven" is a holy number which means what is whole and complete, especially as to love and good. And so in the Word, "seven" is often used in connection with the Lord and what He does; for the Lord is Love itself, and He is Good itself. And in regard to people, "seven" means a high and pure state of love and good. There being seven disciples mentioned in Galilee means that they were full of love to the Lord and to the neighbor, and wanted only to do good. Now wonder the Lord could appear to them

At Peter's suggestion, all seven of them went fishing. This had been their work before the Lord called them to be His disciples. This was their use and the way they could be helpful to others. Their love was not just a feeling of love—it was an active love that made them want to go out, and do something useful and good. And so while waiting for the Lord, they went out to fish. Now we are taught that "fishermen" in the Word mean those who learn knowledges of good and truth and teach them to others, and that "to fish" is to teach knowledges and truths to others, especially knowledges and truths about the Lord. What a great and wonderful use this is! And again it is no wonder that the Lord appeared in His glorified Human to these seven fishermen who were trying to fish.

But although they fished all the night, they caught no fish. And when morning came, they saw in the dawning light a figure of a man on the shore. But they did not recognize that it was the Lord. And when the Lord asked if they had any meat, by which He meant food, they said no. Then the Lord told them to cast their nets on the right side of the ship, which they immediately did. When they acted in obedience to the Lord, instead of just from themselves, that is to say, when they did the Lord's will and not just their own, immediately the net was filled with so many fish that they couldn't draw it up into the ship. They

knew then that it was the Lord; for they knew only the Lord could do so great a miracle. No one had to tell them who it was. And Peter immediately jumped into the sea, so great was his desire to come to the Lord as quickly as he could, while the other disciples came in their little ship, dragging the net of fishes with them to the shore. The Lord told Peter to bring the fish ashore, and he immediately went to draw the net in. Remember that the net had been so full of fish that they couldn't lift it; now at the Lord's bidding they were able to draw the net ashore.

Then, at the Lord's invitation, they ate bread and fish, which the Lord had cooked on a fire He had made and which He shared with them. This eating with the Lord means that they received as their own the goods of love and wisdom from the Lord. This receiving of good from the Lord is what enables us to become like the angels and to perceive heavenly happiness. This, too, is what is meant by the eating of the Holy Supper which is done in remembrance of the Lord.

Now, as it was with the disciples in Galilee, so also can it be with you. If your heart and minds become filled with love to the Lord and to the neighbor, especially with the kind of love that does not let you be satisfied to sit back, but is active and makes you want to learn knowledges of good and truth, especially to learn all you can about the Lord; and if your love makes you want to do good, that is, to do what is useful and helpful to others, you, too, will come to have a vision of the Lord in His glorified Human in your minds from the things you have learned about Him from the Word. And if you do what the Lord bids you, and not just what you want, your efforts to be useful and helpful will be immeasurably successful, and you will not only find great delight in this, but you too will be able to receive as your own the goods of love and wisdom from the Lord.

This is the wonderful meaning and lesson of the story of the Lord's appearing to the seven disciples in Galilee. *Amen.*