

John 21:1-19

The Power of the Risen Christ

Today in the gospel of John we encounter Jesus appearing to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias. Earlier on He had appeared to Mary Magdalene (John 20:11-18). One common thing which we witness when the disciples encountered the risen Christ is the radical positive change in both speech and action-The Power of the Risen Christ.

- In John 18:15-18, Simon Peter became famous for denying Jesus. We told that when Jesus was being tried by the High Priest, it was in the evening and they put on charcoal fire to warm themselves and the young lady identified Peter and told the High Priest, this is one of his disciples! Peter clearly denied, "I am not". But in today's reading, after encountering the risen Christ he is confessing, "You are the Holy one of God"-Power of the Risen Christ.
- In John 20: 25 Jesus appeared to the other disciples in the absence of Thomas. When Thomas came back then they told him we have seen Christ. Thomas said, "Unless I see in his hands the print of the nails and place my finger in the mark of the nails, and place my hand in his side, I will not believe". Today after meeting the risen Christ, Thomas famous for doubting is joining the other disciples in casting the net on the right side of the boat-Power of the Risen Christ.
- Nathanael, an interesting figure mentioned and known only by John (1:46) and not any other evangelist is well known for doubting, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" After meeting the risen Christ, he confessed, "Rabbi you are the Son of God, You are the king of Israel"
- Paul famous for persecuting Christians, today in reading from Acts 9:1-6, for the first time in his disbelief, acknowledged that Jesus was the Lord, "Who are you, Lord?"-Power of the risen Christ.

It is interesting that Jesus is appearing to his disciples while they were back to the sea and fishing again. This is only a few days after the crucifixion of Christ. One would wonder whether they had abandoned the mandate to be fishers of people or else they were simply looking for

food. However, Biblical Social Scientific Critics would interpret the disciple's action of returning to the sea as a normal human reaction in times of confusion. When people do not know what to do, they do what they know, they turn to the most probable comfort and familiar zone hence the disciples were back into the sea.

However, Jesus intervened to ensure that they will not be lost permanently to their old ways. In his intervention, Jesus asked, "Children, have you anything to eat?" Literal translation from Greek would be, "Children, you don't have any fish, do you?" The Greek word used in this passage, "paidia" suggest a familiar relationship. One would not generally call fishermen children without expecting a hostile response.

The disciples said, "We have toiled the whole night and caught nothing" Then Jesus said, "Cast your net on the right side of the boat and you will find something". Although, Biblical Social Scientific Critics, would argue that in Greek culture the right side was considered the lucky side, in this case the emphasizes is not on lucky side but on obedience. First they obeyed and only then were able to see and understand. When faith is dim, acting in faith empowers faith. Their faith was low after the crucifixion but after encountering the risen Christ, they were empowered again-Power of the Risen Christ.

Some of us might have toiled the whole night but with the risen Christ we are made anew, we remain hopeful because Christ has risen. Paul would say it well, "We may be afflicted in every way, but not crushed, perplexed, but not driven to despair, persecuted, but not forsaken, struck down, but not destroyed"-Power of the Risen Christ. Amen.