

# Fruition

by John Follette

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of spiritual understanding and obedience to God over traditional expectations and material desires.*

**Scripture:** Proverbs 3:5, Isaiah 55:8, Matthew 4:18, Matthew 16:23, Luke 5:4, Luke 5:10, John 10:27, John 14:15, John 21:4

**Topics:** "Spiritual Growth", "Obedience To God"

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## Description

John Follette preaches on the story of Jesus instructing the disciples to cast their net on the right side of the ship after a night of catching nothing, highlighting how they were interpreting the Messiah and His Kingdom in materialistic terms rather than spiritual understanding. He emphasizes the need to move beyond traditional religious patterns and past expectations to grasp the higher spiritual purposes of God's Kingdom. Through the disciples' experience of reduction and disappointment, he teaches about the importance of simple obedience, trust, and listening to God's voice for a greater spiritual harvest.

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## Transcript

"But when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore: but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus. Then Jesus saith unto them, Children, have ye any meat? They answered him, No."

"And he said unto them, cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes." John 21:4-6

They had labored all night and caught nothing. After being brought to this condition of reduction, the Lord casually asked, "Do you have any meat?" In order to understand this question, we must consider

the background of this story.

The disciples were interpreting the Messiah and His message purely in materialistic terms. Jesus had told them that His Kingdom was not of this world, but rather, a spiritual realm into which they must be birthed. However, they were unable to hear and understand this, as they had come under the tradition of the elders.

The original intention of the Lord was for the law to be ministered under the power of that truth, until it was imparted to the people with the same value as had been given to Moses. But the Rabbis began to interpret the Law according to the level of their natural thinking, rather than that which was intended when first given. The next generation again reinterpreted it, so they were living under many layers of interpretation.

One nation after another had invaded and depleted Israel. Due to this depletion, the remedy they sought was, "Where is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, has He not promised us a Kingdom?" When John came saying, "Behold, the Kingdom is at hand," their ears responded. But they interpreted the coming of the Messiah on the natural level, and were looking for a King who would drive these nations out and bring prosperity to them.

The mother who brought her two sons to Jesus did not say, "Will You impart the marvelous truth that You have to them?" Rather, her interest was in this Kingdom being established with one of her sons seated on each side of the Throne. When the opportunity came, the disciples argued over who would be the greatest in the Kingdom.

This was so imbedded within them that when Jesus said He would go to Jerusalem, suffer death, and be raised in three days, Peter rebuked Him. This was not because Peter so loved Jesus, but because he was afraid he would lose his place in this Kingdom.

Therefore, Jesus turned to Peter and said, "Get thee behind me Satan." He was not calling Peter the devil, but He was resisting the power of the enemy who would push through even a human personality to destroy the thing God intended.

The disciples were continually expecting Jesus to establish a Kingdom and bring to pass the things they wanted. Therefore, Jesus had to rebuke them because of their lack of insight. They had no

penetration into spiritual understanding and therefore, were unable to enter into the moving of the higher purpose of God concerning His Kingdom.

We are no different. Whenever we are unable to grasp the purpose of a visitation, we interpret it according to a past visitation and then question the Lord as to what He is doing, since it does not fit our expectations.

If we are living under certain traditional religious patterns, we will never piece together true spiritual values. Very often, when the Lord cannot penetrate our spirit, He will reach us through material means. He may allow a reduction such as this to arouse us to our true need, which is spiritual.

This happens when we experience a severe disappointment concerning something we had prayed about for years, and then discovered that it was not for us. While in the depth of our disappointment, the Lord will tell us to take a step of faith that He might take us beyond these things into something of spiritual value, which will be a spiritual substitute for the thing we thought we must have, or we would die. We must realize that the Lord has something far better for us.

Once we begin to understand and accept this, the Lord may seemingly leave us, waiting for the old to fully die. When our faith is unable to bridge this chasm, we will revert back to our old natural position, to the thing with which we are familiar.

Thus, Peter went back to his fishing profession. Of course, the enemy had a boat ready and waiting. The Word tells us that there was a boat there, immediately. We little realize how many we influence during our time of doubt. When Peter announced that he was going back to his fishing profession, the others said, "we will go with you." For those of us who walk with the Lord, we must be careful during our times of doubt that we do not wrongly influence others.

Peter is now in disobedience because his faith would not carry him. He could have rationalized this by saying, "I am in the will of the Lord because He has provided a boat and my friends are with me." But all the boats in the world could not correct his disobedience or lack of faith. Rather, this was a substitute for the will of God.

Peter then fished all night. It is always night when we are in disobedience. When we persist in holding to our own ways, we prolong the darkness concerning our understanding of His higher purpose.

Peter tried all the skills that he had learned over many years of fishing, but caught nothing, not realizing that the Lord was patiently waiting at the shore for the light of day to come. When they finally came back, defeated, He asked, "Did you catch any fish?"

Jesus was not asking for information, for He knew their condition. This reveals a spiritual principle. A question asked provokes an answer. The answer then becomes a platform upon which Divine intervention and activity takes place, which will bring the necessary correction.

Notice that Jesus did not rebuke them. That would have driven them further from Him. Rather, He simply asked if their disobedience had produced anything. He is saying, "you have had your fling in self will, because you could not wait until the Holy Spirit has been poured out upon you, and understanding given to you." Now, are you ready to do it my way?"

The Lord is waiting for us to acknowledge, "I have tried my own ways, but they did not work. Now, I am ready to listen."

In response the Lord will tell us to "cast our net on the right side of the ship." All He is asking is simple obedience and trust. He is not requiring a drastic change in our environment, or some great thing, but only a simple act of obedience - right where we presently are.

We are to carefully listen to His voice, and not interpret what we hear according to our present circumstances or understanding. He has something far greater for us, if we can get beyond our self-imposed limitations.

Only then will we be able to let down our nets and bring in the harvest that He intends.

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