

SERMON FOR MAY 1, 2022

TEXT: JOHN 21: 1-19

THEME: WHEN THE RUBBER HITS THE ROAD

When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” He said to him, “Feed my lambs.” **16** He said to him a second time, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” He said to him, “Tend my sheep.” **17** He said to him the third time, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?” Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, “Do you love me?” and he said to him, “Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Feed my sheep. **18** Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were young, you used to dress yourself and walk wherever you wanted, but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will dress you and carry you where you do not want to go.” **19** (This he said to show by what kind of death he was to glorify God.) And after saying this he said to him, “Follow me.”

In the name of Jesus:

As you know I am still recovering from foot surgery to fix a broken bone. On the day of my surgery, I was taken to the hospital where I was placed in the observation unit for an overnight stay. During my stay, I had a pastoral visit from Pastor Raddatz from Emanuel. During his visit, we reflected upon the recovery process, and Pastor Raddatz shared some godly wisdom with me, that it is in these times where we put our faith into action. For years as a pastor we spend our time helping people when they have trials and tribulations, and now, as I lay in the hospital bed, Pastor Raddatz reminded me

that it is in these times where pastors need to put into practice what they preach to their people. As I thought about our conversation, I realized that this was a time when the rubber hits the road, so to speak, where faith is put into practice.

Such was the case for the disciples. They are now some days out from the first Easter. They went to the cemetery and saw the empty tomb. They had visits from Jesus behind locked doors not once but twice. In the midst of this whirlwind of activity, now we find the disciples, at least some of them, Peter, James, and John, the fishermen, out in the water casting their nets. Even after the resurrection, they went about doing what they normally do, they went about their jobs, doing their jobs, all the while trying to process what the resurrection of Jesus was all about. They were trying to put the pieces together, trying to figure it all out, it was a rubber hitting the road type of moment.

Jesus appears to them on the shore and fixes them breakfast. They rush to meet Jesus once again, and after breakfast Jesus takes Peter aside, forgiving him, restoring him, and then telling him to feed His, Jesus' sheep. It is here where Peter and then the others are able to begin to process the meaning and implication of the resurrection for their lives going forward. In the midst of

their daily activities, they were to go and feed the flock, they were to tell others about Jesus.

Here we are still in the afterglow of Easter. Even though we are in the Easter season, the day of Easter is now two weeks past. So now, for you, the question is what does Easter have to do with you, now, in your life, as you go about living your life day after day? What does Easter and the resurrection of Jesus have to do with your job, your daily activities, your friendships, your interactions with others?

For each of us, the question is how does the rubber hit the road? How does the resurrection of Jesus apply to us today, in our lives? It is as the Apostle Paul says, if there is no resurrection from the grave, then we are to be pitied more than anyone else. The resurrection does matter! We have new life in Christ, our eternity is assured, we are God's children now and forever, we will not taste eternal death but live in a glorified body with the Lord, and today, we are God's new creations in Christ.

So what does that look like in your life? How has the resurrection of Jesus changed your relationships with family, friends, and neighbors? What does it mean to live for Jesus today? How can you do that in your job, in your hobby, in times of work and times of play?

If Jesus has risen from the grave, and He has, then our world and our lives in the world has changed. Our Redeemer, Jesus, lives. He rules over all things. He saves us from sin, Satan, and death. He reigns today and seeks to live in and through you in your life. So how does the resurrection change things for you? How can Jesus use you in His kingdom? When you can answer that, then you will know that the rubber has hit the road.

Amen