

The Sovereign God Provides for His People

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[0 : 00] Let's turn in our Bibles then to John chapter 21. The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the revealed things belong to us and to our children forever.

These are some of the revealed things that are for us. John 21, and we'll read the first 14 verses. Jesus has just appeared the second time to the 11, this time with Thomas present.

And now we read, Afterward, Jesus appeared again to his disciples by the Sea of Tiberias. It happened this way. Simon Peter, Thomas called Didymus, Nathaniel from Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two other disciples were together.

I'm going out to fish, Simon Peter told them. And they said, We'll go with you. So they went out and got into the boat. But that night they caught nothing.

Early in the morning, Jesus stood on the shore, but the disciples did not realize that it was Jesus. He called out to them, Friends, haven't you any fish?

[1 : 14] No, they answered. He said, Throw your net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some. When they did, they were unable to haul the net in because of the large number of fish.

Then the disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, It is the Lord. As soon as Simon Peter heard him say, It is the Lord, he wrapped his outer garment around him, for he had taken it off, and jumped into the water.

The other disciples followed in the boat, towing the net full of fish, for they were not far from shore, about a hundred yards. When they landed, they saw a fire of burning coals there with fish on it, and some bread.

Jesus said to them, Bring some of the fish you have just caught. Simon Peter climbed aboard and dragged the net ashore. It was full of large fish, 153.

But even with so many, the net was not torn. Jesus said to them, Come and have breakfast. None of the disciples dared ask him, Who are you?

[2 : 25] They knew it was the Lord. Jesus came, took the bread, and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. This was now the third time Jesus appeared to his disciples, after he was raised from the dead.

Come, brother. Preach God's word to us. Well, it's good to be back with you again. Not too long after the last time I was here, just about a month, and we're picking up right where we left off in John's gospel.

Don't worry, I'm not going to try to preach a series on the gospel of John at your church. But there's some things here, and I really have a very simple message tonight from this rather interesting story of Jesus encountering his disciples here at the close of his time on the earth, and that is the sovereign God provides for his people.

Now, we'll see some other things along the way as we go, but I want you to be comforted and encouraged tonight. Last time we saw Doubting Thomas and Jesus bending and stooping to accommodate his weak faith and to strengthen that faith.

And I'm very encouraged to tell you that later, in chapter 21 then, that we just read, Thomas is with the other disciples still.

[3 : 45] His faith was strengthened. He was encouraged. And Jesus did pull him back from the edge of that weak, faltering faith. And here he is with the other disciples.

And so the work of the Savior in Thomas's life has had its desired effect. And now he's going to spend a very interesting morning on the beach with a few other of his disciples.

And so Jesus is there. They're now in the north, and we want to think about these verses that Pastor John has just read.

Two headings to put our thoughts under today. One, a failed fishing trip. And two, a sovereign, sweet Savior. Right? So we're going to start with a failed fishing trip.

Jesus, after his resurrection that we've just sung of tonight, after that resurrection, would appear to his disciples at different times. And verse 14 tells us that this was the third time that Jesus had revealed himself to his disciples.

[4 : 48] Verse 1 tells us that's what he's doing, revealed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias. And verse 14 tells us that it was the third time. There were other post-resurrection appearances of Jesus besides the three that are referred to here.

But this seems to be talking about three appearances to the disciples or to portions of the disciples. Because Thomas wasn't there the first time. And this time, only seven of them are identified as being present.

But three appearances to the disciples. Two of them had happened down in the south, in Jerusalem. Down where Jesus had been crucified and rose from the dead. And he met with them that night behind closed doors.

The night of the day that he rose from the dead. Then a week later, again, behind closed doors, he meets with his disciples there in Jerusalem. But now you notice they're up by the Sea of Tiberias.

Now that's just another name for the Sea of Galilee. So they are back in the north. John has focused his attention on the post-resurrection appearances of Jesus on the south.

[5 : 52] But now he shifts up to Galilee. Why are they in Galilee? Well, listen to Matthew. Matthew doesn't give any time to his appearances down in Judea except right after he rises from the dead.

But listen to what Matthew says. It's Matthew 28, verse 10. Then Jesus said to them, to the women that he appeared to right after he rose from the dead. Then Jesus said to them, do not be afraid.

Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee. And there they will see me. In verse 16. Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them.

And that's where Jesus gives them the Great Commission. But perhaps just before the Great Commission, we don't know exactly when this event happened along the shore of the Sea of Galilee with this miraculous catch of fish.

But maybe it's before he gives the Great Commission. They've gone from Jerusalem in the south back up to Galilee in the north where they lived. And Jesus appears to them along the shore.

[6 : 53] The disciples who are present are listed there in verse 2. Interesting list. Seven of the eleven are present. We could speculate all day about those that aren't specifically named. And we could guess who was there and who wasn't and which four were missing and why they were missing.

And I don't know. It would all be guessing because we just don't know. So seven of them are there. We don't even know. Some of them aren't named.

Two others of his disciples. The ones who are of Zebedee, of course, are James and John. And then there's Peter and Thomas and Nathaniel and two others. We don't know where the other four are.

Regardless, Peter has an idea. In verse 3, I'm leaving to go fish, he says. Why does Peter want to go fishing? Now some people think Peter has given up.

They think that Peter is depressed. He's betrayed his Lord. Or not betrayed him. He's denied his Lord. And they think Peter is depressed and he's given up on the mission.

[7 : 54] He's like, I'm going to go back to fishing. The fishing for men thing is not for me and I'm going to go back to my former occupation. I don't think that's what's going on here. I don't think he's rebelling against Jesus' call and his commission on his life.

They're still waiting. Jesus has said, wait until you receive power from on high before you go out and preach the gospel. They still haven't received that gift of the spirit that they'll receive on the day of Pentecost.

And so it's not time yet to be out and about preaching the gospel. So I don't think Peter is rebelling. They've gone back to Galilee as Jesus directed them. Galilee is their home.

It's there that they left behind their fishing boats and followed Jesus. So while they're waiting for Jesus, why not fish? At least that's how Peter and Andrew and James and John had made their living before.

Maybe they need some money. They've just made a big trip down to Jerusalem for Passover and come back. Maybe they're anticipating needs that they're going to have as they go about preaching the gospel and this was the way they made their living and maybe they need to make some money.

[8 : 57] That could be. That's actually, that may sound sort of crass and very non-spiritual, but that may well be why they went out fishing.

Maybe they're just looking for something to do with their time while they wait. Maybe it's just on a whim without too much thought at all. It is Peter after all. Go fish! And so off they go.

We don't know why they went, but these seven get in the boat and go out probably all night and seasoned fishermen, though they might have been a little rusty after three years off, they catch nothing in verse three.

That, friends, is not a fun night. You go out all night, you're hoping for something and you catch nothing and you've worked hard and now you're tired and you've got zero to show for.

And so you have a failed fishing trip on the Sea of Galilee, but that's not all we have. There's a man on the shore. We know that that man is Jesus. The disciples don't know that yet.

[10 : 02] And in Jesus' post-resurrection appearances, he seems to be carefully equipping his disciples and the early church with everything they will need to see that young church established.

Jesus seems very intentional. In his post-resurrection appearances, he doesn't have a lot of time left on the earth and he spends that time in very particular ways with his disciples.

We've seen them, or just last time we saw him come and strengthen the faith of Thomas and others who were there as well. He's focused in what he's doing. So how does this appearance do that?

How does it equip these disciples for what they will face as they go out to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ to the world? Well, let's think secondly then about this sovereign and sweet Savior Jesus.

All right, you've got a failed fishing trip and now a sovereign, sweet Savior. Who is the man on the shore? We know, but they don't. He's there in verse 4.

[10:57] Just as day was breaking, early in the morning, Jesus stood on the shore. Yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. We don't know if they're hindered from identifying him or if a hundred yards is too far to make a positive ID early in the morning and maybe a little mist or fog and they can see somebody's there but they can't tell who it is.

Or if they're kept from seeing who he is. Like the disciples on the road to Emmaus or perhaps Mary Magdalene when she sees Jesus right after he's risen from the dead and thinks he's the gardener and there's other reasons she may have thought that.

We don't know if they're being hindered from seeing or if they just don't have enough light yet to make it out. And apparently they don't at least initially recognize his voice either. And so in verse 5 Jesus asks a question that exposes their need.

Children, lads, guys, do you not have any fish to eat? I think Jesus knew they didn't have any fish. That's my guess.

He's God. He knows everything. I think Jesus knows they don't have fish but the question opens the door to show them mercy and to remind them of their dependence on him. They simply reply, no.

[12:10] If they don't know who the guy on the shore is like, what business isn't of yours? Like, okay, we, yeah, we had a bad fishing night. We don't need you pointing it out for us. No. We have no fish.

And they've been reminded of their lack, their want, their failure, their need. Jesus doesn't leave them there. He gives them a command. He says, cast the net on the right side of the boat and you will find.

And it seems they still don't recognize him. That comes in a moment but by this time bells should have been going off. Alarms should have been going off in their mind. This is Jesus. Why do I say that?

Well, keep your place there in John 21 and come with me to Luke chapter 5 for a moment. Early in Jesus' ministry, three years earlier, part of calling his disciples involved a miraculous catch of fish.

And I want to read about it in Luke's Gospel, chapter 5, verses 1 through 11. All right, Luke 5, beginning at verse 1. On one occasion, while the crowd was pressing in on him to hear the word of God, he was standing by the lake of Gennesaret.

[13:17] That's another name for the Sea of Galilee. So you've got Sea of Tiberias, Lake of Gennesaret, yeah, Sea of Galilee, another name, same body of water. He was standing by the lake of Gennesaret and he saw two boats by the lake, but the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets.

Getting into one of the boats, which was Simon's, he asked him to put out a little from the land and he sat down and taught the people from the boat. And when he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch.

And Simon answered, Master, we toiled all night and took nothing, but at your word I will let down the nets. And when they had done this, they enclosed a large number of fish and their nets were breaking.

They signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them and they came and filled both the boats so that they began to sink. But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees saying, Depart from me for I am a sinful man, O Lord, for he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish that they had taken.

And so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon and Jesus said to Simon, Do not be afraid. From now on you will be catching men. And when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed him.

[14 : 33] So here, early in Jesus' ministry, you can come back to John 21 now. I just want to show you why there should have been some red flags, some alarm bells, some indicators going, I wonder if that's Jesus on the shore when he says to them, Cast your nets over on the right side of the boat.

Now there's some similarities between Luke 5 and John 21 and some differences between these two events. But shouldn't the command to cast the net after a fruitless night of fishing have caught their attention?

Cast and you will find. Sounds like something else Jesus has said. Seek and you will find. Cast and you will find.

Seems like maybe they should have been thinking it's Jesus. And maybe they are thinking of that event. Hey, remember that time Jesus told us to do that and we started breaking our nets there were so many fish?

Wouldn't that be funny if that happened again? And don't think that the guy on the shore is Jesus. Maybe that's possible. But they do as he says. Maybe it's common for fishermen to suggest such things to other fishermen as they might today.

[15 : 40] One of the commentators suggested that. You ever been fishing and have somebody say, why don't you try casting over there? And you're like, I don't know where I'm doing. Just leave me alone. Well, try casting over there. Maybe this guy's got some local knowledge.

Maybe they are rusty after three years. And so, okay. If they're not thinking it's Jesus, maybe there's a reason to listen to this guy. And so, whatever the reason, they comply.

They cast the net and there is a great catch of fish. As they cast it, they find they don't have the strength to drag the net presumably up into the boat with them because of the multitude of fish now in the net.

Verse 6. How great of a catch? Well, after Peter hauls the net onto land, they count. In verse 11, there's 153 big fish.

It has the mark of an eyewitness account. Doesn't it? Right down to the details. Why did they count the fish? I don't know why they counted the fish. Maybe they wanted to divide them up if they were out there to make money that night.

[16 : 37] Maybe they wanted to sell them and we're just going to have a certain amount to sell. Maybe they're kind of like you and me, like, that's a lot of fish. How many did we get it? I don't know. Let's go. So they count the fish and there's 153 of them.

Big ones. Fish in this net that they've just dragged up on shore. What a catch of fish. And despite the huge number of fish the net holds. In the earlier miracle catch in Luke 5 that we just read, the nets were breaking.

The boats were sinking under the weight. Here, the net not breaking may be as miraculous as the catch of fish itself. And yes, the catches of fish are miraculous.

God can direct one big fish like with Jonah or he can direct a school of fish to just the right place at just the right time for his purposes.

He is sovereign over the minutest details of our lives and the whole universe including the fish in the sea. Well, something finally clicks with John.

[17 : 41] The disciple whom Jesus loved. We believe that's John verse 7. And he says to Peter, it is the Lord. Did the others not realize yet? Now, surely the alarm bell should have been going off.

He got this miraculous catch of fish. It must be Jesus. John gets it at least. Tells Peter, it's the Lord. And Peter, who is in some state of undress for work, ties his outer garment around him, either puts it back on or girds it around him in such a way that he can get through the water to get to the sea.

He throws himself into the sea to go to Jesus. And if you're at all familiar with the Gospels and Peter, nothing about that should surprise you. Peter, the impetuous one.

It's not the first time he's gotten out of the boat for his Savior, even. And off he goes. The others follow in the boat, verse 8, dragging the net full of fish with them.

Can you imagine? We're so familiar with these stories. We recognize them. We know them. A miraculous catch of fish doesn't really faze us. Pastor John read it earlier and you didn't drop your jaw and go, what?

[18 : 51] Because you know it. You're familiar with it. Imagine being on the shore there that day. You're there. Maybe you're going to do a little fishing yourself. You're just taking a walk on the beach in the morning. And imagine watching this scene unfold.

There's a guy on the shore and there's some guys in a boat and the guy on the shore is yelling to the guys in the boat. You got any fish to eat? Nope. Try the right side of the boat. And they do and all of a sudden you see these guys and you're looking and they're struggling to pull this net in and they're fighting with it.

And then a guy goes jumping out of the boat, splashing towards shore. And along come the other guy. And you're sitting there watching all of this unfold. What in the world just happened?

What did just happen? The God of the universe has just provided for his poor floundering disciples.

John realized again it was the Lord who had done this and I think we would do well to realize the hand of God and his provision in our lives. This is a particularly striking instance of that provision.

[20 : 03] The disciples had nothing until at the word of Jesus they had an abundance in their net. Calvin pointed out how our efforts may come to nothing.

They fish all night and they've got nothing and then God out of the blue from somewhere else provides exactly what they need. And how that should lead us to praise.

Our efforts may come to nothing so it might be all the more obvious that our provision comes from God and lead us to thank and to praise him. Now typically we work we get paid and we're able to provide.

And if we're looking at that scenario rightly God gives us the work the ability to work the disposition of the employer to pay us and he has provided things that we are able to buy with him. He's got grocery stores stocked with food for us we're able to go and buy and that all provision that comes from God and he's got water flowing to our house and dirty water flowing away from our house and electrical lines come to our house that God has provided all of that that we're able to use our money on in order to provide for our families.

We work and we provide and yes all of that we think comes from God but that's pretty ordinary to our way of thinking. But in those ordinary ways of provision do we often fail to see the hand of God?

[21 : 26] How often do you thank God for your food before a meal without really stopping to acknowledge everything that that involved and appreciating it and you're thanking God for providing it but he was the one who gave you the work and the ability to work and the income and the things that you're able to buy with that food like the food on your table he provided all of them we just say thank you Lord for our food amen let's eat and we really thought that that provision is just as much from God as those 153 fish in the net just as much from him we look at those 153 fish in the net we go ah that's a God provided us a miracle the food that you're going to eat when you go home when you're done here just as much a provision from God as these fish were we would have nothing were it not for God's provision friends I think our trust is often misplaced we may give some lip service to God but our trust is often in our physical strength our wisdom our capacity to work our paycheck our bank account and so on and when those things are removed too often our peace goes right away with them and is replaced with worry but if we're seeing it rightly all of our provision comes from

God sometimes as here it becomes abundantly evident that it was from God boom that's from God but it's true all of the time sometimes we can't help but see it and here's one of those times when I was little I mean like little our family didn't have a lot like financially and we would literally sometimes pray for food or money and a box of groceries would show up on the door that's obvious but the food that's on our table every night is just as much a provision from God maybe you've experienced something remarkable like that in your life 153 fish where there was nothing a moment before maybe the provision that you've experienced seems more ordinary friends all of it is from

God all of it should cause us to praise him and it should make those prayers before our meals genuine expressions of gratitude and total dependence on him and maybe we should pray some other times too maybe not just before we eat maybe we should pray when we get in our car and say thank you Lord for the transportation that you've given me and when we get dressed in the morning thank you Lord for providing clothes on my back and when we go to bed at night thank you Lord for tonight anyway heat in my house and a warm bed or air conditioning when it's hot outside thank you Lord for providing that and when we walk in the door to our house thank you Lord for shelter over my head and when we walk into the church thank you Lord for the body of Christ and the family that you have given to me acknowledging his provision not just before we sit down to eat but at every turn because he is the one who provides it's what Jesus is talking about in the sermon on the mount not worrying about what we'll eat or drink or where as God provides for the birds and the fields he's not going to fail to provide for his much more valuable creature man let's pray that we don't have to wait for a miraculous provision from God in order to be thankful and open our eyes to the more ordinary everyday provision he makes for us and before we move on to talk about Jesus fixing breakfast for them and eating together just notice again God's absolutely sovereign control over absolutely everything absolutely all of the time he put this school of fish there just at the right moment and that complete sovereignty is what allows us to trust

God fully for our provision listen God controls the supply chains you've probably heard a lot about supply chains lately now they're broken bottleneck guess who's in control of not just the food on the shelf the grocery on your table the supply chains God is he's on the throne listen if God isn't sovereign he's not trustworthy but he is sovereign and he's good and he's wise and so we can trust him whether it's a miraculous provision or an ordinary one the Lord will provide so even when we have a failed fishing trip the bank account is really low and even when the stores at the shelves at the grocery store are partially empty and prices are going up we can still trust the sovereign savior God is not dependent on the supply chains he's sovereign over them and if he can put 153 fish in the nets of the disciples he can put food on your table see how important that would be for the fledgling early church that these disciples are about to found to be reminded that in every circumstance the sovereign

God is going to be faithful to provide for his church I think Jesus again is being very intentional in all of these appearances to his disciples he's the one that's sovereign he's the one that's going to provide and they need to look to him to provide well there on the shore there is a meal prepared for them again another example of faithful provision you find that in verses 9 through 12 they arrive at shore there's a fire going with bread and fish on it so tangible and ordinary but it shows us I think a few things further demonstration of that faithful physical provision for these men who would be hungry after a hard night of work he's not just sovereign he's good he's kind he cares for their physical needs he cares about these men that have been out all night and he's not just going to say well there's your fish see ya I've got some already going on the fire why don't you bring some of what you caught and we'll have a meal together he's good he's kind savior it's a reminder this is this is sort of a little side note but this is the post resurrection

[28 : 01] Jesus here and it's a good reminder that the resurrected Jesus had a real physical body after the resurrection his first appearance to them his first of the three that John references here his first of the three was the night of the day he rose from the dead and that night Jesus asked them for something to eat Luke 24 41 to 43 and while they still disbelieved for joy and were marveling this is the night of the day of his resurrection he said to them have you anything here to eat and they gave him a piece of broiled fish and he took it and ate before them and now here on the beach he's got fish prepared for them and we're not told here that Jesus eats but it would be likely that Jesus then ate with them there on the shoreline so later listen to what Peter is able to say Acts 10 verses 40 and 41 but God raised him Jesus on the third day and made him to appear not to all the people but to us who had been chosen by God as witnesses who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead who eating and drinking with the risen Christ becomes part of their witness to the resurrection so again that's just sort of a little side note here but Jesus got a meal prepared and they sit down and eat with Jesus and that's part of their testimony to the real physical resurrection of Jesus from the dead well

Jesus in verse 10 invites them to bring some of the fish they caught that's it's almost funny verse 10 Jesus said to them bring some of the fish that you have just caught all right they didn't catch any fish okay like they gone all night didn't catch anything and Jesus could have said bring some of those fish that I put in your net for you but Jesus isn't that way Jesus doesn't rub their noses in it he says bring some of the fish you caught you caught them because I gave them to you but I suppose technically they did catch them it was their net they let it down they hauled it ashore so bring some of those fish to add to the meal that they'll have together Peter verse 11 hauls that net ashore Jesus invites them to come and eat verse 12 and it's almost as though they don't quite know how to respond to the Lord they know it's him so they don't dare ask verse 12 Jesus said to them come and have breakfast now none of the disciples dared ask him who are you they knew it was the Lord at least now they know maybe they don't fully yet understand what's happening maybe they want to ask more how did you get here what are you feeding why are you feeding us what are you doing where did the fish come from when are we going to start our mission they know it's him now and whether it's his voice or the miraculous catch of fish whether it the net or the net not breaking or his appearance and the provision of bread and fish beside the sea of galilee had Jesus ever provided bread and fish beside the sea of galilee before yeah for five thousand people same savior before his resurrection and after his resurrection caring for the physical needs of people we care for that that crowd that had gathered around him and he doesn't want to send them on their way faint fainting on the way because he said you give them something to eat five loaves and two fish and Jesus multiplies this miracle meal beside the sea of galilee and now he's provided another miracle fish beside the sea of galilee it must be they know it's him so they don't dare ask until he takes the bread and he gives it to them likewise with the fish verse 13 he's still caring for the physical needs of his disciples our savior is a complete savior he doesn't neglect the body for the sake of the soul of course our never dying souls are crucial but Jesus doesn't neglect the body he cares for the physical needs of his disciples feeds him and neither should we neglect to care for the physical needs of those who are around us and even our own physical needs that we have that we might be better fit for service in his kingdom you see our savior sovereign he directed those fish and he's sweet providing for his disciples and I hope that we will be full of thankfulness and praise and trust and service to this king who is absolutely worthy of that trust now I want to mention one other thing about this passage and I can't give it to you as a definitive interpretation but I'll tell you what it looks like and you can see what you think don't forget about everything that we just said God's faithful kind provision for his people but can we learn something more than that here why do I ask well Jesus time on the earth with his disciples is bookended by miraculous catches of fish you read the one in Luke five and you've just seen the other here in John 21 bookended by miraculous catches of fish the first showed them Jesus miraculous power and Peter fell at Jesus knees and and it's sort of like Isaiah's response woe is me I'm a man of unclean lips among unclean people and and uh I don't remember Peter's

exact words but he's it's a similar response like he saw the miracle and he knew that there was something about this man peter said depart from me for i'm a sinful man oh lord so he showed his divine power in that first miracle catch of fish but that's not all we see there the first catch of fish showed that power but also provided a point of comparison to fishing for men as he called them to follow him remember what we read earlier from luke five this luke five part of verse ten and jesus said to simon do not be afraid from now on you will be catching men he's just giving them this catch a fish that was breaking their nets and sinking their boats and he says from now on it's not about the fish you're going to be catching men and this from mark 1 16 to 18 passing along aside the sea of galilee saw simon and andrew the brother of simon casting a net into the sea for they were fishermen and jesus said to them follow me and i will make you become fishers of men at one point bob heaney had us memorize that verse in an evangelism class follow me and i will make you become fishers of men and immediately they left their nets and followed him their occupation of fishing provides that point of comparison for jesus to help his disciples understand their new work not fishing for and catching fish but people in the sense of bringing them to christ and into his kingdom catching them from out of the world and drawing them to christ they were to be fishing for and catching men and what if jesus very intentional in his post resurrection appearances just before he's about to send to heaven and send his disciples out to do what to go fishing for men and to see the church established what if on this second miraculous catch of fish it's not just jesus providing for the disciples and deepening their dependence on him and trust in him but was also giving them the same point of comparison of fishing for men that's their mission that they'll be on shortly for the rest of their days and they're being sent into the world so that men will be saved and drawn into christ's kingdom and he says let's end where we began by the sea reminding you that it's me that does the work of drawing them to myself i'm the one that fills the nets you're going to have to go cast the net but i'm the one that is sovereign and who fills those nets and who brings the people in and doesn't let the net break all who come to me i will certainly not cast out that net can't break in their efforts they will fail but jesus is giving them the holy spirit he's going to direct them where to go where to cast their nets he'll give them the increase he'll infallibly draw his people to himself through the labors of his disciples praise the lord he's given them a mission and he's equipping them for the mission and maybe here he gives them a reminder hearkening back to their earliest days with him a picture of what he's about to do through them fishing for men they're in galloway here and maybe it's not long after this event with a miracle catch of fish on the shore that we read this in matthew 28 18 to 20 and jesus came and said to them all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me go therefore and make disciples of all nations baptizing them in the name of the father and of the son and of the holy spirit teaching them to observe

all that i've commanded you and behold i am with you always to the end of the age now i can't tell you that definitively that interpretation of this text but i can give it to you suggestively and it seems that jesus man echoing that first miracle catch of fish very intentional in his post-resurrection appearances preparing his disciples for his departure maybe he's just giving him that picture again before he sends him out you're going to go fish for men and i'm going to give the increase what a morning on the shore for these disciples in some ways it's terribly ordinary fire with some food for some weary workers prepared by a kind friend in other ways of course it is extraordinary a providentially orchestrated miracle catch of fish that may be a picture of something more of what was to come and friends this sovereign sweet savior remains the same today he hasn't changed he still providentially rules over all of our circumstances faithfully providing for us even when we don't acknowledge that the provision came from him it's still from him he's the one providing for us he's the one filling our nets he cares for and provides for all of our needs and he has the same work for us to be about fishing for men so are you resting in his providential provision or in your own strength do you trust him do you thank him thank him for and marvel at his kindness and provision do you worship when you come in here on on

Sunday to worship with God's people that should be fueled at least in part by God's faithful provision all the week before he's kept me another week he deserves my praise he deserves to be worshiped the Lord will provide are you fishing for men casting the net praying that God will fill it and have you been caught I know that very often from this pulpit the net is cast has grabbed you up yet have you been caught in it and when you see that net do you swim the other way want nothing to do with it I pray that you'll be caught pray that Jesus will send you swimming right into that net and he'll save you and draw you to himself and make you one of his own and God make it so and in him you'll find forgiveness of sins and faithful provision all the way home to God well let's praise him and thank him for who he is what he's done for us as our faithful provider let's pray together father we do thank you for our savior Jesus we thank you for your faithful provision for us that we are not deserving of it we pray that we would never take it for granted but that we would always be genuinely truly thankful for your provision we pray that we would be glad to cast that gospel net out for others to be drawn in and we pray that you would draw others in even tonight we thank you that you're good and that all that you do is good and that we can trust you and that you will not fail us and we pray and thank you in Jesus name amen