

Sunday 11th April

All Age Service

Breakfast By The Sea - John 21:1 – 25

Message

Here's a question: Do you have any regrets?

Some people say to themselves "I don't have any regrets".

"I've got where I am even though I made mistakes so I have no regrets".

That's the response I often hear from A listers and stars in the media when asked do they live with regret.

Often their success justifies the means in their eyes.

Others do have regrets

Paul McCartney said about the Beattles;

"You'd have to say the way the Beatles broke up was a bit untidy, a bit ugly, We were such a great little band, it would've been nice to just continue on.

... The business side really crept in and got a bit sticky. I regret that."

For some people regret is something we have to live with for the rest of our lives. Madeline McCann's Parents Kate & Gerry have often talked about their regrets in the media regarding the disappearance of their little girl.

I certainly have regrets and maybe if we are being honest we all wish some things could have been different.

So we come to Simon Peter, also known as Cephas. How he wept bitterly after denying that he knew Jesus. Not just once, not just twice but 3 times and to add salt to the wound Jesus turned and looked across the courtyard at Peter on that final denial. Peter wept bitterly!

How Peter coped over the next few days with his guilt we will never know but I would have imagined he felt an absolute failure filled with regret! Interestingly in John when Jesus first appears to his disciples, we don't hear much from Peter until this passage in John 21. I think I too would have kept a low profile especially as the person I denied is suddenly alive and well and knows exactly what I've done. Jesus saw the failings of Peter just as God sees the failings in you. It's an uncomfortable place to be in.

So if you feel that you've failed or you've missed the boat here is how Jesus the Son Of God can help;

- A) Jesus meets us where we are at: Where would you find Peter the fisherman? You would find him out fishing of course! Peter was doing what he was taught to do and that is Fish. What's lovely about this encounter is that it's a carbon copy of when Jesus encountered Peter. Read Luke 5: when Jesus asked Peter to let down his net. Peter caught nothing but he followed what Jesus said and ended up catching so many fish the nets began to break! "Go away from me Lord; I am a sinful man!" Jesus said "Don't be afraid; from now on you will catch men." Whether you are in your garden, teaching, being a Mum, shopping, at school, playing football or lying helplessly in a bed, know this; Jesus Christ the risen Lord is with you. Jesus met Peter who had failed him on his own patch. Jesus met Peter as he meets us in our mess and failure. Remember the father didn't wait for the prodigal to return home the father ran to embrace the lost son.
- B) Jesus Feeds us! Have you ever looked into the different ways God has provided for his Children? You have manna from heaven, the feeding of the 5000, birds bringing food to Elijah, a lamb to be sacrificed for Abraham instead of Isaac and here Jesus provides breakfast on the beach for his disciples. Jesus provided the fish to be caught in the first place – all 153, and with what he provided he asks the disciples for some of those fish to be cooked. Christ in his resurrected body was physically eating food with his friends and I bet it tasted very delicious. Did Peter deserve this lovely Israeli breakfast? Probably not, but Jesus cooked it

anyway. How many times has God blessed me even though I don't deserve it. God is gracious he gives us what we don't deserve.

- C) Finally the big part of this amazing story; Jesus restores us and gives us another Chance. In this age of cancel culture Simon Peter would be finished! He's shown he can't do it. If you can't take the heat, you need to get out of the kitchen, as the phrase goes. But Jesus said 3 years earlier Simon Peter You will catch men! Jesus hasn't changed his view or plan Jesus sees and knows who you are and what you will become. What did God say to the scaredy cat Gideon in Judges 6 "The Lord is with you mighty warrior" before Gideon did anything – You can imagine Gideon thinking "this must be some mistake". Sarah laughed when she was told that even though she was in her old age that she would have a child. God has a plan for you and this Church. If you have walked away thinking it's over I've messed up or it's too late then please think again. If God has spoken to you, he is faithful he will bring it to pass. Do you think your failures can thwart God's plan? No way!

Finally Jesus, after a few appearances finally addresses the past. Peter do you love me ? Peter do you love me? Peter do you love me? 3 times Jesus asked this to address the 3 times of denial. Forgiving the mistakes. Do you remember when Peter asked Lord in Matthew 18 how many times should I forgive my brother? Up to 7 times and Jesus responded no not 7 but 77 times. Jesus practises what he preaches.

After Peter's confession of Christ in Matthew 16 where Jesus says to Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church, Jesus asks Peter to feed his sheep 3 times. Take care of my Church Peter! Yes it wasn't Peter's Church but Christ's. Let's bear that in mind with Park Road Baptist Church. This Church belongs to Christ! Since 1653 people have come and gone but the one person that has remained is Jesus.

Let's be encouraged today in knowing that we have a future where Jesus meets you, Jesus provides for you and Jesus restores you.

Amen

