



The 13th Day of Christmas: When the Carols are Finished

John 21.3 and 17

3 Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We will go with you." They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing. 17 "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.

The Point: When the celebration is finished, it is time to get back to work.

The Question: When does the work end?

The twelve days of Christmas. Too long or too short?

What is up with the disciples?

What is Jesus teaching them?

If you don't have direction do, your job/duty

The first rule of discipleship: without Jesus, you can do nothing

Follow his command, and success will follow.

Discipleship is obedience, work, and fruit.

Discipleship means fellowship with the Lord.

The mission: catch fish and feed sheep.

The job ends when the disciple goes home.

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Isn't it interesting that the beginning of the story of Jesus starts at the end of the calendar year? Fitting, I guess. It was the ending of the old era and the time of the gospel. The longest night gives way to more light. Cold turns to warm, and the dormant resurrects.

The traditional twelve days of Christmas start with the birth of Jesus. Then, on the last day, January 5, they remember the Magi coming to present their gifts to the toddler Jesus, and the Lord of life is presented to the gentiles (They bowed prostrate before their new king. Matt 2.11). Some call it the Epiphany. Then, there is a twelfth night party, and everyone goes back to work. January 7 (Distaff Day when women go back to work) and Plough Monday (when the men went back to work.) Well, that's the old tradition. Now, one night and a day and the celebration are over; and that is also okay.

After Jesus' resurrection, the disciple did as he commanded and went back to Galilee. There is no evangelism, no direction, so Peter says he is going fishing, and six disciples follow him. They were not doing wrong; they needed to eat. When a Christian has no clear call, the best they can do is work in their profession as a Christian. Do your duty, and God will guide you.

Jesus has a few lessons to teach them before and after breakfast. "Children, do you have any fish?" "No, and we fished all night. Command: "cast your net on the right side, and you will catch fish." He doesn't come down on them for fishing; he called them from nets to catch men. He hasn't given the Great Commission yet. So whatever you do, do it as a Christian. The Spirit, through the Word, will guide you.

The Master serves them breakfast and teaches more lessons. The net was full to breaking, but it held fast. God gives you all you need to do his will. Discipleship requires obedience, work, and fruit. It demands fellowship with the Lord.

The mission is not complex but changes through the successive generations and differing cultures: catch fish (of all types) and feed the sheep (all breeds.) The mission is over when you go to your new home.