

## God's Empowering Presence Week 2

These weekly studies are loosely based on the previous Sunday's sermon. If you missed it, you will find a recording on our website ([www.knaphillbaptist.org.uk](http://www.knaphillbaptist.org.uk)). They are designed for both Home Group discussion and/or personal reflection. Don't necessarily try to cover all the questions and discussion topics in your group at one sitting. You may like to think about them later in your own time.



### An Honest Answer

#### Read John 21:1-17

In Matthew 4:18-20 we are told of the calling of the first disciples - *As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. 'Come, follow me,' Jesus said, 'and I will make you fishers of men.'* At once they left their nets and followed him. Called to be fishers of men and here they are back with

their fishing. They did not know what to do so they slot in to what they are familiar with. The disciples have gone to Galilee. Jesus told them he would go ahead of them and they would see him there (Mark 14:28, 16:7). They had seen Jesus after the resurrection but they still failed to recognise him when he shouts out to them from the shore - too preoccupied with their fruitless pursuits to recognise Jesus? The fishing is not going well. The risen Lord then points them in the right direction and they net a miraculous load of fish. This is to be compared with a similar haul of fish in Luke 5:1-11. Here, when Peter, as a fisherman, realised what had happened, *he fell at Jesus' knees and said, 'Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man'.* Peter had experienced the grace of God and in the light of it is faced with his own sinfulness. When the cry goes up from the boat *It is the Lord!*, Peter's reactions are very different. He can't wait for the slow progress of the boat and he leaps into the water. When the exhausted disciples finally come ashore, they smell the coals on the fire, the barbequed fish and the hot bread. Jesus has cooked for them - he says *'Come have breakfast'.*

## **Questions and pointers for discussion/reflection**

1. Jesus invites us to feast with him on all that has been made available to us by his death and resurrection. The disciples are back fishing again, back in the old familiar ways. Consider whether you might be too comfortable in your walk of faith preferring to remain within what you consider safe and familiar?
2. Peter stepped out of the boat. God calls us out of our comfort zones and into the adventure of faith. According to John Wimber you spell faith, R.I.S.K. What might this mean for you? What risks would you take to follow Jesus?
3. Consider the picture on the front. What would you talk about over breakfast with Jesus?
4. Jesus knew exactly how and where the disciples would catch a huge trawl of fish. What he suggests is completely contrary to normal fishing procedure but it was abundantly fruitful. What might God be calling you to as an individual and us to as a church that might be contrary to what is 'normal procedure'?
5. Read Jesus' letters to the church in Ephesus (Revelation 2:1-7) and to the church in Laodicea (Revelation 3:14-22). What might God be saying to you through these Scriptures?
6. Read Luke 14:26. What is your response? This verse is described as a 'vivid hyperbole' meaning that our love for Jesus must be so great that other loves pale by comparison. Do you think this is what this verse means?
7. Peter was over confident and came crashing to earth when he denied Jesus (Matthew 26:31-35). It is only when we are honest with our failings and face up to our weaknesses and seek God's help that God can then come and do something new in our lives. See 2 Corinthians 12:9,10 and 1 Peter 5:5,6.
8. Is there anything holding you back? Do you find it difficult to be honest with yourself or open up to other people?
9. What did you receive from last Sunday's sermon?
10. Sit quietly, close your eyes and imagine yourself in the story sitting on the beach with Jesus eating a breakfast of hot bread and barbequed fish. Imagine the sights, the sounds, the tastes. In your mind talk to Jesus about some of the things that you have thought about in this study. Then take time to sit quietly and ask yourself the question, honestly, 'Do I really love Jesus'?