

The 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter ~ Sunday May 3, 2026

“Joy Takes Root ~ Restoring the Fallen”

Psalm 30 // Jeremiah 32:36–41 // John 21:1–14

Not joy as a passing emotion or \_\_\_\_\_ happiness, but joy as something deeper—something \_\_\_\_\_ and growing that holds steady even when life feels uncertain. Through each encounter, we’ve seen that joy isn’t something forced or \_\_\_\_\_, but something that grows when the risen Jesus meets His people where they’re at.

It’s here, in this \_\_\_\_\_ setting, that we meet the disciples once again, who, despite seeing the risen Jesus on two occasions, are still wondering where they \_\_\_\_\_ with Him.

And that’s where our Gospel begins—not with celebration, but with \_\_\_\_\_. Not with triumph, but with \_\_\_\_\_.

And yet, just as our introit Psalm promised, and as Jeremiah declared in our first reading, \_\_\_\_\_ was coming and God was already preparing to \_\_\_\_\_ what had been broken.

### 3 LESSONS WE CAN LEARN ABOUT JOY

**Lesson #1.** \_\_\_\_\_.

Galilee was home. It was \_\_\_\_\_. It was where their story with Jesus had first begun years earlier.

Peter isn’t just returning to fishing, he’s \_\_\_\_\_ to what feels safe and predictable.

After denying Jesus three times in the courtyard of the high priest, hearing the rooster crow and realizing what he’d done, Peter had carried the memory of \_\_\_\_\_ with him.

This kind of grief doesn’t fade overnight. It lingers, settles into the heart, and shapes how a person \_\_\_\_\_ themselves. And now, standing by the water, Peter does what many people do when they feel \_\_\_\_\_ about the future or ashamed of the past—he returns to the \_\_\_\_\_.

“That night they caught nothing.” (John 21:3)

That long, empty night feels like more than just a fishing report. It feels like a \_\_\_\_\_ of the disciples’ hearts: Exhausted, \_\_\_\_\_, uncertain.

“Weeping may endure for a night...” (Psalm 30:5)

Sometimes the night lasts longer than we expected. Sometimes it’s filled with memories we wish we could forget. Sometimes it feels like endless \_\_\_\_\_ without visible results.

One of the great dangers after failure isn’t rebellion, but \_\_\_\_\_. Not running away loudly, but slipping back quietly.

Returning to routine, to what feels \_\_\_\_\_, without purpose. Keeping busy without direction. Going through the motions without \_\_\_\_\_.

Many faithful people carry memories of failure that shape their \_\_\_\_\_ long after the moment itself has passed.

Jesus doesn’t \_\_\_\_\_ His people to their routines. Even when we retreat, feel unworthy, and return to old patterns, Jesus comes \_\_\_\_\_ for us—that’s what makes this passage so powerful.

“Just after daybreak, Jesus stood on the shore.” (John 21:4)

Morning comes—not necessarily immediately, not always dramatically, but \_\_\_\_\_. And with morning comes the \_\_\_\_\_ of Christ

This is where \_\_\_\_\_ begins—not with dramatic speeches or loud miracles, but with \_\_\_\_\_,

Joy begins to return when we realize that Jesus hasn’t walked away—that even in the middle of our \_\_\_\_\_ routines, even after nights of regret or discouragement—He still comes looking for us.

**Lesson #2.** \_\_\_\_\_.

The Lord is near and already at work in ways we can’t yet see, but in our weariness, discouragement, or \_\_\_\_\_, we fail to \_\_\_\_\_ His presence.

“Children, do you have any fish?” (John 21:5)

This is a word of tenderness and \_\_\_\_\_; a word that reminds us that even in their discouragement, they still \_\_\_\_\_ to Him.

Restoration often begins with simple \_\_\_\_\_ before God. Not polished prayers or impressive words, but \_\_\_\_\_.

“‘Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some.’ So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in, because there were so many fish.” (John 21:6)

Empty nets become overflowing nets. Failure turns into \_\_\_\_\_. Discouragement gives way to astonishment. And in that moment, \_\_\_\_\_ begins to dawn.

“I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me forever...I will rejoice in doing them good...and I will plant them in this land in faithfulness.” (Jeremiah 32:39ff)

Notice that God doesn’t \_\_\_\_\_ His people because of their past. Instead, He \_\_\_\_\_ their future, gives them a new \_\_\_\_\_, and leads them in a new way.

The disciples aren’t being rejected, they’re being \_\_\_\_\_ directed. Not punished, but \_\_\_\_\_. And restoration begins with listening again to the voice of the Lord, who doesn’t scold or shame them, but \_\_\_\_\_ them.

Often, after failure, one of the hardest things to do is listen again because \_\_\_\_\_ can be loud.

This passage reminds us that the voice of Jesus still calls out across the waters of our lives, still invites us to try again, still offers \_\_\_\_\_—even when the instructions seem small.

It’s in these simple acts of \_\_\_\_\_ that restoration quietly begins—not always immediately, not always dramatically, but \_\_\_\_\_.

Joy begins to grow when we listen again to the voice of Christ—not perfectly, not confidently, but \_\_\_\_\_. Because sometimes the most important step after failure isn’t a grand gesture, but a small act of \_\_\_\_\_.

**Lesson #3.** \_\_\_\_\_.

“When they got out on land, they saw a charcoal fire in place, with fish laid out on it, and bread.” (John 21:9)

That detail isn’t \_\_\_\_\_.

The charcoal fire tells us that Jesus doesn’t \_\_\_\_\_ our past, He \_\_\_\_\_ it. He returns to the very places of our deepest failure and begins to rebuild something \_\_\_\_\_.

Simple, ordinary words. And yet, so full of \_\_\_\_\_. Because what Jesus offers here isn’t interrogation, but \_\_\_\_\_; not judgment, but \_\_\_\_\_.

“You have turned for me my mourning into dancing; you have loosed my sackcloth and clothed me with gladness.” (Psalm 30:11)

This \_\_\_\_\_ doesn’t always happen in dramatic ways. Sometimes it happens quietly—through presence, restoration, and renewed fellowship.

Notice how Psalm 30 doesn’t skip over the night. It acknowledges sorrow, mourning, weeping, but it also declares that God doesn’t leave His people there. He lifts them, restores them, and brings them into \_\_\_\_\_ again.

Sometimes joy returns not with noise, but with \_\_\_\_\_. Not with spectacle, but with fellowship.

“I will plant them in this land in faithfulness, with all my heart and all my soul.” (Jeremiah 32:41)

Planting is \_\_\_\_\_ work; it doesn’t happen overnight, but steadily, faithfully, over time.

He’s planting something new in the lives of the disciples. Not discarding or replacing them, but \_\_\_\_\_ them, stabilizing them, and re-rooting them in grace.

Jesus doesn’t meet the disciples with \_\_\_\_\_, but with breakfast. He doesn’t begin with rebuke, but with fellowship. This is important because restoration isn’t something we achieve, it’s something we \_\_\_\_\_.

That’s how joy returns—not because life becomes perfect or failure disappears, but because \_\_\_\_\_ with Christ is restored.

“None of the disciples dared ask him, ‘Who are you?’ They knew it was the Lord.” (John 21:12)

\_\_\_\_\_ is complete, fellowship is restored, and \_\_\_\_\_ has returned. Not loudly, not dramatically, but deeply, steadily.



Joy grows wherever Jesus is \_\_\_\_\_—and where He’s present, new \_\_\_\_\_ begins again.