



WHAT IF JESUS MEANT THE FISH?

John 21 begins with the record of Jesus' appearance to seven of the disciples who had returned to fishing after His resurrection. They encountered Him after a night of empty nets. As they were approaching the shore in their boats, Jesus called out to them and told them to cast their net on the opposite side of the boat. They did not recognize Jesus until after they took His instruction and hauled in a net so full of large fish, the net was in danger of breaking.

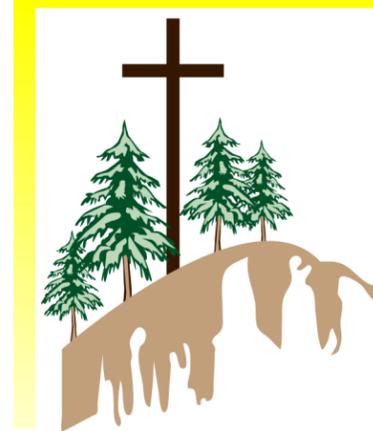
When Peter heard that their benefactor was Jesus, he jumped in the water and waded ashore. The others followed in the boats, dragging the net with the fish. There were 153 large fish. Someone counted them. Ever wonder why? And ever wonder who Jesus is talking about when, a few minutes after breakfast on the shore, He asks Peter, "Do you love me more than these?" It's easy to assume, given Peter's denial of Jesus and later leadership of the church, that Jesus refers to the other disciples in His question. But, what if Jesus meant the fish?

Jesus called these men from their boats to make them "fishers of men." But here they were, after His crucifixion and resurrection, returned to fishing for fish. And they had 153 large fish to split between the seven of them. Someone counted the fish to work out the economic benefit for each of the fishermen! It really was not only a huge haul of fish in general, it was an explosion of immediate wealth for them all. It was success on a grand scale that would make them not only a bunch of money, but might also build their reputation so that future catches might sell more readily in the local market. It was a foundation for future financial success in their chosen career.

What if, when Jesus asked Peter, "Do you love me more than these?" He is asking Peter whether he loves Him enough at this point to continue as a disciple, committed to "fishing for men," and surrender once and for all the self-supporting success Peter might gain fishing for fish? What if Jesus is asking Peter what He loves more: losing his life for Christ's sake and the gospel or losing his life to a lifelong pursuit of secular success? What if Jesus wants to know, from Peter's perspective, whether He had succeeded in truly discipling Peter?

Successful Christian discipleship produces disciples of Jesus devoted to producing disciples who produce disciples. Discipleship does not produce consumers who look only for what they can gain from Jesus. True discipleship produces humble servants willing to give all to Jesus and take up the mission and cross of Jesus for themselves.

What if Jesus meant the fish? Or the lesson plans? Or the PVC pipes? Or the computer keyboards? Or the spreadsheets? Or the hotel rooms? Or the HR files? Or the bus route? Or the . . . well, I expect you get the picture. What if Jesus meant us to see that every call to discipleship is a call to radical commitment to a spiritual rather than temporal or economic life focus? If so, we must ask, am I truly a disciple of Jesus, or do I love the fish more?



Cornerstone CONNECT

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The Role of Conscience

As of April 23, 2021 Cook County MN reports more than 70% of eligible individuals in the county have received at least the first dose of a COVID vaccine. Through the course of the COVID crisis, Cornerstone has voluntarily participated in suggested protocols and practices intended to minimize transmission of the COVID virus in public venues. However, neither Pastor Dale nor Cornerstone have made any official announcements in support of or in opposition to individual, preventative vaccination.

We have declined to make public moral assertions related to vaccination primarily because we view matters of personal health care, even when there are public implications, as matters of conscience, especially where there is no clear guilt-producing sin involved in the choice. We believe the people of Cornerstone to be thoughtful, devoted disciples of Jesus able to interpret God's word capably, willing to surrender themselves to the leading of the Spirit, happy to accept the consequences of following Christ and serving His glory in the world. Therefore, we trust our people to act responsibly relative to all choices and to seek God's wisdom in faith-filled prayer, in the diligent study of God's word, and in consultation with trusted teachers, leaders, and other believers.

We believe God when He spoke through the apostle Peter who wrote, "[God] has given us everything necessary for life and godliness." We believe there is no biblically compelling reason to exclude a vaccination from God's provision for "life." We also believe Cornerstone members to be fully capable of deciding for themselves whether a vaccine has been sufficiently developed prior to authorization and whether they want to entrust their well-being to any given medicine or medical procedure.

We believe that the spiritual principles of Romans 14 and 1 Corinthians 8 apply in regard to the current question of COVID vaccination and matters of conscience. In this consideration, "each one should be convinced in his own mind," "no one should pass judgment on one another," "let us pursue what makes for peace and mutual upbuilding," and "let no one seek his own good, but the good of his neighbor." We see these phrases, in their contexts, calling us to be mindful of the role of conscience in the life of a disciple, to both shepherd and protect the life processes through which the Spirit of God leads the people of God into spiritual maturity, which is the will of God for each of us and all of us. "Our liberty," says Paul, "is not determined by someone else's conscience," but he still instructs the Corinthian church to be intentionally sensitive to the impact of their liberty on the conscience of other believers.

So, we have not dictated a moral choice nor imposed our personal convictions upon others in this question of vaccination. We have intended to honor the question as a matter of conscience. We have attempted to answer biblically and responsibly when others have posed questions to us without requiring a specific compliance. And until such time as public policy requires a different response, we will continue to honor the role of conscience.



VALITA BOCKOVICH AND FOUNTAIN OF CHRIST SCHOOL

The first time we took a team from Cornerstone to Fountain of Christ School in Pignon, Haiti, our goal was not only to introduce team members to cross-cultural Christian missions, but to foster a love for ministry in them and to perhaps build a long term relationship with the excellent Christian school ministry that is Fountain of Christ.

Valita Bockovich caught the vision. She has returned numerous times to Haiti for two week ministries and is committed to returning annually to provide any support she can to the school staff and administrators.

Valita also personally sponsors several students at FOC and is happy to help others learn how they can sponsor as well.



Introducing: Alexandre Vixama

Alexandre is 9 years old, loves to play soccer, enjoys math as his favorite school subject, and helps at home by looking for wood, the principal cooking fuel in the Northeast State of Haiti where he lives near the small town of Pignon.

Alexander is a student at Fountain of Christ school and children's home. His education at Fountain is partially sponsored by Cornerstone.

For more information about Fountain of Christ School and/or sponsoring a Haitian child's education at FOC, please contact Valita Bockovich at Cornerstone or visit the Fountain Of Christ website at <https://www.fountainofchrist.org>.

www.fountainofchrist.org.

Introducing: Chertaute Relianse

Chertaute is in the 4th grade at Fountain of Christ School. She lives with her mother and father and four brothers. She enjoys studying and her favorite subject is math.

Chertaute has a pet goat. She likes to help with the cleaning at home and one day hopes to be a police officer! Chertaute drew the picture below for her friends at Cornerstone who are partially sponsoring her education at Fountain.



Chertaute has written the date and her name at the top of the drawing (Wednesday February 24, 2021), and closes with the French/Creole word "merci" which means "thank you."

Letters directed to either child will be hand-delivered by Fountain staff and will be translated either by the Principal or by a fully capable translator connected with the school. Letters to either child should be given to Valita Bockovich at Cornerstone.



ANNOUNCING THE RETURN OF ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL!

**June 6, 2021
8:15 AM**

Adult Sunday school with facilitator, Jim Mattson, returns Sunday June 6 at 8:15 AM with a Lifeway Explorer study in Job & Ecclesiastes. Student guides will be available for anyone who requests one. Please contact Jim for more details. (The adult class is located at the south end of the west hallway.)

Summer 2021 Study: Job; Ecclesiastes

Do we love God for who He is or for what we can get from Him? And what's the meaning of life? This study will wrestle with these deep questions and ultimately enable us to see afresh our need for the gospel of Jesus Christ. (13 sessions)

Birthdays (May—June)

- John Hay 5/03
- Larry Gamer 5/04
- Jim Chupurdia 5/13
- Jakob Farnum 5/14
- Marin Hay 5/26
- Madelyn Pike 6/01
- Laurie Hill 6/14
- Valita Bockovich 6/16
- Patti Gamer 6/26
- Linda McIntire 6/27
- Gloria Johnson 6/30

Anniversaries

- Mike & Crystal Farnum 5/03
- Joel & Renee Pike 5/15
- Randall & Mary Boyd 5/20
- Dawn & James Dossey 6/06
- Patrick & Tracy Scully 6/25

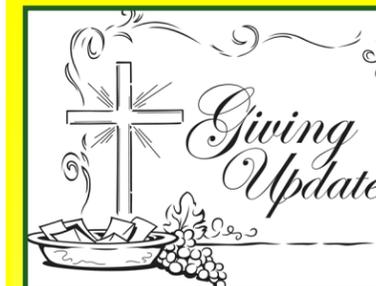


Congratulations CCHS 2021 Graduate

Kevin Viren



And home-school graduate Abe Avery



Current fund balances as of May 8, 2021:

General	31828.67
Helping Hand	10,234.90
Special Missions	2003.24
Special Projects	521.20
Sabbatical	29,951.18
Total	74,539.19

Rejoicing in the faithfulness, goodness, and grace of God with you!

—John Hill
Treasurer

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Scanning the code below with the camera of your mobile phone will immediately take you to a list of links to Cornerstone's digital resources on the web.

You'll find quick links to the website, YouTube, and Facebook pages Cornerstone maintains.

