

Starting Overō over and over again! The secret, if there is one, to being a Jesus follower, is learning to start over, over and over again! **John 21** Fishing! It had been a long three and a half years. Seemed like a lifetime, really. So much had changed. Pete had cut and run when the chips were down. He denied Christ. Sure, he was forgiven. But people didn't look at him the same. He was always Mr. Mouth+, never at a loss for words. Now he was Mr. Foot in Mouth+, and his shame was greater than their disappointment and nobody was more disappointed in him than he was in himself. Some days he just wished he could go back home. Back to the boatō back to the fishō back to something normal, something he was good at for once! Following Jesus brought nothing but changeō constant, unpredictable, and inconvenient change. Enough! As he sat there looking at that boat and the nets, the words just blurted outō I'm going fishing!+ Always the influencer, two steps towards the boat and five other guys join the expedition. Finally, something I'm good at!+Or not!
All nightō no fish...nothingō nadaō nyet! Figures! Can't even fish anymore.+Some guy on shore shouts the one question nobody wanted to answerō . Catch anything, boys?+ NO! NOTHING! (and thanks so much for askingō .)
Throw your net on the other side! (Thanks for the great advice, buddy. If you could fish, why are you on shore! Oh why not, we were only going to throw it out once more anywayō saves moving the stupid boat!)
WHOOSH!!! DOUBLE WHOOSH!!! TRIPLE WHOOSH!!! Nets full. John speaksō I'm the Lord!+

Pete grabs his robe and leaps overboard. He may not be walking on water, but swim, wade or walk, he got to Jesus. Amazing! It all came rushing back. Back to the beginning!

Luke 5 Three years beforeō all night, no fish. Jesus says I let down your nets+ Pete gave his reasons, but something made him relent and whooshō double whooshō triple whoosh. Nets fullō nets breakō boats going down!
Pete said I leave me Lord, for I am a sinful man.+
Jesus saidō Don't be afraid. From now on you'll catch men. Follow me.+And Pete did.

John 21 This was so weirdō like starting all over, all over again.
Same lakeō Galilee same situationō all night, no fish same voiceō the Lord same resultō huge catch
same sinnerō same need same shameō he felt beforeō maybe worse this time

But this timeō this time he wouldn't ask Jesus to leave him aloneō .
this time he waded ashore just to be near him.
this time the fish didn't matter, even though the nets didn't break. 153 really big, tasty, wonderful fish.
He couldn't get over it. 153 of them for crying out loud. But then came the questionō
Pete, do you love me more than these (fish)?
Pete, it's not about fish, it's about sheep. Feed 'em. Lead 'em. Care for 'em.
Pete, this is a calling, not a career. You can't go back. There is no going back.+
But there is starting overō all overō over and over again.
Same callō Follow me+
Pete, follow meō all the way to the graveō it won't be easy, but it will be good.
Pete, follow meō regardless of how it turns out for othersō it's not about them, it's about you and Meō
Pete, follow meō nowō againō forever!

All people growō some grow upō . some just grow old. If you want to grow up, learn to start over with Jesus over, and over again.

Self Check Questions:

1. Rev 2:1-5 Read this passage and discuss aspects of first love+that you may have left behind?
2. Heb 10:32-33 What characterized their early faith? Do you identify with or envy their reaction to suffering?
3. Col 2:6 In what ways should our initial coming to Christ characterize our daily walk regardless of the years gone by?

For Further Study: Check out the weaknesses and strengths of the seven churches of Asia in Revelation 2-3. Make a chart of them, noting the self identification of Christ, the praises and the warnings and the promises to each. Discuss which are most convicting and challenging to you as this stage of your journey and where you need to start overō again.

Lord, sometimes I long for the first daysō those first steps in following You. Every decision seemed so black and white. Obedience was clear. Sin was huge. Everything mattered! O Savior, please do not let me live by habit. Deliver me from mindless prayer or casual interest in Your word. Renew me. Renew my heart, mind, soul and walk like in the first daysō I want to start over with Youō over and over again! In Jesus Name, Amen+

Remember, you are very special to us and we pray for you continually. Living with leaving in view.... Jn 9:4
Ron & Val

Seeing The Invisible, embracing The Unapproachable, declaring The Unexplainable, changed by The Immutable, running after The Irresistible with inexhaustible joy in our inexpressible sorrows, spending our time on eternity, owning nothing yet possessing everything that matters and lasts. We are Pilgrims in Paradox. Welcome to THE JOURNEY.