

# Hanging Out with Jesus

## Jesus, the Tender Warrior

Unedited Transcript

*John 21:1-25*

David Delk

It is such a joy to be here with you today. I always love getting a chance to come and to speak to you guys. It's amazing to see a group of men like this willing to get up every week and be here to pursue Christ, to pursue God, to pursue manhood. It's so exciting to see what God's doing all across the country, what He's doing here in Orlando. There's a group of leaders of groups like this that have started meeting together to talk about what God's doing in our city, how we can better coordinate with one another, how can we be more aware of what's going on. It's just exciting. There are men's lives being transformed all across the central Florida area.

Tonight I have a chance to speak for a men's seminar at a church here on the east side of town. I'm excited about that. Pat Leopold is our Field Staff area director for this region. He is working with churches all across central Florida to help them disciple more men. If your church has not connected with Pat, we'd love to have you do that. Speaking of that, I'd like to just give you a quick Field Staff update. A lot of you know about this initiative that we're doing across the country, and those of you who are watching by video have probably heard about this, as well. I'm going to give you a quick update. We just crossed over the 100 mark for Field Staff across America, more than 100 guys. Isn't that amazing. Yeah. We're so excited. Many of them are in process. They're getting their training so that they can know how to work with pastors and leaders.

Our goal is men discipling men. That's what we're striving for. We dream of a day where every man in America, and in the World, but every man in America is being disciplined by another man. Think about the impact that that would have on families, on wives, on children, on businesses, if every man was being disciplined by another man. We're getting great reports of what God is doing. The churches that have engaged with one of these Field Staff members tell us that they're discipling on average 18 new men, 18 new men per church. You can just imagine multiplying that by thousands and thousands of churches in the years to come. We're very, very excited.

Pray for us. As you can imagine, our staff is stretched thin. Three years ago there were 15 of us here in Orlando, Florida, and now, today, there's the equivalent of 60 full-time staff, basically with the same headquarter staff trying to pull all that together. There's a lot going on. Pray also for our finances. It's been a long summer, and you can imagine that this kind of an effort takes a lot of resources. We believe God's going to provide. We would just really appreciate your prayers. We have a long way to go before the end of the year, and we're praying that God would give us everything we need to do the ministry that He's called us to do. That's what we believe He will do.

If you have your Bibles, turn to John, chapter 21, John, chapter 21. We are continuing in Hanging Out With Jesus, our series, and we're going to be looking this week at the last chapter of the book of John.

This is a long chapter, so we're not going to read the entire chapter up front, like we might normally. We're going to just read it as we go along, so you'll want to keep your Bible open, to have it to refer to. Last week Brett talked about how Jesus helps His friends move from unbelief to belief. It was a story of Thomas and Thomas' request to see the marks in Jesus' hands.

We're going to kind of continue that theme because we're going to see Jesus doing something similar here for his disciples in John, chapter 21. As I was studying this week, I was just frankly almost overwhelmed with the graciousness and the tenderness of Jesus. I hope you see that today. Friends are so important in our lives. If you think about the role of friends in our culture, and the different types of images we have of that. It is so vital that we have real relationships. One of the places this begins is in childhood. We all think about those childhood friends that we had, the escapades we got involved in.

I'm going to give you a chance to talk at your tables right now. I just want you to take three or four minutes, and I want you to think back, what is a really strong image or strong stark memory you have of something that you experienced with some childhood friends. Maybe elementary school, middle school, something like that. Just share a little episode or something that stands out from your memory with your childhood friends. Just take three or four minutes and then we'll come back together.

All right, let's come back together. Anybody have a particularly interesting, or dramatic, story that was shared at your table, that you think everybody ought to hear about? Anybody have one? Anybody? We have a boring group this morning. Is everyone asleep? Yeah, okay, what was it?

Participant: Yeah, long story, but essentially it was off the Severn River in the south side of Annapolis, Maryland. I was an elementary age boy, and one time a group of us ... we, essentially, were told that there was "buried treasure" just off of a sandbar.

David Delk: Okay, so a group of elementary school boys looking for buried treasure in a river.

Participant: We found it.

David Delk: You found it.

Participant: Yeah.

David Delk: Wow. What was it?

Participant: It was actually, one of the boy's brother, older brother, had actually manufactured them using Tenpenny nails and had buried them about a year before.

David Delk: They had manufactured a treasure, one of the older brothers and buried it a year before, and they found it. Hey, that would be memorable.

Participant: Hey, it happened, everybody. That was exciting.

David Delk: That was exciting. Anybody else? Well, I've got one. I remember this very, very, a strong image. When I was in probably second or third grade, in our neighborhood in Atlanta, Georgia there was a family that had boys a little bit older than that. I was with one of them. I don't know which one, and we were in the woods near their house and he had gotten a bow and arrow set that had a real tip on the arrow. We were out in the woods, you know, and we were fooling around with this thing. We were trying to shoot it at some trees, or whatever. It was pitiful, right. I mean, I'm however old I am. We're pulling this thing back and we're trying to shoot it maybe 10 yards, or 20 yards, and it's flying around and hitting the ground.

I think we probably shot it 20 times and even hit a tree once. It's one of those kind of things. Then he's got it in his hands and all of a sudden a squirrel goes running up a tree, and he says, "I'm gonna shoot

that squirrel," and I'm thinking, "Yeah, we haven't even hit a tree yet and you're gonna hit a squirrel." He pulls back on it and, sure enough, lets go and just nails that squirrel. I was horrified. I was like, "What in the world," and the squirrel took off running and ran about 20 or 30 yards, and all of a sudden we see the arrow come dropping down from the tree. Man, that memory of him nailing that squirrel with that arrow just stood out in my mind, because we hadn't hit anything and here he is hitting a squirrel way up in a tree. That was divine intervention or something.

It's interesting, though, how those episodes of friendship stand out in our minds, right? They form us, these relationships. Jesus knew that. He spent all this time with these men that were his friends. Look here at John, chapter 21. This is one of the post-resurrection appearances of Jesus. He's risen from the dead. It says after this Jesus revealed Himself again to the disciples by the sea of Tiberius, and He revealed Himself in this way. Now this is the Sea of Galilee, where they came from, and where they originally fished. Simon Peter, Thomas, called the twin, Nathanael of Cana and Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples were together. Simon Peter said to them, "I'm going fishing." They said to him, "We'll go with you." They went out and got into the boat but that night they caught nothing. Here are the disciples, they're going back to what they know, and they're going fishing, because, you know, Jesus is gone. They don't know exactly what all is going on, and so they're a little bit aimless and so they return back to what they know.

Now, one of the things we should recognize is that Jesus considers the disciples His friends, and He tells us this. He tells us that we're His friends, too, and He tells us that in John, chapter 15, verse 15. He says, "No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master's doing, but I have called you friends, for all that I've heard from my Father I've made known to you." Jesus is bringing them as friends into His agenda. That's what we're going to see Him doing in this chapter. He is forming them. He's a tender warrior. He's on a mission and He knows that for that mission to be accomplished He needs friends. Jesus needs disciples, He needs followers, He needs men who are fully men, and so He's going to do whatever it takes to help these men become everything that God wants them to be. He's going to do the same thing for us.

That only happens when we realize that Christianity is not just a commitment to a set of ideas, but it's a commitment to a person. So often I can kind of get into this mindset that Christianity means being against these things, right, and being for these things. Just look at Facebook or Twitter, you know, everybody yelling about whatever they're yelling about. All the political issues, all the cultural issues. Christianity is you're against this, and you're for this. That's not what Christianity is, right? Christianity is not a philosophy. It's not a moral lifestyle choice, okay. That's not what Christianity is at the heart of it. The thing that differentiates Christianity from every other philosophy, from every other religion, is that we are told that we can have an actual relationship with the living God, that there is a person, Jesus Christ, who's alive. There is a person, the Holy Spirit, that lives in us. There is a person, God the Father, who is ruling over all, and that we have a relationship with this triune God.

Now, that's kind of crazy, right? We can't see Him, right? We usually can't hear Him. What does that look like. What does that mean. One of the things we do is we go back to the scriptures and we see how Jesus lived with His disciples and what He did for them, and then we can say, "Okay, how is He doing that for me?" That's what we want to look at in this passage. One of the things that we see so clearly in this passage is that Jesus is the God of the seventh chances, not the second chance, not the third chance, but the seventh chance, on and on and on.

If you'll notice here in the beginning of John, chapter 21, these disciples that are mentioned here, four of them are the first ones that Jesus gathered together. In John, three of the first disciples that are mentioned are Andrew, Peter, and Nathanael, and Peter and Nathanael are mentioned in this passage. The first four in Matthew, chapter 4 are Andrew, Peter, James and John, James and John being the sons of Zebedee, so they're mentioned in this passage. The famous part of this chapter, and we're going to get to that, is when Jesus talks to Peter, and He gives Peter a chance, three times, to say, "I love you," okay. What a beautiful passage that is.

Before that, I want you to see what Jesus is doing here. He is reprising His whole ministry for these disciples. We're gonna see this. He is going through His whole ministry for them. The reason he's doing that is he's trying to show them, "Look, this thing is not a failure. It turned out exactly the way that I wanted it to, and we're gonna go forth from here and what I wanted to see accomplished is going to be accomplished." Let's watch how He does this. The first thing that we see is that they go out and they don't catch any fish. That's in verse 3.

Verse 4, "Just as day was breaking Jesus stood on the shore, yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus." Many of the people could not recognize Jesus in His resurrected body at first. Also, it could have been fog, or mist, or who knows. Jesus said to them, "Children, do you have any fish?" They answered Him, "No." He said to them, "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 of the quantity of fish. Does that remind anybody of anything? Does anybody remember another story like that in the gospels? Okay. Yeah, the same exact thing happens in Luke, chapter 5. They're out all night. This is when Jesus first calls them. They're fishing. They don't catch anything. Jesus says, "Hey, cast your net out one more time." They cast the net out one more time. There's so many fish in it they can't even get it into the boat, okay.

Jesus is redoing the same miracle He did when He first called His disciples. He's reminding them of the calling that He has placed on their life, okay. All is not lost. You're not failures. We're all still in this deal together, okay. Now, look here at verse 7, "The disciple, whom Jesus loved, therefore, said to Peter, 'It is the Lord.' When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord he put on his outer garment, for he was stripped for work, and threw himself into the sea." Does that remind anybody of anything? What episode does that remind you of? When Jesus was walking on the water, and Peter says, "I want to come to you," and Jesus says, "Come," and Peter gets out and he starts walking on the water, until he looks away from Jesus and starts to sink, right? Peter is jumping into the water again, reprising this episode of the way that Jesus had affirmed his faith.

Okay, let's keep going. Verse 8, "The other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, but about 100 yards off. When they got out on land they saw a charcoal fire in place with fish laid out on it and bread." Now, does that remind anybody of anything? Where have we seen Jesus with fish and bread that came from nowhere? Okay, the feeding the 5000 when he multiplied the loaves and the fishes, okay. At the shore, of the same lake. It's the same lake. He's showing them, "Hey, remember what happened with the loaves and the fishes? Remember the power that I showed? That was me. We're still together. We're still in this thing. Everything that happened is true," okay.

Let's keep moving. Look at verse 10. Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish that you have just caught. Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore full of large fish, 153 of them." What a great fishing night, huh? "Although there were so many, the net was not torn. Jesus said to them, 'Come and have breakfast.' Now, none of the disciples dared ask Him, 'Who are you?' They knew it was the

Lord. Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and so with the fish," okay. Does this remind you of anything, when Jesus brings them bread? The Last Supper, right? He's bringing them, He's feeding them, He's reprising this whole thing, okay. This was now the third time that Jesus was revealed to the disciples after He was raised from the dead.

Then we get to this famous passage. He's all the way up, he's reprised everything up to the Lord's Supper. They're sitting around a campfire there on the shore. Now, who remembers where Peter was the first time he denied Jesus? Around the fire in the courtyard, with the smell of the smoke, right, and all of that. Where does Jesus restore Peter, around a fire, okay. Everything that's happened up to this point Jesus is giving them a little fast-forward, mini-reminder of everything that they've been through together, to say, "Hey, we're still in this thing, and I am still the Lord."

Let's look and see what Jesus actually does for Peter. The lesson I want us to see from this is that Jesus wants to forgive your greatest sin and undo your greatest shame. Jesus wants to forgive your greatest sin and undo your greatest shame. Jesus takes Peter back in this passage to the worst experience he could imagine. Think about this for Peter. Peter was the one that was always out front. He was always saying, you know, "If everybody else denies you, I won't do it." He's the guy that grabbed a sword and cut the guy's ear off. He was going to fight for Jesus, right? He was the one who had the most to lose in terms of his reputation and his standing, and being shown to be a coward and a guy who didn't keep his word.

Everything that Peter thought he believed, everything he thought he stood for, every strength that he had, turned out to be his weakness. How often does that happen to us? It's amazing how the places where we believe we're strong turn out to actually be some of our greatest weaknesses. That's what happens with the world of flesh and the devil. These things get twisted and they get turned. Peter ends up denying Jesus.

Here we have Jesus talking to Peter. When they had finished breakfast Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?" Now, why do you think Jesus said that to Peter, the more than these part? Anybody? Why would Jesus say, "Do you love me more than these?" Well, think about how many times Peter acted like he loved Jesus more than these, right? He did it all the time. "Even if everybody else denies you, I'm gonna stay with you," you know, and all that stuff. Jesus says, "Are you still in that mode, or have we gotten over that yet?" Notice how Peter answers Him. He says, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." No reference to more than the other people, but you know that I love you. Jesus drops that, He said to him, "Feed my lambs." He said to him a second time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" So now there's no more than these in there. He said to him, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." He said to Him, "Tend my sheep."

He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, "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. Truly, truly I say to you, when you were young you used to dress yourself and walk wherever you wanted, but when you were old you will stretch out your hands and another will dress you and carry you where you do not want to go." This He said to show by what kind of death he was to glorify God. After saying this He said to him, "Follow me."

What did Jesus say to the fishermen when he first met them, and he called them to leave their nets? "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." He has brought Peter full circle and is restoring him to be the leader that Jesus needs for His church, one of the foundations and pillars of the early church.

Notice what he did for this, to do this for Peter. He took Peter back to the very bottom, worst sin that he ever could have committed. You know when I think about my own life and I think about most men I know, we want to avoid these things. You know, if you've paid for an abortion, if you've visited a prostitute, if you were ever so angry that you struck one of your kids in an inappropriate way, these things bring shame, right? We don't want to think about that. We don't want to face that. We want to shove that down somewhere.

We're glad to have a relationship with Jesus because now we get to act better, right? Now I get to be a different kind of man. I don't have to do that kind of stuff anymore. We just kind of bury it, we put it in the closet, we hide it, we hope it goes away. Too often those things just stay there and they fester. What Jesus did for Peter was that He took him back to the moment of his greatest failure and He walked him through that as a friend, and He showed him that Jesus loved him even in the midst of that. Jesus loves us in our moment of greatest betrayal. He doesn't love us in spite of what we've done. He just loves us. He just loves us.

I was with a guy in Pennsylvania, and he had made some very poor choices and ended up in an inappropriate relationship, an episode from an inappropriate relationship, and he was just torn up about the consequences of this. He was torn up about how stupid he was. He was torn up about all the decisions that led him to this place. He was completely, appropriately, beating himself up about how stupid he had been. As we were sitting there, for some reason, I don't know, the Holy Spirit just prompted me, and I looked at him, because he was just obviously in such despair, and I said, "You know, Jesus really, really loves you," and he literally just started sobbing and heaving. He could not believe that Jesus would still love him.

I think a lot of us are like that. We think the nice, cleaned-up version, the saved version that doesn't do all that stuff anymore, we're okay with Jesus loving that guy. As a matter of fact, we kind of deserve it. I mean, look, we're doing pretty good, you know. Let's face it, we're nice guys, right? That's not the gospel. The gospel is Jesus with His hands dirty with the prostitute, with the tax collectors, right, with us at our very worst, loving us. He could have just told Peter to suck it up, right? We could have had an episode on the beach where Jesus said, "Peter, come on, you're with me for three years, suck it up already, okay. You screwed up, you're gonna do better, you know, let's get your act together." That's what I would have been tempted to say to Peter, right. Actually, I probably would have been tempted to say, "Well, forget Peter, you know, he can't even stand up for Jesus on the worst night of His life. What a loser. Come on, who's the next guy up? Let's forget him." That's not what Jesus does. He's the God of the seventh chance, and He comes to Peter and He rescues him and He restores him.

Here's what I want you to think about. Imagine Jesus taking you back to that motel where you went with that woman, walking with you to the room, opening the door, turning to you and giving you a bear hug and saying, "I love you, and I am so excited about the man that you're becoming." Picture yourself outside the abortion clinic. You walk up to the doorstep, Jesus opens his arms, grabs you, tells you that you're forgiven and that He loves you. Picture yourself standing in that room in the house where you screamed those words at your wife that should never have been said, and Jesus is right there beside you and He looks you in the eye and He says, "I love you, I love you, I forgive you."

On the computer where you filled your heart and mind with lust and the images that have a power to destroy you, your family, He grabs your hands, He holds those hands, He looks you in the eye. He says, "I love you, you're awesome. If you walk with me, we're gonna have the greatest adventure of your life." That's what Jesus does for us. It's not some kind of Band-Aid that we're putting over our sin, no, He gets

in to the very deep, dark, dirty places and brings real restoration, and He does it for anybody. There are people who say, "What I've done could never be forgiven." The truth is, that's exactly the things that Jesus wants to forgive. He's not excited about forgiving all this little petty stuff that we talk about. He wants to get real. He wants to get down to the stuff that really matters. That's what He does with Peter and that's what He wants to do for us.

The big idea today is that Jesus wants to heal our most broken places so that we can be completely His. The American church is filled with men who have used Jesus as a Band-Aid, who are sort of treating Him as a fixer-upper, like one of these home shows on cable television, where Jesus comes in and rips up the carpet and puts in some new wood floors, and repaints everything, and adds a window treatment and now look how good my life is, okay. That's not the gospel. Jesus does not want some nice guys who are trying to be good. He wants men who've been radically transformed from the very deepest parts of their soul. He's selfish, He wants all of us. He doesn't want half-hearted men. He doesn't want two-thirds-hearted men, three-fourths-hearted men. He wants whole-hearted men, and that only happens when we experience this kind of deep transformation.

As our friend, He's willing to get in there and to do the dirty work. He's willing to take the punishment for the worst thing that you've ever done. That's what He did on the cross. The worst thing that you have ever done has been paid for, and His righteousness, His perfection is given to you in its place. When God looked at Peter He didn't see the person who denied Jesus, He saw His Son that faithfully went in obedience to make His life as a sacrifice for sin. When He sees you He doesn't see that man who has betrayed his wife, He doesn't see that man who's gotten inappropriately angry with his kids, He doesn't see that guy that's looked at those things on the internet, He doesn't see that guy who has cut some corners on a business deal, whatever it might be.

If you have put your faith and trust in Jesus Christ, He sees the perfection and righteousness of His Son, and He loves you. He really loves you, because He wants you to be completely His. Now, there's no promise in the scriptures that this is going to be easy, right? Look at verse 18 and 19 we just read. Peter is told, "Hey, you're gonna be in chains. That's what that means. You're gonna be in chains. You're gonna be a prisoner. People are going to direct everything you do. They're gonna dress you. They're gonna bind your arms. There's no promise that this is going to be easy. The promise is that it's going to be amazing. It's going to be amazing. We're going to know that it's everything that we were made for. We're going to be able to live free with the power of the resurrected Christ. No longer in bondage to these secret sins and this deep shame, but we're going to have the freedom to be men who risk, who love, who give grace, who give forgiveness, who reach out, who sacrifice. Why? Because we've experienced the deep and transforming love of Jesus Christ.

Do you know Jesus as your friend today? Have you let Him take you to those places that you've walled off in your heart and mind? He's willing to fight for you. He'll fight ferociously. He'll fight tenderly. All you have to do is meet Him, on the beach, let Him remind you who you are, and let Him transform your heart. Let's pray.

Father, we thank you so much for today, and I thank you for this message from your Word. What a great reminder it was to me this week as I think about the places in my heart that I have tried to hide, and manage, and control, and the places where such shame comes from because of my own failure and my own betrayal. Lord, I pray that you'd make me willing to let you in, that I would experience that deep and transforming forgiveness, God. Remind me who I am. Just like you did for the disciples, remind me how you called me, all the things that you've done in my life to show me who you are, to show me that

you love me. I pray that you would help me to understand that there is transformation, that there is restoration, and that the life that I can have with a whole-hearted commitment to you is so extraordinary compared to anything I can do by trying to manage it on my own.

Lord, I pray for the men in this room, that we would all abandon ourselves to your grace, that, Lord, we would be restored like Peter, from the moment of our greatest betrayal, from the moments of our deepest sin, that you would do the work, that we would be reminded that we are your children, that we are your friends, that you love us, and that with you we have an incredible adventure ahead of us as men of God. We pray, in Jesus name, Amen.