



How Big Was That Fish?

Have you ever been regaled with a fanciful story of a fisherman's retelling of the "big one" that got away? It seems like every-time the story is recounted the details get exaggerated just a little more. The fish is bigger, the fight to reel it in gets longer and the heightened jump out of the water and the seemingly impossible escape from the line gets more dramatic. It might not be a fish story for all of us, but many of us can relate to the "size" of a story and how it can grow in its details.

One of my all-time favorite verses in the Bible is found in John chapter 21:25. Throughout the book John writes about several miracles that point to Jesus' power as the Son of God. At the conclusion of his book he writes, "Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose the even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written."

Is John telling us a "fish story" here? In a way he is. He uses a literary device called hyperbole in this verse to help us understand two things. First, he recounts only seven of Jesus' miracles to draw our attention to his sovereignty as the Son of God. As we read the other gospels, we hear of many more miracles that Jesus performed. So yes, there is more to the story of Jesus life that have been written down in this gospel. Secondly, it speaks to the infinite power and most certain point that God, through Jesus is never idle in His purpose for our lives. He leads us, guides us, corrects us, challenges us, grows us, teaches us, and forgives us. (the list could go on). What we have presented before us in this gospel and the others tells us of God's story and his incredible love for us.

John's words in this verse also speak volumes to the praise, honor, and glory that we as Christ followers are to give to our Father in heaven. I am often reminded of the Psalms and the words of praise that are lifted to God; Psalm 150 is a great example:

*"Praise the Lord!
Praise God in his sanctuary;
praise him in his mighty heavens!
Praise him for his mighty deeds;
praise him according to his excellent greatness!
Praise him with trumpet sound;
praise him with lute and harp!
Praise him with tambourine and dance;
praise him with strings and pipe!
Praise him with sounding cymbals;
praise him with loud clashing cymbals!
Let everything that has breath praise the Lord!
Praise the Lord!"*

When his (Jesus) story becomes a part of our story today we have opportunity to praise him for the work that he continues to do in our lives and the lives of others. The way we live our lives as followers of Jesus can also bring praise, honor, and glory to him. Praise is not limited to the sound of trumpets, tambourines, strings, or the sounding of cymbals. When we reflect God's love, his mercy and grace to others this brings praise to his name.

Let's praise the Lord together for what he has done in our lives and pray for exciting new chapters in life filled with stories to share with those around us.