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**Limbo Land**

**By Reverend Sue Seeley**

**John Chapter 21 verses 1 - 3**

Hearing that Lectionary Reading you may have thought, “I wonder what Sue is going to make of that?” The answer is “Nothing!”

For two reasons:

1. Firstly I know that Chris had chosen it solely for the last verse. And we will be coming back to that.
2. And secondly because that’s not the message that God gave me weeks ago for today. So let’s dig into that, starting with a timely Introduction.

**On Boxing Day, a headline in the on-line news caught my eye. It read: “12 Recipes for when Time Isn’t Real between Christmas and New Year”.** Yes, we know the feeling. **My earrings** are an illustration: **One is a Christmas Tree and the other is an ordinary everyday earring!**

One year Tony and I started decorating the kitchen on Boxing Day. Well, when you’re working you have to take advantage of time off.

Are your cards and decorations still up? Some folk can’t wait to get them down - on Boxing Day! Others are Traditionalists and keep them up until 12th night on the 5th of January. For others, inertia sets in and they may still be up at the end of January!

Whatever your view on that, right now we’re in a kind of **Limbo Land**.

And that’s where my message - God’s message - for today, comes in. I want to read just 3 verses from **John Chapter 21.**

The Disciples were in a Limbo Period, ***though they didn’t know it at the time*.** They were between the Resurrection and the Ascension, a 40-day period when Jesus turned up sometimes, but they were no longer itinerant disciples, going where ever Jesus chose to minister. Yes, of course, the Risen Christ was in their hearts, but not on the ground on a day-to-day basis.

**And they really didn’t have a clue what to do – they no longer had a Clear Purpose. (*Remember the Great Commission didn’t come until the Ascension)***

**They knew the Future wouldn’t look like the Past. But what would it look like?**

Ever the Activist, Simon Peter, decided to do the only other thing he really knew how to do – **GO FISHING.**

For some, 2025 cannot be like 2024. Maybe due to the loss of a loved one, or deteriorating health; and for Chris and Teresa, both individually and as a couple, and for us as a church, there’s that same question: **WHAT NOW?**

From my experience in the Christian life - and I’ve been a follower of Jesus for around 70 years - the answer is: **“If in doubt – WAIT!”**

**However**, I’m absolutely brilliant at trying to nudge God in the direction I think I’d prefer to go, but experience tells me that this is doomed to disaster – **big time!**

God makes things plain at the Right Time – and not before.

Which is where we pick up on the last verse from the Lectionary Reading: **Blessed are those who hear the word of God and obey it.**

We sometimes sing the old chorus, **“Trust and Obey!”**, and we need to both Trust and Obey **when God is silent,** as well as when He speaks clearly.

As individuals, and as a church, we can’t know what 2025 will bring. However, we **can** look back on the many, many blessings we’ve received during the past 12 months.

God has been faithful – **and will continue to be faithful**.

And, in the meantime, we can do worse than to follow Peter’s example and to **do the familiar until God opens up Something New.**

**And Oh Boy!** For the disciples that was certainly going to be different! **Go into all the world and preach the Good News to all creation**.

However, we mustn’t overlook the first part of the Commission:

**You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem** [Sprowston], **all Judea** [wider Norwich] **and Samaria** [other parts of Norfolk and the UK] **and to the ends of the earth**.

**And it all begins in our Homes and in our Neighbourhood.**

***Amen.***

***So Be It*.**