

John 21:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

This is now the third time that Jesus shewed himself to his disciples, after that he was risen from the dead.

Analysis

This is now the third time that Jesus shewed himself to his disciples, after that he was risen from the dead (τοῦτο ἤδη τρίτον ἐφανερώθη Ἰησοῦς τοῖς μαθηταῖς/touto ēdē triton ephanerōthē Iēsous tois mathētais)—John marks this as the third post-resurrection appearance to the disciples collectively (not counting individual appearances to Mary Magdalene or the two on the Emmaus road). The first was in the upper room without Thomas (John 20:19-23), the second with Thomas present (John 20:26-29), now this third by the Sea of Galilee.

The verb ἐφανερώθη (ephanerōthē) means 'was manifested' or 'revealed himself'—emphasizing that resurrection appearances were sovereign disclosures, not chance encounters. Jesus revealed Himself according to His purpose and timing. The pattern of three witnesses or testimonies establishes certainty (Deuteronomy 19:15, 2 Corinthians 13:1). Three times Jesus manifested His resurrection, moving disciples from doubt to certainty, from fear to mission. This third appearance, combining miraculous provision, intimate fellowship, and commissioning (verses 15-17), prepares them for Pentecost and worldwide witness.

Historical Context

The 'third time' refers to group appearances recorded in John's Gospel, not the totality of appearances mentioned across all Gospels and 1 Corinthians 15:3-8. John selects seven signs in Jesus' ministry and carefully numbers post-resurrection appearances, demonstrating literary intentionality. The movement from Jerusalem

(first two) to Galilee (third) fulfills the angel's instructions (Mark 16:7) and Jesus' promise (Matthew 26:32) to meet disciples in Galilee. This geographic shift symbolizes mission expansion—from Judea to Galilee to the ends of the earth.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does the pattern of three manifestations establish the certainty of resurrection for wavering disciples and for us?
2. What does Jesus' sovereign timing of appearances—'manifesting himself' when and where He chose—teach about His continued lordship over the church?
3. How do the three appearances progress in purpose (peace/commission, proof/belief, provision/restoration), and what does this progression reveal about Jesus' patient discipling of failures?

Interlinear Text

τοῦτο	ἤδη	τρίτον	ἐφανερώθη	ὁ	Ἰησοῦς	τοῖς
This	now	the third time	is	G3588	that Jesus	G3588
G5124	G2235	G5154	G5319		G2424	
μαθηταῖς	αὐτοῦ,	ἐγερθεὶς	ἐκ	νεκρῶν		
disciples	G846	after that he was risen	from	the dead		
G3101		G1453	G1537	G3498		

Additional Cross-References

John 20:26 (References Jesus): And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you.

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