

John 21

Text Outline

¹Afterward Jesus appeared again to his disciples, by the Sea of Galilee.^[a]

I. It happened this way:

A. (Who were present)

1. ²Simon Peter,
2. Thomas (also known as Didymus^[b]),
3. Nathanael from Cana in Galilee,
4. sons of Zebedee,
5. and two other disciples were together.

B. ³“I’m going out to fish,” Simon Peter told them,

C. and they said, “We’ll go with you.”

D. So they went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.

II. ⁴Early in the morning,

A. Jesus

1. stood

a) on the shore,

b) but the disciples did not realize that it was Jesus.

2. ⁵He called out to them,

a) “Friends, haven’t you any fish?”

b) “No,” they answered.

3. ⁶He said,

a) “Throw

(1) your net on the right side of the boat

(2) and you will find some.”

b) When

(1) they did,

(2) they were unable to haul the net in because of the large number of fish.

B. ⁷Then

1. the disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, “It is the Lord!”

2. As soon as Simon Peter

- a) *heard him say, "It is the Lord,"*
- b) *he*
 - (1) wrapped his outer garment around him (for he had taken it off)
 - (2) and jumped into the water.

3. ⁸ The other disciples followed in the boat,

- a) *towing the net full of fish,*
- b) *for they*
 - (1) were not far from shore,
 - (2) about a hundred yards.^[c]

III. ⁹ When they landed,

A. they saw a fire of burning coals there

- 1. with fish on it,
- 2. and some bread.

B. ¹⁰ Jesus said to them,

- 1. "Bring some of the fish you have just caught."
- 2. ¹¹ So Simon Peter
 - a) *climbed back into the boat*
 - b) *and dragged the net ashore.*
 - (1) It was full of large fish, 153,
 - (2) but even with so many the net was not torn.

C. ¹² Jesus

- 1. said to them,
 - a) *"Come*
 - b) *and have breakfast."*
- 2. None of the disciples
 - a) *dared ask him, "Who are you?"*
 - b) *They knew it was the Lord.*

D. ¹³ Jesus

- 1. came,
- 2. took the bread
- 3. and gave it to them,
- 4. and did the same with the fish.

E. ¹⁴ This was now the third time Jesus appeared to his disciples after he was raised from the dead.

IV. ¹⁵ When they had finished eating,

A. Jesus said to Simon Peter,

- 1. "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?"
- 2. "Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you."

3. Jesus said, “Feed my lambs.”

B. ¹⁶ Again Jesus said,

1. “Simon son of John, do you love me?”

2. He answered, “Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.”

3. Jesus said, “Take care of my sheep.”

C. ¹⁷ The third time he said to him,

1. “Simon son of John, do you love me?”

2. Peter was hurt

a) *because Jesus asked him the third time, “Do you love me?”*

b) *He said,*

(1) “Lord, you know all things;

(2) you know that I love you.”

3. Jesus said,

a) *“Feed my sheep.*

b) ¹⁸ *Very truly I tell you,*

(1) when you were younger

(a) *you dressed yourself*

(b) *and went where you wanted;*

(2) but when you are old

(a) *you will stretch out your hands,*

(b) *and someone else*

(i) *will dress you*

(ii) *and lead you where you do not want to go.”*

c) ¹⁹ *Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God.*

d) *Then he said to him, “Follow me!”*

V. (John)

A. ²⁰ Peter

1. turned and saw that the disciple

a) *whom Jesus loved was following them.*

b) *(This was the one*

(1) who had leaned back against Jesus at the supper

(2) and had said, “Lord, who is going to betray you?”)

2. ²¹ When Peter saw him, he asked, “Lord, what about him?”

B. ²² Jesus answered,

1. “If

- a) *I want him to remain alive until I return,*
- b) *what is that to you?*
- c) *You must follow me."*

C. ²³ Because of this,

1. the rumor spread among the believers that this disciple would not die.

2. But Jesus

a) *did not say that he would not die;*

b) *he only said,*

(1) "If I want him to remain alive until I return,

(2) what is that to you?"

D. ²⁴ This is the disciple

1. who testifies to these things

2. and who wrote them down.

3. We know that his testimony is true.

VI. ²⁵ Jesus did many other things as well.

A. If every one of them were written down,

B. I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written.

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Conceptual Outline

Theme: Jesus restored Peter & re-commissioned him to ministry.

I. Unfruitful labor without Jesus

A. 7 disciples were together including

1. Peter who denied Jesus
2. Thomas who doubted but had repented and was with the group
3. Nathanael, a loyal person, who deserted Jesus
4. the sons of Zebedee
5. 2 unnamed disciples possibly representing any of His disciples

B. Peter initiated the return to fishing possibly because of restlessness, uncertainty about the future. Returning to the familiar would mean increased security.

C. All 6 joined Peter

D. Unfruitful labor all night

II. Jesus appears & grants success.

A. Jesus appeared.

B. Jesus asked a rhetorical question opening their awareness to their need for Him.

C. The difference of obedience

1. Jesus instructed them to throw the net to the right side of the boat.
2. The catch was so large, they were unable to haul the net in.

D. The recall

1. John recognized the Lord & told Peter
2. Peter wrapped his outer garment & jumped into the water
3. The 6 towed the boat in from about a hundred yard

III. Communion with Jesus

- A. When they arrived, Jesus already had fish and bread ready for them.
- B. He allowed them to contribute to the breakfast.
- C. The catch totaled 153 large fish but the net was not torn even after being dragged 100 yard.
- D. Jesus invited them to enjoy breakfast with Him.

IV. Peter reinstated asking Peter 3X

A. First time

- 1. Jesus asked "Simon son of John, do you love (agapao 2X, Phileo the 3rdX) me more than these?"
- 2. Peter's reply: "Yes Lord, you know that I love you (Phileo 3X.)"
- 3. Jesus Said, "Feed my lambs."

B. Second time

- 1. Jesus asked "Simon son of John, do you love me?"
- 2. Peter's reply: "Yes Lord, you know that I love you."
- 3. Jesus Said, "Take care of my sheep."

C. Third time

- 1. Jesus asked "Simon son of John, do you love me?"
- 2. Peter was hurt. He said "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you."
- 3. Jesus said,
 - a) *Feed my sheep*
 - b) *Jesus foretold Peter's martyrdom.*
 - c) *Then, "Follow me!"*

V. Single-minded devotion

- A. Peter inquired about John's future.
- B. Jesus answered,
 - 1. If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you?
 - 2. You must follow me."
- C. Rumor spread about John not dying refuted.
- D. John authenticated his writing.

VI. Closing - John exaltation of all that Jesus deeds as compared to the limited world.

Questions & Potential Answers:

1. This is an individual exercise, you'll not be asked to share. On a sheet of paper, write 10 things/people except Jesus that you love the most. Draw a vertical line and put the things or people you love in order. Then, place your love for Jesus relative to this list. Where about is He in the ranking? How have you demonstrated your love for Him?

Read John 21. Try to visualize the scene as we read.

Vs. 1-8

2. In this study, Peter's love of Jesus is in question. Let's first consider the context of the event and the setting. Who were there at the scene? What do you know about each of them?
 - Simon Peter - Professional fisherman, recently denied Jesus 3X, passionate sanguine
 - Thomas - a twin, prone to doubt, was an absentee (is present now), restored by Jesus in John 20
 - Nathanael - also named Bartholomew, Jesus praised him as a true Israelite with no deceit, was first to recognize Jesus as Son of God (Jn 1: 47-49)
 - sons of Zebedee - James & John, professional fisherman, Jesus named them sons of thunder; their mom wanted them to sit on Jesus' right & left (Mt 20:20.)
 - 2 other unnamed disciples

Why didn't John name the other 2 disciples?

- Possibly they were not well-known or John purposely kept them unknown so that anyone of us could relate.

Where were they? Why were they in Galilee? (Mk 14:28, 16:7)

- In Galilee. Jesus had previously instructed them to meet him there after the resurrection.

What did Peter decide to do? Why? When was the mood at the time?

- Possibly lost, confused, restless, anxious, frustrated, uncertain about the future.
- Return to the familiar is more grounding & provides a sense of security & productivity.

3. How productive was their fishing expedition? How might their mood be affected?
 - Unproductive. They must be even more restless and frustrated.

When & how did Jesus initiate contact with them?

- Early in the morning, He called out to them.

Why did He ask them a rhetorical question?

- To bring awareness to their need for help.

What is the lesson to be learned from their unfruitful result?

- Without Christ, even our best effort can fail. Productivity depends of God. Restless work to fill our empty hearts will fail.

4. Who recognized it was Jesus? How?

- John. He was observant enough to remember they earlier encounter with Jesus.

What was the disciples' response?

- Peter jumped into the water and rushed to see Jesus.
- The others followed & towed the net of fish with them.

What prompted Peter to put on his out garment and jump into the water?

- Maybe he wants to greet Jesus properly with respect. He couldn't wait for the boat to land. He was excited to see Jesus.

Does this incidence remind you of another familiar experience the disciples had with Jesus?

Read Luke 5:1-11. What are the similarities & differences?

- The other incidence was when they first met Jesus & were called to follow Him.
- Similarities:
 - They caught a large catch so much that they couldn't handle with normal procedure.
 - They responded to Jesus' instructions.
 - They were in the same place – Lake of Galilee.
- Differences:
 - The net began to break in the first but not this time.
 - With help they were able to fill the boats the first time. This time, they could only tow the net onshore.
 - First time, Peter recognized his sin and asked Jesus to go away. This time, Peter rushed to meet Jesus. Possibly, he knew that in Him, he could find forgiveness.

Vs. 9-14

5. The next scene is very affectionate. When they landed, what did they find?

- Jesus already had breakfast ready for them - fire of burning coal, fish, & bread.

Since Jesus already had fish and bread, why did He ask them to bring some of the fish they caught?

- Jesus wanted them to have a part. He allowed them to contribute.

By cooking and serving them breakfast, what was Jesus trying to communicate to them?

- His love & providence. He understood and accepted their pain and struggles. He cared about what's going on in their lives and was able, willing, and ready to minister to their needs.
- Again, He demonstrated a servant's attitude to them.

6. What miracles can you identify from this passage?

- Professional fishermen caught nothing all night.
- Jesus' appearance.
- Jesus speaking from 100 yard away with wind & ocean waves but they could hear Him clearly.
- The catch was large.
- The net was not broken and could be towed 100 yard without breaking.
- Jesus already had coal, fish, and bread.
- Peter, who feared for his life and denied Jesus, can be transformed into someone who will die for Christ. A person, who failed Christ, can be restored to be a leader of the church.

Does this scene remind you of other experiences they had with Jesus?

- Feed of the 5000, 4000 where Jesus cared for His disciples.
- Last Supper in the upper room where Jesus served them.

7. How did John and the other disciples recognize Jesus? Why didn't they "dare" ask?

- Jesus took great care to remind them of their past experiences with Him. They were able to recognize him by remembering what He did with them, His instructions, the Communion, and His miraculous power.
- They didn't dare ask the obvious.

None of us have seen/heard Jesus speak. How can we recognize Jesus in our spiritual journey?

- By remembering His mighty acts in our lives, by His teachings, and how He has related to us, by communion with Him among His people.

Vs. 15-19

8. What did Jesus do after breakfast?

- He initiated a dialog with Peter to restore him and to mend their broken relationship.

What did He ask Peter? How did He address Peter? Why? What was Peter's response? In your opinion, how much did Peter love Jesus?

- He asked, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?"
- Simon son of John, not Peter (the rock.) Peter's faith had wavered and was not the rock at that point. He needed restoration. Jesus probably wanted to call attention to Peter's need for restoration.
- Peter pointed to Jesus' knowledge & affirmed that he loved Him.
- I do think that Peter loved Jesus. His first 2 responses were properly in his usual casual impulsive way, but his third response was more thoughtful especially as he pointed to Jesus omniscience. Yet this love may still be short of the Agapao (sacrificial) kind of love.

Why did He ask 3X? Why "hurt" Peter this way? Why didn't Jesus deal with Peter's denial the first 2 or 3 times they met previously?

- 3X to correspond to Peter's 3 denials.
- Peter needed to be broken to recognize that the broken relationship couldn't just be brushed aside.
- With Peter's quick personality, Jesus might have been giving Peter time to reflect. He might also have been waiting for Peter to initiate the conversation. When He could wait no longer, He confronted.
- He also wanted to bring Peter & the disciples back to the scene and place they were first called and responded to Jesus. There they will be reminded of why they followed in the first place. It was the be perfect setting to recommit their lives to following Christ.

What was Peter's perception of himself and his faith prior to his denial? (Mk 14: 27-31; Lk 22:33)

- Peter felt that he was better than everyone else. He promised that he would die for Jesus.

What did Peter's denial of Jesus show about his love and whom he loved the most?

- He loved his own life more. He wasn't really the rock he wished/pretended he was.

What could "more than these" refer to for Peter?

- More than the fish, livelihood, his career, his materials. His life.
- More than the other disciple's love for Jesus (the better than everyone else mentality.)

- Jesus might have purposely left it vague to include a number of things.

What could "these" be for you? Why does Jesus have to be #1 in our lives?

- He needs to be Lord and Master. There can be no other master including ourselves.

9. What charge did Jesus give Peter as soon as he affirmed his love for Jesus? What does "feed/take care of my lamb/sheep" mean?

- Peter's love for Christ might be less than perfect. Yet, Jesus entrusted him to feed/take care of my lamb/sheep.
- Sheep needs much care; easily get lost. They need to be led. They are helpless animals from dangers around them. They are dirty & filled with lice and ticks. Peter is to nurture, care, lead, guide, and protect Jesus' people. Yet, Peter does not own them. They belong to Jesus.

Why is the order of love and commission important? How will this commission cost Peter? What price have you paid for loving Jesus?

- Love has to come before service. Otherwise, service will be superficial, meaningless, and obligatory. Service is love in action. On the other hand, love has to be demonstrated through service. Otherwise, love will be empty lacking in substance.
- It will cost Peter his life. Loss of his self-will, authority, and control.

Vs 20-25

10. The closing few verses of the gospel recorded an interesting reality about ministry. After being told his future, Peter turned around and saw John following them. How did Peter respond to this discovery? What does his response show about Peter's sense of security?

- He inquired about how John's future as though he wanted a comparison, a competition.
- He's not secure in Jesus' love. He's still struggling with needing to be the best and to prove himself.

How did Jesus handle his insecurity?

- Jesus told him to just focus following Him with a single-minded devotion, not comparing, competing, or depending on others. Jesus is the only one Peter is to follow, not John, not anyone else.

11. What principles can we draw from this passage regarding following Christ? How will you respond to Jesus if He asked you, "...do you love me more than these?"

- We need to love Christ more than our lives.
- Our love for Christ need to be the reason for ministry.
- Without Christ, ministry will not be fruitful or satisfying.
- Single-minded devotion, following Christ is the answer to insecurity, envy, and competition.
- Jesus will accept a repented worker in His Kingdom. He is willing to restore and re-commission.

Personalize reading of the whole passage.

Questions:

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9. What charge did Jesus give Peter as soon as he affirmed his love for Jesus? What does "feed/take care of my lamb/sheep" mean? Why is the order of love and commission important? How will this commission cost Peter? What price have you paid for loving Jesus?

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