

Reconciliation

- John 21:15-19
 - John 21:15-19 English Standard Version (ESV)
Jesus and Peter
¹⁵ When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” He said to him, “Feed my lambs.” ¹⁶ He said to him a second time, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” He said to him, “Tend my sheep.” ¹⁷ 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.
- The questionable love of Peter for his Saviour, Jesus Christ
 - Jesus appeared to his disciples just before this in John 20, while the door was locked. He said to them “²¹ Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.” He breathed on them the Holy Spirit.
 - Thomas came in a bit later and doubted what they saw and eight days later, Jesus again, behind locked doors, appeared to him. Jesus showed him His hands and said:” ²⁹ Jesus said to him, “Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”
 - We have no account of how long after this Jesus took before appearing to them again, but this time on the shore of the by the Sea of Tiberias.
 - They were waiting on Jesus to give them the go-ahead to preach the Gospel to the world and instead of doing nothing they went about their business.
 - You will see that there is no disagreement between the men and all went fishing, but caught nothing.
 - Jesus called out to them from the side and asked if they caught anything. After a whole night of trying, they caught nothing. Jesus

said to throw the nets to the other side and soon they had so much fish they couldn't haul it in.

- "So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in, because of the quantity of fish"
- I love the next part of the story... *"⁷ That 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. ⁸ The other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, but about a hundred yards^[a] off."*
- Peter couldn't care less about the fish... think of Josh' sermon a while back about the nets. This was the most expensive part of all their equipment. He needed to get to Jesus. His guild drove him to, without thought, jump and swim for shore.
- As soon as the others got to shore Jesus had a fire ready and they took some of the fish they caught (153 large ones in total) and ate with Jesus and this is where we get into the story.
- ***John 21:15-17 English Standard Version (ESV)***

Jesus and Peter

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He allowed them to eat and spent time with Him. The disciples were at their happy place. Just like the good old days. Eating together, sitting in awe when Jesus spoke. Jesus knew that his conversation with Peter would be an uneasy one, and thus left it till the end, because he didn't want to spoil their dinner. Something to take note of. Peter on the other hand was conscious to himself and the events that surrounded Jesus's death. He betrayed Jesus, just as Jesus said he would do... and now they have dinner and all seems well. But was it. He sat with the battle in his mind as to where he stand with Jesus. Is he still a

disciple, what is the rest thinking of him, even though they went fishing with him. I believe he sat with fear in his heart because he was unsure of himself in Christ. How often do you feel like that? What will be the key in conquering this feeling?

The one key here to reconciling to Christ was **community**. Jesus dined with them all and instead of taking Peter out about what He did, he handled him not as a criminal but as a friend and together with all of the other disciples. Peter already reproached himself for what he did and Jesus didn't need to do it. So often our reconciling to Christ and one another comes from that place of reproaching oneself first.

The 2nd key is **tacit intimation**, agreeing to something with an indirect suggestion. Without directly calling Peter out, Jesus, through the dinner with his friends and seeing the reproach Peter had, could indirectly show him that he is forgiven. But not just forgiven, but forgotten and Christ assured Peter how dear he was to Him.

The 3rd key is **restoration with a Spirit of meekness**. "The quality of being quiet, gentle, and unwilling to argue or express your opinions". Jesus has given a great encouraging example of the way he want us to handle this and live.

But Jesus still had to ensure that Peter understood what was happening and the question that He asked, "Do you love me", 3 times, and the same reply 3 times. It was to affect Peter and the other disciples that were present and furthermore to affect us as the reader. Kneeling down before Jesus and answering from deep within.

Let's look at how Jesus asked it.

Jesus had to ask these questions to ensure that Peter and all the other disciples understood that this is not just a little quick answer you give and then be sent off to tend to the flock of Christ. Even though he knew their hearts and for that matter, our hearts as well, Jesus made sure they knew it. I believe that if you were asked the same question 3 time over and give the same answer, you will be sure of what you believe, but so often we get asked the same question and by the 2nd time it is asked, we hesitate and fall back.

Jesus call him by his name, again to affect him, but he doesn't call him Cephas or Peter, for he had lost the credit of his strength and stability, which those names signified. But in Matt 16:17 *Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon*

Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. He calls him son of Jonas (From the KJV) (or John or Johanan), to remind him of his extraction, how mean it was, and unworthy the honour to which he was advanced. When Jesus asked Peter if he loved Him, He used a word for love that signified total commitment. Peter responded with a word for love that signified his love for Jesus, but not necessarily his total commitment. This was not because he was reluctant to express that greater love, but because he had been disobedient and denied the Lord in the past. He was, perhaps, now reluctant to make a claim of supreme devotion when, in the past, his life did not support such a claim. Jesus pressed home to Peter the need for unswerving devotion by repeatedly asking Peter if he loved Him supremely. The essential message here is that Jesus demands total commitment from His followers. Their love for Him must place Him above their love for all else. Jesus confronted Peter with love because He wanted Peter to lead the apostles (Matt. 16:18), but in order for Peter to be an effective shepherd, his overwhelming drive must exemplify supreme love for his Lord.

None of this is possible if there are doubt, un-forgiveness, and bitterness, judgment or anything that hinders you from declaring your love for Christ. Christ needs to know you love and with that love you will be able to tend to His sheep.

Lambs need to be fed and sheep needs to be shepherd. And we can feed the sheep of Christ from that place of real love for Jesus.

I need to ask the question this morning, what drives your business?

Do you always have the excuse of being too busy and with what are you busy. Are you busy with the things of Jesus and eternity or are you busy building an empire that will fall away one day. Please don't get me wrong here today. I'm not saying quit your job and become a missionary. You need to hear from the Lord and be confident in the place where you are with what you need to do. God uses your degrees and qualifications so that you can "tend" to His flock. But that requires you to be an effective witness in the work place, for family, for friends. God will challenge you with what you are busy, and you will need to give account to Him one day of the things you have kept yourself busy with.

Are you too busy to reconcile with friends, family, the Lord. Too busy to tend to your community, showing one another with tacit intimation and a spirit of meekness, the Love of Christ to one another.

Reconcile to Jesus first and flow from that place of love and intimacy to your community, friends, family, work etc.

Romans 14:12 (ESV)

¹²So then each of us will give an account of himself to God.

Hebrews 4:13 (ESV)

¹³And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

1 Peter 4:5 (ESV)

⁵but they will give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead.