

"Fire One. Fire Two."**John 18:15–18; John 21:1–19**

Throughout Scripture, God has a remarkable pattern. He often brings His children back to the places of their deepest failure, not to shame them, but to redeem them.

- The same Lord who met Adam in the garden...
- Jacob at Bethel...
- Jonah outside Nineveh...
- And Thomas, before the scars...now meets Peter beside another fire. A charcoal fire.
- The question isn't merely, "Why a charcoal fire?"
- The better question is: **Why did Jesus build the same kind of fire?**

I. Fire One — The Fire of Failure John 18:15–18, 25–27

¹⁵ Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple. Since that disciple was known to the high priest, he entered with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest, ¹⁶ but Peter stood outside at the door. So the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out and spoke to the servant girl who kept watch at the door, and brought Peter in. ¹⁷ The servant girl at the door said to Peter, "You also are not one of this man's disciples, are you?" He said, "I am not." ¹⁸ Now the servants and officers had made a charcoal fire, because it was cold, and they were standing and warming themselves. Peter also was with them, standing and warming himself.

²⁵ Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. So they said to him, "You also are not one of his disciples, are you?" He denied it and said, "I am not." ²⁶ One of the servants of the high priest, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, asked, "Did I not see you in the garden with him?" ²⁷ Peter again denied it, and at once a rooster crowed.

A. Distress and Denial

1. Peter stood around another man's fire and warmed himself among Christ's enemies.
2. Three times, he denied ever knowing Jesus. Then the rooster crowed.
3. Luke tells us that Jesus turned and looked at Peter (Luke 22:61).
4. Can you imagine the crushing weight of that moment?

[Many of us have a "Fire One." A place. A conversation. A hospital room. A courtroom. A phone call. A bad decision. A moment we wish we could erase. Sometimes all it takes is a smell, a song, or a location to bring it rushing back.

B. Defeat and Defining

1. The enemy wants us to believe our worst moment defines us forever.
2. Peter probably thought his usefulness had ended beside that fire.

II. Fire Two — The Fire of Fellowship John 21:9–13

⁹ When they got out on land, they saw a charcoal fire in place, with fish laid out on it, and bread. ¹⁰ Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish that you have just caught." ¹¹ So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, 153 of them. And although there were so many, the net was not torn. ¹² Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast." Now none of the disciples dared ask him, "Who are you?" They knew it was the Lord. ¹³ Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and so with the fish.

A. Jesus' Gracious Approach

1. When Peter reached the shore, Jesus already had breakfast waiting.
 - The risen Lord began with hospitality, not correction. "Come and have breakfast."
 - Before the questions...
 - Before the commission...
 - There was fellowship.
 - Jesus served the meal. Similar to the Last Supper in the Upper Room

B. Jesus Serves Us Before He Sends Us Out

1. We often think God says, "Get your life together, then come."
2. Jesus says, "Come, sit down. Let's eat."
3. Grace invites us to the table before it sends us back into the field.

III. Fire Two Becomes the Fire of Restoration John 21:15–17

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.

A. The Reminders – Only after breakfast did Jesus ask, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me?"

1. The Upper Room Meal
2. Peter's Shame – Notice what Jesus did not ask. "Why did you fail Me?"
 - Instead, He asked about Peter's love in three questions, with three affirmations, and three commissions.
 - The issue was never Peter's perfection. It was Peter's relationship.

B. The Restoration – Jesus often revisits painful places, not to reopen the wound, but to remove the infection.

IV. Fire Two Becomes the Fire of Purpose John 21:17–19

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. ¹⁸ Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were young, you used to dress yourself and walk wherever you wanted, but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will dress you and carry you where you do not want to go." ¹⁹ (This he said to show by what kind of death he was to glorify God.) And after saying this he said to him, "Follow me."

A. The Recommission: "Feed My sheep."

1. The man who failed publicly would now shepherd publicly.
2. Failure did not disqualify Peter.
3. Grace prepared him.
4. The fire that once represented shame now became the place where Peter rediscovered his calling. Now, when Peter smelled a charcoal fire, he remembered the Sea of Galilee, not the courtyard.

B. Our Renewal: Many believers remain parked beside Fire One.

1. Jesus invites us to move to Fire Two.
2. He restores us so that we can serve Him with humility rather than pride.

1. **It's no accident that Fire One happened in the darkness of night and Fire Two happened in the light of dawn.** The night ended with a rooster's crow. The morning began with Jesus' voice. Fire One took place during the darkness of the night. Peter's greatest failure happened before dawn. But Fire Two took place in the morning.
2. **The Greater Fire:** Jesus stepped into that judgment for us and bore what we deserved so that we could receive what we never earned.
3. **The Greater Way Forward**
 - a. Perhaps you are haunted by your Fire One. You remember the failure, the regret, the broken relationship, and the words you wish you could take back.
 - b. Jesus does not pretend those moments never happened. He provides a way forward.
4. **The Grace For "Me."**
 - Could it be that Jesus isn't asking us to prove or defend ourselves?
 - Could he simply be saying, "Come and have breakfast"?
 - Every one of us asks, "*Do I really belong?*" Jesus says we do.
5. **Jesus often brings us back to the place of our greatest failure, not to condemn us, but to redeem what happened there.**
 - The Christian life is not about pretending Fire One never happened.
 - It is about discovering that Jesus was already waiting at Fire Two.
 - Where failure once had the final word...grace now speaks louder.

This week, before you rush into another day of responsibilities, picture yourself on that shoreline. Smell the charcoal. Hear the waves. See Jesus smile. And hear Him say, 'Come and have breakfast.' Sit there for a while. Before you try to serve Him again...let Him serve you." Have a blessed week!