

Wk 19

19May24

Call to Worship.

Psalm 18:1-3 'I love You, O LORD, my strength. The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, My God, my rock, in whom I take refuge; My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold. I call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised, and I am saved from my enemies.'

10,000 Reasons

There is a Fountain

Doctrinal Teaching. (Our Love For God and God's People)

Deut. 6:5-6 'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.'

Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus

His Mercy is More

Psalm 90; Satisfy Us

Sermon Text.

John 21:15-19. A Different Breed Pt 1.

'So 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, "Tend My lambs."

He said to him again 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, "Shepherd My sheep."

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 all things; You know that I love You."

Jesus said to him, "Tend My sheep. Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were younger, you used to gird yourself and walk wherever you wished; but when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands and someone else will gird you, and bring you where you do not wish to go."

Now this He said, signifying by what kind of death he would glorify God. And when He and when He had spoken this, He said to him, "Follow Me!"

Intro.

Today's message is titled, A Christian Breed. It is part 1 of a 3 part message to close out the Gospel of John.

Christian leadership is the matter of becoming a different breed.

Today in this sermon I am calling everyone here to become a different breed.

Every person, who is called by Christ is called by this same outline as Peter.

You are called to become a different breed.

No longer are you what you once were; now you cast off every restraint.

No longer can you wallow in self-doubt; because you no longer believe in yourself, you believe in Christ.

Today, I am making the call to become a different breed.

In this passage, Peter is placed in his calling. In Peter's calling, Christ creates a different breed.

In order to create a Christian breed, I must plant a Christian seed. But, it's at this point of planting the Christian seed that a number of things happen in the sermon.

Satan puts one man to sleep. The seed passes by like distant dream.

Satan takes one man and hardens his heart. I've been hurt and it won't happen again, so he protects himself from the vulnerabilities of Christian service.

Satan takes another man and closes his mind. Cynicism, Skepticism, Atheism. A case of the Pout's, Doubts, and fishing for Trout's – each serve to steal the man's call to Christ.

In that man's mind, Christ becomes a figment of his imagination.

Whether a man falls asleep, hardens his heart, or closes his mind, just know this; it was those things that him to miss his calling.

The call was made but you were asleep. The call was made but your mind was closed. The call was made but your heart was too hard.

Then, there is another man or woman. One who still believes.

This is the person who will hear the message. They will hear the seeds.

Failures are not the saddest thing in life. Failures come and failures go. But Failures are not the saddest thing to see.

The saddest thing to see is a person who lives life with no heart. They have no heart.

You can be alive but have no brain. You'd be brain-dead. But you're not dead. We have a lot of people in the world like this today.

They are living and breathing but not mentally functioning. That's a sad way to live but not the saddest.

You've got people who don't seem to get anything right. All their actions seem to just keep getting it all wrong. That's sad to see. But NOT the saddest thing to see.

The saddest thing to see is a person with no heart! And because they have no heart they have no love.

To live a life with no love is to live a lifeless life!

To really live, you have to love. And to define how a person lives is to define what they love?

Do they love the world? Their life will be marked by worldly distinctives.

Do they love themselves? Their life will be charted by their individuality.

Do they love Christ? Then the personhood and priorities of Jesus Christ will direct their life.

Here in this passage, Jesus Christ is calling Peter to a life of Love.

It is a life that is directed by the Love of Jesus Christ. The question is presented, Do you Love Me?

If you do love Me, then do this for Me? Feed my sheep, Shepherd My Sheep, Tend to My Sheep.

Be consumed by your love for Me and let that affection provide your life's direction.

Before you get married it is an important question to consider; Do you truly love that other person?

Before you are called into Christian service it is an important question to consider.

You know I've been in Christian service for years now and of all the people that are attempted to qualify my service, I've yet to have anyone ask me this question? Ironic, isn't it.

I've had people ask me about my education? Where did you go to seminary?
I've had people ask me about my personal life? Do you drink, do you smoke?

But I've yet to have anyone ask me, **Do You Love Jesus Christ?**

Personally, I think it is the greatest qualifier of Christian ministry.

You don't enter Christian service for the fanfare.
You don't enter Christian service for the pay.
You don't enter Christian service for the vacation time.

The only one reason that will sustain genuine, true, Christian service, is Love For Jesus Christ.

By the way, this is not merely Peter's calling. This obligation of loving Christ's people is not merely fulfilled in Peter.

Among many things, the Church is to Love Christ's people.

A Church should be marked by Love. Affection determines Direction. What you love will determine where you go.

I present this question here, **Do You Love the LORD JESUS CHRIST?**

Body.

Peter, throughout the Gospels, claimed to Love Jesus more than all of the other disciples?

Peter really becomes an example unto all of us of what to do and what not to do.

People that set an example of what to do and what not to do are called Leaders.

Christian leaders aren't perfect. Peter isn't perfect. And his lack of perfection does nothing to disqualify his call to leadership.

These people that are called to leadership, give direction, and they can give direction because they have a genuine and sincere affection.

Christian Leadership and Christian calling.

Restoration/Forgiveness.

Leadership/Love.

Peter learns Christian leadership.

1 Pet. 2:12 'Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God on the day of visitation'

1 Pet. 3:16 'having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame. For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God's will, than for doing evil.'

Afflictions may kill us, but they cannot hurt us; they make take away my life, but they cannot take away my God, my Christ, and my crown. **Thomas Brooks, Precious Remedies Against Satan's Devices**

Christian leadership is a challenging role, but OH, how we need more Christian leaders.

In an age of people jockeying for territory. Positioning themselves for greater power and influence.

How foolish it is, to dilute the population of Christian leadership because of selfishness, jealousy, and envy.

In order to have Christian leadership you need restoration. Peter needs restoration.

In order to have restoration you need forgiveness. Peter needs forgiveness.

In order to have forgiveness, you need love. Peter needs Christ's love.

'above all things, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins' 1 Pet. 4:8

'hatred stirs up strife but love covers all transgressions' Prov. 10:12

I remember a commander in the military telling me, '**Leaders are friction-free**' – in other words, you don't get bogged down by the various problems on a day to day basis.

Leaders are friction-free, they are **problem-solvers not problem-revolvers**.

The Bible shows us the best way to solve problems and the two on-going ingredients of problem solving are; forgiveness and love.

Problem-solving is not a matter of intuition, ingenuity, and intelligence.

Most problems can be solved by overlooking pettiness, and loving a greater cause than your own ego and image.

James writes **'he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.'** James 5:20

NOW, Peter sinned big time, He did it on prime time, and it's recorded for all time.

But the LORD Jesus did what He came to do; 'not to condemn' but to restore. And Jesus makes it plain in front of all of the disciples that Peter is restored and commissioned into leadership.

There will be No Flies on Peter. Peter will not be tricked or work in trickery. Peter is no longer a character, but is filled with Christian character.

Exposition.

v. 15 'So 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, "Tend My lambs." John identifies Peter as Simon Peter in nearly every reference to him in this Gospel.

Here, Jesus calls Peter, **'Simon Peter, son of John'** – this is what Peter was referring to in his initial call in John 1.

It would be the equivalent of your mom calling you by your entire name when you know you better listen up!

The simple take-away is that, ok, ok, Jesus is really getting Peter's attention now.

You recall, Peter denied Christ 3 times, here Jesus confirms Peter love 3 times.

Jesus asks Peter 1 question 3 times. Do You Love Me?

a. 'do you love Me'

Now this would not be apparent in your English translation. But in the Greek text there are two different words here used for love.

Αγαπώ and φιλω (agape and phileo) – These two expressions of love refer to the love of the will and brotherly love, or friendship.

Both of these words are referring to a person's affections.

Friendship love in the Christian faith is important. It is important to have friends. You should have friends.

I would encourage you to make more friends and to love your friends. Be loyal to your friends. Help your friends. Encourage your friends.

But salvation and service are something more significant than the fleeting moments of friendship.

Friendship is important, but let me be clear, friendship that interferes with obedience to Christ is no Christian friendship.

Friendship that causes you to miss your calling, causes you to not fulfill your calling, is not Christian friendship.

Somebody said, once 'I don't want a friend that will tell me the truth, I want a friend that will tell me what I want to hear' – Well that's not a Christian friend.

'faithful are the wounds of a friend' Proverbs.

Jesus is calling Peter to identify a type of Divine Love in that will be necessary for Christian leadership and service.

Affection determines direction!.

b. 'more than these'

More than these. More than what? More than the other disciples? More than John?

That's reasonable to assume. Peter has made that statement plenty of times.

Peter's zeal has made the claim that he was highly faithful, though his actions showed otherwise.

More than the other disciples? Probably not.

Jesus is most likely referring to Peter's previous life. Do you love Me more than your previous vocation? Do you love Me more than fishing? More than your boat? More than your nets? More than the catch?

Do you love Me more than these things?

That is a requirement for a Christian leader. It's really a requirement for all Christians, but especially a leader.

Leaders set examples. Peter must be an example to the flock.

It's been well said before that 'Example is not the best form of influence; it is the only form of influence.'

'Don't talk about it, be about it' – 'I don't care how much you know until I know how much you care'

Well, this is basically what Jesus is confirming here, because Jesus is going to require this love to the fullest extent possible; Peter's life.

Do you love me, more than these?

Do you love Jesus enough to turn away from the previous lifestyle? This is called Repentance.

Repentance is the tails side of the Conversion coin. Faith is the heads side of the conversion coin.

And the call is this Peter, what's it gonna be, **Heads or Tails?** Heads you walk by Faith, Tails you turn from your previous life.

And Jesus says in **Luke 22:32 'I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers'**

Peter is being called to put Christ's sheep on a nutritional program that will build muscle mass. Strengthen the flock.

c. 'you know that I love you'

There are times when there is minimal exegetical value in the Greek text.

What I mean by that, is that you don't always need a reference to the Greek in order to understand the passage. However, there are some critical times when it is important.

To me, this statement is one of those times.

Peter responds to Jesus' question about αγαπάς, Yes Lord I φιλω.

Some people believe that this distinction in the Greek text is just a stylistic difference in John's written. Personally, I don't think that is the case.

I had a good conversation with a former Greek profession of mine about this distinction, and he said it's not an exegetical distinction it's just a synonymy.

That's fine. I can see it that way.

Personally, I do believe John is communicating something distinct to us here to be gleaned.

John has had about 60 years of both meditation and recall of these events and John has been able to witness the expression of the Holy Spirit through teaching at the NT church for over 60 years.

Personally, I believe that John is showing a distinction between what Jesus expects and what Peter offered as a response.

Jesus expects us to love Him to the extent of our self-will being yielded to His purposes.

Submission to self-will and submission to friendship are not equivalent levels of submission.

Very often, professed Christians will submit their self-will to things that are NOT Christ, and then still claim to be a friend OF Christ.

What I personally believe, John is communicating in the Greek text that there is a distinction in the expectation of what Jesus expects and what Peter offers.

An additional reason for why I think it's more significant that just being a synonym is because the concept of total submission to Christ is stated by Christ at the end of the passage.

Jesus says, there is going to come a time **when you will be girded by someone else, and you will go where you do not wish!**

What does Jesus mean by that? It is a 1st century euphemism for crucifixion.

Jesus is basically telling Peter, that your love for Me will go to the extent that you will end up dying for Me.

And what does Peter say in response?! 'What about him/John?!' LOL. Insane.

d. 'Tend My lambs'

Now this is important. This personal pronoun, '**My**' – the people of the church are Christ's people! They do not belong to Peter, a pope, or pontiff. They are Christ's lambs.

These lambs are Jesus' lambs. These lambs are the people the Lord Jesus died for!

Peter is being commissioned to be the under-shepherd of the Great Shepherd.

Peter is being commissioned to become an identifiable priest to a nation of priests, all of which fall under the High Priest.

But the question remains, How will Peter 'tend' to Christ's lambs? What is the expectation? What do those lambs need? How will Peter do this?

v.16 'He said to him again 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, "Shepherd My sheep."

Another interesting exegetical distinction here.

Βοσκέ, πρόβατα. Tend, Shepherd.

In v. 15, Jesus calls the people that Peter will lead, **αρνιά/lambs**, in v. 16, Jesus calls them, **πρόβατα/sheep**.

What's the difference between a lamb and sheep? About 12 month's maturity. A year's maturity. Lambs are usually 0-1 years old. Sheep are mature in size usually after a year.

Βοσκέ; feed, tend, cause to graze.

Πρόβατα; refers to the role of a Shepherd of sheep.

What's the difference between tending/feeding and Shepherding? Well there is a subtle distinction between leading children and leading adults.

There is a little difference as it **pertains to maturity**.

There are some full-grown people who never grow up. 70 year old's that are still 17 in the Spirit.

Then you've got 17 year old's that have been committed to Christian discipleship and they attain a level of wisdom that is uncanny.

Why do some mature and some don't? It's very simple, they don't miss the regular feeding and they don't rebel against the faithful shepherding.

When people don't eat the food, they have stunted growth.

When people run away from the shepherd, they get lost!

It's that simple.

'all we are like sheep have gone astray' Is. 53:6

If a person is committed to the Christian faith, they seriously can learn all the fundamentals that sustain their faith in under a year.

The trouble with some people is they get bored with those fundamentals. Getting bored with the fundamentals can stunt a person's growth.

It's good to put some FUN, into the Fun-damentals, but Shepherds also have to watch out for putting too much FUN into the fundamentals. And there are people that don't like that.

Some lambs never mature into sheep because they would rather consume goat content. Shepherds have to watch out for that too.

They say give me the Billy Goat Breakfast and they get so filled up on Billy Goat Breakfast, they skip the Lambs Lunch, and their asleep before the Sheep's Supper.

In a real simple sense, Jesus is saying to Peter, 'Feed them, and Lead Them.'

If you Love Me, Feed them, and Lead Them.

Leadership is tough. It's tough because a lot of the people you lead will NOT like you.

It's tough to not be liked. But Jesus is not calling Peter to popularity, He is calling Him to propriety!

Jesus is calling Peter to Posterity. To stand firm. To get it right.

In order to lead well, you must Love well.

Peter is being called into service as a Christian leader. All of the other disciples do the same in their own right.

One of the tough things about Christian leadership is that it is **rarely unified**.

Rarely do we witness **Unity of Command**. Even among the disciples they eventually scatter across the greater region and take up the mantel of Christian leadership.

But the councils and the conferences are much more scarce than the critics, condemnations, and crucifixions.

Leadership and Liker-ship are NOT the same thing.

Leadership requires maturity, Liker-ship embraces immaturity.
Leadership requires sacrifice, Liker-ship embraces worldly vice.

Leadership counts the cost. And the cost is Love. What do you love the most?

It's been said before, If you want to be liked by everyone don't become a Leader, sell Ice Cream.

Well, the Cream of the Crop, Rises to the Top. Humility comes before Honor.

I personally believe that ALL Christians are called to be Leaders. The reason I believe that is because Christians set a Christ-like example everywhere they go.

Christian leadership is not a matter of position but a **matter of imposition. It is a matter of God's will being imposed upon you and lived out.**

Christian leadership is a matter of an other worldly burden placed upon your character.

Jesus Christ is commissioning Peter to be a **Feeder and a Leader**. In order to do that, Peter must Teach and Preach God's Word, Pray for God's People, and set an example for them in Godliness.

This is why Peter says in the book Acts '**I cannot leave the Word of God and Prayer to wait tables' Acts 6.**

Peter did not have an ESV. He did not have an NASB, LSB, KJV, NIV.

Peter had the OT. The Old Testament. And Peter, a rural fisherman. Without education, had to study to show himself approved.

Peter had to get back in the text, and prove to God's people, Christ's lambs, that it is a fundamental Truth, that the LORD Jesus is the Son of God.

Peter had to prove to the people from the Law, the Historical books, the wisdom literature, and the prophets, that Jesus Christ is the Messiah.

v.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 all things; You know that I love You." Jesus said to him, "Tend My sheep."

Look, if Jesus tells you to do something, you better do it.

Peter has his marching orders for the rest of his life. Tending to Christ's lambs and sheep.

Now the matter remains, how is Peter supposed to do that?

It says that Peter was grieved. Why is Peter grieved? Peter is the last person in the situation that needs to be grieved about the whole thing.

Where does grief come from? In short, grief comes from a lack of contentment.

Grief does come from trouble. But we have promises from Christ about how to have contentment despite our troubles.

If Peter, is grieved now, just wait. By the world's standards, things are only going to get worse for him.

How will Peter be able to find contentment in his calling to Shepherd the sheep? It comes down to this, Peter must place his identity in the Lord Jesus Christ.

As a Christian Leader, if it happened to Christ it can happen to you.

If Christ was betrayed, then betrayal is not beneath you.

If Christ was dishonored, then dishonor is not beneath you.

If close friends could sell Christ out, why would you expect any different?

This brings about a side-trait that every Christian will eventually develop. It is a side-trait that comes into your life and it is this trait, that actually develops Christian love.

It is the trait of HUMILITY. Love must be partnered with humility.

It's been said before that the only partnership that works is the partnership that you don't enter into.

Well as far as Christian love goes, for it to go anywhere, it must embrace Humility.

There is no Christian love without Humility. Lowliness. Meekness.

A person cannot actually love others if they are NOT humble. Humility is what actually proves the groundwork for love.

For Christ to love us, He condescended and become a man.

For Peter to tend the lambs, He must be humbled from his self-pride, pre-tense, and presumptions.

I cannot think of anything that would be more humbling than to be told by God, that you are going to be killed in you service.

I think that might serve to take the winds out of the sail.

Christ doesn't say to Peter, '**Hey we got a great benefits package! You've got a 401k, guaranteed vacations, and healthcare.**'

No, Jesus calls Peter to come and die.

The depth of love is beyond the surface.

v. 18

v. 19

I'm going to save verses 18-19 for next week.

Application.

How do we demonstrate our love for the lambs? Our love for the sheep?

Love for self is really the major obstacle to love for Christ.

Selfishness. Self-focus. Self-confidence. Self-fulfillment. Self-boasting.

The Self is the opposition to the Love of Christ.

Satan is not the opposition to your love of Christ. BUT, Satan will use your Self to work against this arrival of Love for Christ.

Why do we fast? Self-denial.

Why do we give? Self-denial.

Why do we serve? Self-denial.

Why do we tell the Truth even when it is inconvenient? Self-denial.

We end up setting ourselves on a trajectory of life that is completely different than the rest of the world.

You end up becoming a different breed. Peter calls it this...

'a chosen race' 1 Pet.

We each have a Gospel call.

We like Peter have call to need forgiveness.

We also have a call to lead by setting an example of Christ-like love to one another.

Conclusion.

Christ is calling Peter to become a different breed. It's not a call to self-confidence, it's a call to self-denial.

Peter is not Joshua, He's not John. He's no longer a fisherman, He is now a fisher of Men.

God creates Some preachers as prophets, like Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Jeremiah and receive no meaningful converts but they still preach the Truth to God's glory.

God creates Some preachers as leaders and receive 3000 converts in one sermon.

God creates Some preachers as apostles, sent ones, that give instruction to Christ's church but are scorned and rejected, like the Apostle Paul. Yet God uses them to establish the church for centuries.

But in it all, Christ is calling us to love Him to the extent that we follow Him no matter the results.

That we deny ourselves. That we give up confidence in ourselves. That we give up love for self.

Instead we place our confidence in Jesus Christ. We place our love in Jesus Christ.

Peter is being reinstated and it is for the sake of Leadership.

This leadership is predicated on Love. Love for Christ and Love for Christ's people.

Pastoral Prayer.

Seek Ye First

Benediction.

Rom. 8:37-39

Closing Prayer.

Small Group Questions.

1. Can you see the differences of the words for love that Jesus and Peter used? What is the difference in our hearts and minds and how we serve Christ in these types of love?
2. What has Christ call each of us to do in common (love one another) and what has Christ called you to specifically to fulfill that love?
3. What do you need to turn away (the nets, the boats etc.) from to fulfill this love for Christ and this love for one another?
4. Do you regularly pray for Christ's love? That He would help you to love Him and His people more?
5. Spend time in prayer for one another that God would give us a sincere Christlike love for one another and that we would each be certain of Christ's call to serve Him at our church.