

Pastor Jim Jackson, 10/4/26
Days With Jesus, Day 63—Peter's Epilogue
John 21:15-25

Jesus questions Peter's LOVE

In the weeks between the resurrection of Jesus and the start of the church, no one knew what would happen to Peter after his failure at Jesus' trial when he denied him three times (John 18:15-27). John fills the gap when Jesus met the disciples on the shore of Galilee and made them breakfast. *When God is the Author of your story, He writes the last chapter!* After breakfast, Jesus and Peter go for a walk and he refers to him by his pre-disciple name, Simon. As Peter swore he would stay even if all fell away, Jesus asks if he loves him more than 'these,' probably meaning the other disciples they left at the fire (Matt. 26:33). Like Peter's three denials, Jesus asks three times about his love for him, the first two times using the word *agape* as a sacrificial-type love. But Peter replies with *phileo*, which is a warm, brother-type love. However the third time, Jesus also uses *phileo*, questioning even this level of love. Though Peter was hurt, he affirms Jesus 'knows everything,' including his heart. *With God, holy hurt can bring whole healing!* By lovingly rebuking Peter, Jesus reinstates him to a place of leadership over the flock of God. This is the same calling all pastors after him are called to as well (1 Pet. 5:1-4). *Your failure is never final when you move forward with God!*

Peter questions John's FUTURE

Jesus uses his omniscience to tell Peter about his future method of death. Before he failed, Peter swore he would die for him and now he will make good on that oath. Now, he was probably in his twenties full of strength, passion, and pride. But he would spend the next thirty years serving God and staring down his own death sentence. *Whether physically or spiritually, Christians are to 'follow the Leader' in service to God and others* (Matt. 16:24, 25)! Seeing John tagging along behind eavesdropping on their conversation, Peter asks about his life and death. But instead of being nosy and worrying about someone else, Jesus tells him to focus on his own walk and he will decide when he dies! *Focus on God's business, not other people's business!* Church tradition holds that Peter and his wife were crucified in Rome by Nero c. 65 AD. Not feeling worthy to die like Jesus, Peter asked to be crucified upside down. John finishes his book reminding the reader Jesus' life was incomparable. *You'll never go wrong following the greatest man who ever lived!*