

the gospel of

JOHN

all intents and purposes

JOHN: THE INTENTIONAL AND PERSONAL LOVE OF JESUS

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John 21:9-19

The death of Christ was seen as a horrific tragedy by his followers. But unknown to them, it was a plan carried out, an intentional act of sacrificial love. Every moment of his perfect life, his death, his resurrection, all of it was done to intentionally display his rule and reign over the world. How do we obey his commands to love others with the same intentional love? Join us for our final installment in our walk through the Gospel of John. We will see that God's love is behind all of his intents and purposes. Go to doxa-church.com to learn more about Doxa, find service times or support the making of disciples in the everyday stuff of life.

Good morning, Doxa. Let's stand for the reading of God's word. We are going to be reading scripture from Gospel of John 21:9-19.

"When they got out on land, they saw a charcoal fire in place, with fish laid out on it, and bread. Jesus said to them, 'Bring some of the fish that you have just caught.' 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. 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. Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and so with the fish. This was now the third time that Jesus was revealed to the disciples after he was raised from the dead. 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.' 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.' 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. 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.' (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.'" This is the word of the Lord. Please be seated.

Thanks Habi. Good morning everyone. Hey, we are two weeks, two more weeks of John. We have four, have been in a four year, four-part journey. So two more weeks. Oh yeah, for those of you that are new and you don't know who I am, my name's Eddie, I'm the lead pastor. I do most of the teaching here most weeks. Last week you might have saw Pastor Justin, he's our family discipleship pastor. Did an awesome job talking about Thomas and doubt. So two more weeks of John, of John here, and then we're gonna go right into a series on Galatians. So we've got a lot here. So we're gonna cover a lot of ground. So I'm gonna pray for us. We're gonna get right into it. So if you have your Bible turn open to that chapter.

Well, Lord, we got a lot of ground to cover, but you're an unhurried God. So I just wanna settle into this moment for myself, for my friends here. I know there's a lot on all of our minds. There's a lot going on in the world. We might be tempted to look up what's going on on our phones or, or talk to our neighbor or just be scatterbrained and not be, not be in Lord God, including myself. And so, Lord, I pray for I hedge your protection around this room, that the Spirit would settle in into this space and that we would be attentive to what you have to say for us, Lord God. And as we talk about what it means to be intentional for you as a God and restored for us, I do pray that we would lean into that restoration as we need it so deeply. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Well, if you've been with us for a while, we just finished John 20. And John 20 kind of felt like a triumphant end to John, didn't it? I dunno if you've been following along with us. It felt like the end of the story. Jesus resurrected from the dead, spoiler alert if you haven't gotten that far in the book, Jesus resurrects from the dead. Okay? He conquers Satan, sin, death, all of these things. He comes back from the grave. He then goes and makes peace with his disciples. He even sort of breathes the Holy Spirit on them and he commissions them with the great commission. If you remember John 20:21 as the father sent me. So I'm now sending you, we got all this information done and even last week we saw Jesus come back and then show his scars to them to sort of like close the book on the story of John. But then we turn the page and there's another chapter. So what else is there to say? John 21 then is really like a true epilogue to this book. It really is an epilogue. But why is it here and why, what can we learn and how can we understand God through it? I mean, again, the theology's out of the way, faith alone, grace alone in Christ alone, we got all this information, all the facts of the faith, the facts of the resurrection, the facts of salvation. All, we learned it all, we got it all. The facts are done. But the Bible isn't just a fact book, although of course it has facts. The Bible is an epic story. It's a love story between God and his people. So there's more to say. And while we've gotten all the facts outta the way, there are relationships between Jesus and his followers that need restoration.

So what we're gonna see here in John 21 is that Jesus isn't too big or famous to come down and to restore you. He's not come, he's not too busy or too big and too often doing mighty things to, to actually engage Peter and engage you specifically. And maybe that's not news to you. And

I think it, I suspect maybe it's not news to you, but I think there will be a lot in here for you. Sometimes you don't just need apologies. Sometimes you don't just need lectures. Sometimes you don't just need facts about Jesus. Sometimes the challenging nature of life means that we've been broken down a bit and sometimes we need healing. We need revitalization. You and I need to be restored even after we've heard and believed the good news of Jesus. You know, when I first became a Christian, I understood Jesus as the sort of big and powerful God. He was sovereign and he was glorious and all of which by the way, he is all of those things. But what I failed to really understand early on, especially, and I'm still learning today, is how exactly how invested Jesus is in my wellbeing. He's incredibly invested in your wellbeing. He's incredibly invested in mine and in even in our flourishing. And maybe that's not news to you, but for me, that's something I'm still working on trying to understand. And you know what, when you miss on how, when you miss how relational Jesus is for you, you miss out much of what God has to say. Cause he has a lot to say about relationship. And that's why John 20:21 is here, or sorry, John 21 is here. What we're gonna see is just as in the days before Jesus crucifixion, Jesus is sort of still out ahead of his disciples providing for their needs and serving them, which is a lesson that the church, capital C Church, but also each of us as individuals, we need to keep learning that over and over again. So my hope is that Jesus' example will serve as a model for you as you sort of disciple other people and help them, teach them the ways of Jesus. And that you might learn how intentional and personal of a God is, or how intentional and personal God is to you. Okay? So there are three ways Jesus love impacts us. And if you grasp these friends, if you grasp these, they're really important, you'll be granted sort of a heavenly perspective. You'll be able to see things with a better perspective that just might make you bulletproof to life's curve balls spiritually. Okay? All right, let's get into it.

First one, it's in verse 21, or sorry verse one in chapter 21. Let's read.

"After this. Jesus revealed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias, and he revealed himself in this way." Again, feels like an epilogue. "Simon Peter, Thomas (called the Twin), Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples were together. Simon Peter said to them, 'I am going fishing.' They said to him, 'We will go with you.' They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing." They didn't say they were good at it. "Just as day was breaking, Jesus stood on the shore; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to them, 'Children, do you have any fish?' They answered him, 'No.' He said to them, cast the net on the right side of the boat and you'll find some." Ooh. So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in because of the quantity of the fish. Now let's pause here for a second.

If you're familiar with the gospel stories, then this maybe story sounds familiar to you, even if you haven't read John 21. In Luke chapter five, there's a story where Jesus first comes upon his disciples, including Peter, and he sees that they're not catching any fish. And he says, take your net and put it on the other side. And what happens? They pull the net up and there's tons of fish, so much so that it breaks the net. So, so they've already kind of been through this. Jesus appears to the disciples in a way he had already appeared to them. And this I believe jogs their memory just a little bit. Look at verse seven.

"The disciple whom Jesus loved," that's John by the way, "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 he threw himself into the sea." A little overboard, but he did it, no pun intended. "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 off." So wait a second, John is thinking, I know this story. I felt like this exact same thing happened to us when many of us met Jesus. Oh wait, that is Jesus. That's Jesus. And so he's recognizing Jesus in this moment because Jesus is doing something they're familiar with. Jesus often does the same thing for us, friends. God is the author of motifs. He is the author of themes. He is the author of patterns. He will often use patterns and motifs in our lives to remind us of something that he did for us in the past. Oftentimes. Keep reading. A lot of text here. Verse nine.

"When they got out on land, they saw a charcoal fire in place with fish laid out on it, and bread. Jesus said to them, 'Bring some of the fish that you have just caught. 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. And Jesus said to them, 'Come and have breakfast.' Now, none of the disciples dared asked him, 'Who are you?' They knew it was the Lord."

So Jesus, thinking of his disciples, knew that they had been fishing all night. Now, I've never been fishing at night. We can imagine it's probably pretty scary. But they were out there fishing all night and they didn't catch a single thing. But nonetheless, Jesus decides that he's gonna prep a fire, a charcoal fire, he's gonna get some bread, he's going to get some fish for them. And then he is gonna say of all things, "Hey, come have breakfast." Now this shows us something awesomely simple about Jesus love for them and for us. Now, I wanna emphasize awesomely simple. And that's this, that Jesus love is thoughtful and it's caring. It's so small and so intentional. Now, I don't know what this says about me, and maybe you're thinking the same thing, but it feels to me like the recently ascended God of the universe could be doing far more important things than I don't know, you know, having breakfast, especially with a group of guys that can't seem to catch any fish, right? He could have been doing any number of things, and yet here he is having breakfast. Didn't you just send them out to go forth and make disciples of many nations? Isn't that like this massive call on their lives? And yet here he goes, "Hey, why don't you relax and have a little breakfast?" Like, what are we doing here? There's a mission to go do, but yet we're gonna sit and have breakfast. Why? I actually think this is why we miss God's love in our lives so easily. Because we think Jesus should show up in some sort of big, massive fire or maybe a revelation from a friend or maybe a prophetic word, or maybe even an audible voice from the heavens that should bestow upon us exactly the will of God for our lives. Lord, what should I do? Thus sayeth the Lord. And we are supposed to just go, oh, here it is now I'm going. But if God doesn't speak like that, he's not speaking at all. We believe that. I just don't understand where God's will is for my life. Well, have you asked him? Well, I have, but he hasn't answered from the clouds. Well, he probably is not going to. He might not. Right? What's it like for you when someone does something really small for you that you weren't expecting, like really small? like maybe you were having a rushed morning, you didn't have time for coffee, but someone brought you a cup of coffee, just how you like it and you're like, oh my gosh, that

was so nice, they remembered my order. Like that's too great. Or someone remembers your anniversary or your birthday, or they write you a nice card or bring you flowers and it's so out of the blue or unexpected. Isn't that like a joy to you when that, it is for me.

One time for Christmas, my mom had passed away about five or six years earlier and I had someone thoughtful enough to remember that my mom had passed away and Christmas was always really hard for me. And so she, they took the time, this is crazy story. They took the time to go to the Star Registry and they went to the Star Registry and they had, they had a one, a small name, a star, a small star named after my mom, which is like really cool. And they got this cool certificate and, and they put a frame on it and for Christmas instead of like, I don't know, what did an 18 year old kid want for Christmas? Maybe an Xbox game or something, I don't know. But they gave me this frame that my mom with my mom's name on it with an international star registry. And I cried. I hadn't cried in years and I cried because someone had thought about me in a way that was so meaningful to me and so deep. I didn't know how to make sense of it. They saw me, they knew me. They expected, they were expecting that maybe I would be excited, but I don't think they were expecting that I would be that emotional about it. When people think about you and think of you, it outweighs even the expense of a gift that was far more costly because the thought is there. It's so small and so minuscule, but friends, this is Jesus love towards his disciples and towards us. He remembers his initial calling of his disciples. He remembers the net he told them to cast over. He does it again, this jogs their memory of them. And when they get across, he has a warm breakfast meal prepared for them knowing that they're not such great fishermen sometimes and they might have needed to eat. Isn't that cool? Where have you missed God's love because you didn't see the big ticket demonstration of his love? Where have you missed it? Like you were hoping from that prophetic word or that revelation from the heavens, but it never came. But did you have breakfast in the morning? Was God winking at you in his scripture reminding you of the first time you met him? Did he give you a small glimmer of hope in a moment where you were down? Friends, God is not too big to be with you. God is not just a theological idea. He's a personal one. He's not too big to be with you. And yeah, he could be anywhere in the universe if he wanted to, but he's here with you because he cares about you. And that's good news.

Jesus love so powerful. It's thoughtful and it's caring. What else is his love and how else does it impact us? Look at verse 15 if you would. It says,

"When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter," now he's gonna turn his attention to his friend Simon, son of John. "'Do you love me more than these?'" Talking about the other disciples. "He said to him, 'Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.' He said to him, 'Feed my lambs.' 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.' Then he said to him, 'Tend my sheep.' He said to him the third time, 'Simon son of John, do you love me?' Peter was grieved." He wept because he said to him a 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.'"

After breakfast, imagine sitting there in full awe by the way of Jesus mind-blowing appearance multiple times and then his mind-blowing call that you know, Hey, you're gonna go out and tell the world about me. This is gonna be a very big thing for you. Imagine that like amazing call and you're sitting there after a full meal of miracle fish you know, stomach full. By the way, Jesus always fish and loaves like does he do steak or anything? Like I'm always wondering like, you know, I don't want to like bite the hand that feeds me, Lord, but can we multiply some ribeye every now and then. And and they're sitting there full and they're going, wow, Jesus is sitting across from us. This is unbelievable. Not only that he made me breakfast, you'd think he'd have like an angel that could do that. And yet he did it. And then he turns to his friend Peter, the last time Peter and Jesus, by the way, looked at one another before he died was when Peter was in the midst of denying him across from a fire. And a little girl pointed it out and he locked eyes with Jesus. What must have Peter been feeling in that moment? You ever stumble upon a mess in your house? If you have kids, of course you have, and your kid made it. Or you see crayons like across the walls or some sort of furniture broken or a glass window destroyed, but they never came and told you about it? And then you go find your child and you ask what happened. What were they like? Unless you have a sociopath child, they were probably, probably a little ashamed, right? Eyes darting around, trying not to make eye contact, right? They're like trying not to feel the emotions that they're feeling, but they feel guilty and they feel shame. It is all over them. This is what Peter is going through. He turned his back on his friend three times and he's feeling that. He can't shake the immeasurable shame and guilt that he feels for betraying not only his friend but his God. But Jesus, he won't stand for that. He's not interested in standing for that. Jesus wants more for him. And that's the next way his love impacts us.

And that's this, that Jesus love is restorative. It's restorative. I think Jesus willingness not only to forgive people but to restore them is like what separates him from like all other religious gods and especially separated from, from us as people, right? There's always some like, something attached to our forgiveness of other people. Like we as people, forgiveness, I mean especially of this scale, is not our strong suit, is it? It's hard. It's hard. You ever been wrong like so deeply. It is hard to forgive. And you say things like, I forgive, but I don't forget. Well that doesn't sound awful. Like, like forgiveness does it? That sounds horrible. Like, wait, so you're, every time I do something, am I, is my least shorter? Like, you know, and you say, I trust no one now. Believe, you know nothing of what you hear and only half of what you see. And we get real cynical and you're like, oh my gosh. And then we sometimes we Facebook post about it and it's like this like really intense thing for people sometimes. Sure, if someone you know, does something to us and it was small enough, then maybe forgiveness, we can get there, right? We can get past it. But certainly if someone crosses us this deeply and this painfully, even if we can get to a place where we're able to forgive them, that relationship is never the same though, right? Do you know what I'm talking about? Like, can you think of someone who has harmed you, that you've reconciled with maybe, but that relationship is just like different forever. Like I, I've got those relationships where it's like, man, I forgive him, but like I just don't know if it'll ever go back to the way it was. But here we see Jesus trying to tackle this. Jesus goes a step further. He doesn't just forgive, he doesn't just, he doesn't just make right what happened. Not only does he forgive him, he decides to build Peter back up. Giving Peter way more than Peter ever gave him. Hmm. Jesus asked Peter if he loves him three times. Do you have a guess as to why he asked

him three times? Once for each denial. Peter, do you love me? Peter, do you love me? Peter, do you love me? God, the book, the holy author, the writer of this book, the author of motif, the author of literary device, adds this beautiful, wonderful connection into his story as he lives it and breathes it. He asked him three times, do you love me? Do you love me? Do you love me? And essentially what he's asking is, Peter, do you love me more than yourself? Do you love me more than your safety? Do you love me more than all of the other disciples do? Do you love me more than fishing, your hobby, your role, your job? You love me more than all of this stuff? And Peter says, yes, Lord, I love you. Yes Lord I love you. And then in tears, yes Lord, I love you. This act right here from Jesus publicly restores Peter's reputation and it restores his trust and relationship with Jesus. But it restores his reputation as the leader amongst the disciples. Because if you were to just fast forward to the Book of Acts and you were to look at Acts after John 20 and didn't see this chapter, you would go, who is this guy Peter with bold courage, preaching the gospel and healing people? Like I thought last time we saw him, he was backing out on Jesus. You'd be right. Jesus then restores him. Peter becomes one of the most central figures in the book of Acts, in all of church history. But it began not with his great sermon, not with his gifting, certainly not with his courage. You know what it began with? His restoration from Jesus. This is why Peter becomes great. Peter becomes a central figure because Jesus restored him after he failed.

Do you know that you need restoration? Do you know you need to be, you need healing? Do you know the, do you feel the shame and the guilt on your soul from the people you've let down? The failures that you've had? The people that you've harmed? Do you feel that weight sometimes? Maybe we do a really good job at distracting ourselves in this culture, like extraordinarily good. Like it's pretty crazy from moment to moment how we can see someone weeping after being transformed by God, but then within 10 minutes they are violating the intimacy of the Holy Spirit on their souls with like humor and jokes trying to like make light of the fact that God did something amazing to them. Cause we are really good at that. We just distract ourselves from these powerful moments in our lives. It's crazy how it happens. And yet we see it. We see it happen to Peter and he does it. How long are we going to pretend like it's not weighing on us that we've done some hard things in our lives that's crushing us that we're distracting ourselves in our jobs? How long are we gonna, some of us are walking around with a thousand pound backpacks full of bricks and you have no idea what it's like to be free of that burden. No clue. And we're just like sludging along, this is life, this sucks. Well just get through it. Maybe I'll buy some more stuff or get a promotion or fall in love again and try to get past it. It's hard. That's okay. Jesus is open to restoring and forgiving you. And man, wouldn't that just be great to just drop that off your back?

Listen, maybe you feel like this is sort of like a simple elementary sermon for you. Maybe you're like, yeah, I get it. Jesus forgives. Like what, what was the first point? Let me read, read it again. You said Jesus' love is thoughtful and caring. Got it. I've been coming to church for a long time. Like I, I think I know that now. Like Jesus forgives and restores for sure. I get it. I just wanna remind you of something if you're in that boat because I sense because of our region, because of this church and its history that many of us have like theologically moved on from this point. I just wanna like settle in because there's a reason this book, this point, this chapter is here. The

point of John 21 isn't to give you any more knowledge about God. It's not to tell you more so you can be smart in your Bible study. Peter knows that Jesus is God by now. Peter knows more than we do about this. He knows Jesus forgives. Peter's just freshly got his great commission from Jesus. John 21 is here not to tell you more to know, but to describe the emotion of what it means and feels like to be restored. Jesus did, Peter didn't rather, doesn't need more facts, he doesn't need more information. You know what he needs? He needs a hug. He's a mess. He needs to weep. He needs to process his failure. He needs to figure out like what do I do with this? How do I not pass the shame on from my mom and dad right onto my kids? How do I end this? He needs to figure that out instead of just trying to learn more. He needs to solve his soul. He needs a hug. Some of us are in that boat. We need a hug. We've been pretending it for so long and it's, it's like you're, you know, it's that moment where the therapist asked you the same question 20 times and you finally break. Some of us have gotten really good at like callousing that shell around us and we don't even feel those emotions at all. The emotion of being restored to Jesus. Now if you can't connect to that, if you say I still, I'm still not tracking with you, I think that's okay, but I will say you've got work to do. You've got work to do because you've been hardened to a cold and brass tacks world and you've been told that your emotions don't matter as much. And if you only feel two emotions like nothing or like distraction and anger, like if those are your only two gears, then that's a pretty sure sign that you're emotionally disconnected from the world around you. So if you can get really angry and then also if just feel kind of nothing, that's your protective mechanism keeping you from processing the failures and the trauma of your life. And Jesus didn't come to just give you brutal facts and like save you on your way to heaven. Yippy Skippy, he came to impact you now. And this is why Western Christianity isn't important. This is why it, like it falls on deaf ears. This is why you can come into church and go in one ear and out the other. Cuz if we give like vague messages about like hope and peace and joy and you don't hear anything of like the actual power of the resurrection and what it can actually do for you, you just miss out on everything and you're like, you know what? I'll go read a book by Bre, you know, Brene Brown or Tony Robbins. Those hit me harder. And yeah, they probably do. If we're not actually talking about what Jesus actually did. We need to hear, you need to understand something. Jesus is capable of healing trauma, of healing past failure, and of building you back up to something. You don't need to enter into a self-help schema in order to do that. You can actually be done in the gospel. It can, this is what Jesus is doing to Peter. Do you understand? This is what he is doing. So if there's no facts here, you've missed it. There's plenty of facts here. You're just disconnected emotionally and I want more from you, I want more for you for that. And so does Jesus. That's what he's offering us here. Okay? He wants more for you. Okay.

I wanna point out one more question that I've had over the years and it's connected to this, but I've always had this question as a kid, and I think maybe you maybe had this question too sometimes. Why does Jesus forgive Peter but not Judas? Like why does Judas go die and hang himself, but Peter gets to be restored. Why is that? Now I think there's a lot of answers and I can't answer 'em all now, but I'll give you one here. I think the reason is, is that Jesus unburdened Peter here in this passage and Judas was unwilling to receive that. Instead of Judas going back to Jesus to be unburdened, by the way, do you know Judas could have ran back to Jesus in all of his guilt? Do you ever consider that? Where does he go instead? Do you

remember? He takes his 30 shekels of silver and he goes back into the Sanhedrin and he throws the coins back at them as if that would unburden him. He doesn't run to Jesus to be unburdened, he tries to unburden himself. And many of us have been walking around the exact same way. Even if we sit in church. We've been walking around trying to unburden ourselves, clean ourselves up, make ourselves something, you know, get retribution, get reconciliation for what we've done, get a job, become a better father, become a better mother. Finally do that task that I was supposed to do because you know what, I failed a lot in the past and you know what? Some, you know what's happening, you know what's gonna happen? Nothing. You'll be just as burdened as you ever were. Maybe even worse, Judas didn't go to Jesus to be unburdened, he tried to unburden himself. And guess what? That doesn't work. And we've all been in that. So many of us have been in this cycle trying to make things right for ourselves, just like Judas for years trying to free our own soul. And you can't.

Okay, I gotta move on. How else does Jesus love impact us? Here's our last thing. Jesus love, well, let me read verse 18 first.

"Truly, truly I say to you," Jesus says, "When you were young," talking to Peter, "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.' (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.'"

Now, this kind of seems a little confusing, but let me unpack this metaphor for you. Jesus is saying to Peter here that before you, before I, Jesus came into your life, you were seemingly in control. You were a fisherman, you weren't good at it, but you were a fisherman. And when you were younger you could kind of go where you wanted, you could do what you wanted, you could dress however you'd like. But now you love me and you represent me. And soon as a result of that love, you are going to lose everything. You are going to make a great sacrifice. And this leads me to say that Jesus love calls us to cosmic priorities, the incomparable vastness of a priority that is not anything of those world. We know from history that Peter was ultimately martyred, which means he was killed on behalf for Jesus. And some theologian, some historians would say that Peter was even crucified upside down for fulfilling the commission of Jesus, the commission that Jesus asked him to. Now Jesus knows that Peter is going to face that ultimate version of persecution in death. And so he shares this message with Peter here telling him that soon you'll be carried off and you will not go where you want to go. This is serious. Now, I do think that the reality of being a Christian for those of us that are Christians was actually really much easier in the first century, not being a Christian, but the reality of thinking of like what its impact will be because sharing the mission of Jesus meant sort of near automatic death. So the stakes were clear like, man, this message must be important because people are trying to kill me for it. And today, not so much, at least in America, especially in wealthy parts of America, certainly in other parts of the world, but not here. So we have to sort of ask our, ask this question to us if we wanna relate to this passage. Following Jesus meant death to a first century Christian. But what does following Jesus mean for us? What are the stakes? What's on the line for me? Now, we might not be killed, but what might

happen instead? Well, you know one thing is probably true. There will be consequences for following Jesus. Your life certainly could not remain the same as it is today if you're following Jesus more. If you can just live the life you're living without any consequences, then you have to ask the question on the east side here in a wealthy, affluent region, like, am I actually doing anything for my faith? I mean, has it cost you anything? A friend? Has it cost you a friend? Have you been called in the manager's office at work? Have you, have you lost a family member as a result of this? Because certainly a public demonstration of God's love, of your love for Jesus rather will cost you something and it should.

Back to Peter, Jesus knew that Peter was gonna go die. So he wants Peter to know up front, Hey man, this is gonna happen. But I think this is actually where we see Peter's redemption story. It's right here. It's right here. Because now Peter knows he's about to die if he shows his love for Jesus to the world. And guess what? He still goes, he still goes. He hasn't demonstrated his ability to do that ever. And yet after this restoration of love, he's able to still go. And here he is, right back in front of a coal fire. Remember, he had this chance once before. He was in front of a coal fire with a little girl right beside him and he saw Jesus being tried and that fire is burning and he looks at Jesus and he bails because he didn't wanna die. And yet here he is again, back in front of another coal fire, knowing the end of his life is gonna come. And guess what? He still goes. Jesus, when Jesus love falls over someone like it does Peter, it can supersede your fear, it can supersede the uncertainty and it can certainly push you towards a more courageous faith. So some of us are right now at another, back at another coal fire. We're back. God, the author of motif and metaphor has, has brought us back to the moment where we walked away from him. And here we are in front, warming our hands and giving us another shot while he is restoring us, trying to give us another chance at this marriage, trying to give us another chance at this job, this relationship with a family member. He has given you another opportunity. You too can have redemption and restoration. The question is, will you go? Will you embrace the restoration process that Jesus has put on you? And will you undertake the mission he's given you with another opportunity?

Here's the thing, we will go if we press into God's love. Now, I'll just leave you with this. I think here is what Peter learned later that we need to know right now. And it comes from the Apostle Paul that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers nor height, nor death, nor anything else in all of creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ our Lord. We do not have to be afraid to embrace the failures and the trauma and the lostness and the brokenness in our own souls because we have a God who is not unwilling to restore us. He wants you new. And oftentimes we are not new because we're just gripping on to that old life. Or we are like Judas, I need to make this right myself. And let me tell you, you can't. But we have a God who loves us and won't let us go. Do you want him? That's a question we have to answer. Let's pray.

Well, Lord, I pray for my friends as we, as we search our own souls, trying to figure out who we are, who we really are as we get past our anger and our distraction. Like what is going on in there and how can we open ourselves up to be restored so much greater? Lord, this isn't about facts and knowledge. This is about our hearts. And guess what? Our hearts don't make a lot of

sense sometimes, do they? And they certainly don't follow string of facts. They go where they want. The Bible says the heart is wicked above all else who can understand it? So Lord Jesus, I pray that you would orient our hearts towards a loving, gracious God who is not unwilling to restore us. And for those of us that just sit back feeling hardened, or maybe we sit back not even knowing who Jesus is, would you be kind to them? Would you, would you grant them your loving restoration against their will and demonstrate your love on their hearts? And might they look back years from now or months from now and say, oh, that was the moment that the Lord Jesus restored me. It's in His name we pray. Amen.