

the gospel of

JOHN

all intents and purposes

DISCUSSION GUIDE

WEEK 9: PETER'S PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

Read the Text

John 18:15-18, 25-27; 21:15-19

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"...

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...

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. 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.”

Main Point

These passages walk out Peter’s infamous three denials of Jesus. As we’ve gotten to know Peter throughout John, we see that he is faithful, he is a true friend to Jesus (although often gets ahead of himself), and he is willing to make sacrifices to follow Him. But in this passage, we see him buckle under pressure and deny his friend and Messiah. This contradiction and inconsistency is something we can all relate to because if Jesus’ best friend is capable of turning his back on Him, how much more betrayal must we be capable of?

How does Jesus respond to this betrayal though? Jesus wasn’t surprised over this betrayal – in fact, He warned Peter that it would happen! ***Despite Jesus knowing that His friend would deny Him, He still loved Peter and forgave Him. And He offers that same love and forgiveness to us.*** Like Peter, there are varying ways we can respond to this forgiveness. We can stay stuck in our despair and resist the truth that we are forgiven. Or maybe we strive to make up for our sin by serving more, doing more, worshiping more, etc. Or maybe we just presume upon God’s forgiveness and live our lives without obeying Him, knowing that forgiveness is offered. God wants more for us though. ***He doesn’t want us to despair in our sin, but rather head back to Him, who is full of mercy. We are free to repent. We are free to make amends. And we are free to move ahead knowing His grace covers us.***

Fast-forwarding to Jesus’ resurrection, we see Jesus reunite with Peter. Jesus lovingly pursues Peter as He asks him about his love for Jesus. ***In asking Peter if he loves Jesus, Jesus is showing***

us that the more we grasp what we have been forgiven for, the more we will be able to love the Savior and others. Our love for God is directly tied to our awareness of the extent of forgiveness we have received.

Reflect Together

1. ***Who is God?*** Pastor Donald talked about the face of Jesus. When you imagine Jesus' face towards you, what do you see? How does that reflect who God is? Where is your vision maybe inconsistent with who God is?
2. ***What has He done?***: Jesus forgave Peter despite his deep betrayal. That same forgiveness is offered to us for all the ways we've betrayed Jesus. How do you receive this forgiveness? On the spectrum of self-condemnation to humble acceptance, where do you land, and why?
3. ***Who are you?***: How has Jesus' love and forgiveness changed you? Do you in turn love or forgive others more? Why or why not?
4. ***What are you to do?***: How do you want to grow in living in light of what Jesus has done for you? Do you want to grow in forgiving others? In forgiving yourself? How can you take steps to grow in this area?

Abide Together

Pray together as an MC about what came up during discussion. Pray that you would grow to believe and embrace Jesus' love and forgiveness for you and in turn show that love and forgiveness towards others.

Mission Together

Who in your life needs to hear this message of God's merciful love? What's a step you could take in helping them hear that message? Easter is just a few weeks away! It can be as simple as an invitation to attend the Easter gathering at Doxa!