

The Next 40 Days – Week 5 – John 21:15-25 – Jesus Restores Peter

John 21:15-25: *When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?”*

“Yes, Lord,” he said, “you know that I love you.”

Jesus said, “Feed my lambs.”

¹⁶ *Again Jesus said, “Simon son of John, do you love me?”*

He answered, “Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.”

Jesus said, “Take care of my sheep.”

¹⁷ *The third time he said to him, “Simon son of John, do you love me?”*

Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, “Do you love me?” He said,

“Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you.”

Jesus said, “Feed my sheep. ¹⁸ Very truly I tell you, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go.” ¹⁹ Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify

God. Then he said to him, “Follow me!”

²⁰ *Peter turned and saw that the disciple whom Jesus loved was following them. (This was the one who had leaned back against Jesus at the supper and had said, “Lord, who is going to betray you?”) ²¹ When Peter saw him, he asked, “Lord, what about him?”*

²² *Jesus answered, “If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you? You must follow me.” ²³ Because of this, the rumor spread among the believers that this disciple would not die. But Jesus did not say that he would not die; he only said, “If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you?”*

²⁴ *This is the disciple who testifies to these things and who wrote them down. We know that his testimony is true.*

²⁵ *Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written.*

INTRO to series “The Next 40 Days” – After He walked out of the grave on that first Easter Sunday, Jesus spent the next 40 days teaching and preparing His followers for what was coming next. As each day passed, the power of the Holy Spirit and the birth of the Church drew nearer. Though many were struggling with fear, failure, and doubts, Jesus cut through their confusion as light breaks into darkness. Jesus also gave some of His most important teaching during this time, including the “great commissions”—and then He ascended to heaven.

INTRO to **John 21:15-25:** Just before this conversation with Peter, Jesus had appeared the third time to his disciples on the shores of the Sea of Galilee (see **John 21:1-14** below). After a miraculous catch of 153 fish, Jesus ate with the disciples and then began a personal conversation with Peter in front of all the others.

I. Jesus reconciled and restored Peter in love. (vs. 15-17)

-Jesus walked Peter through this process in a “public” manner, with the other disciples around after they had finished eating. Just as Peter had denied Jesus publicly, so Jesus led Peter towards restoration publicly.

-Jesus never brought up Peter’s denials. Instead, He gently and graciously walked Peter through this exchange and allowed him to experience restoration and a renewed commitment through his own words.

-The conversation after dinner – three times Jesus asks Peter, “Do you love me.”

-With each confession of love Peter made back to the Lord, Jesus responded with a commission signifying restoration: “*feed my lambs; take care of my sheep; feed my sheep*” – all action words describing the ministry to which Peter was called.

II. Jesus reaffirmed Peter’s call and commission as a disciple. (vs. 18-19)

-Jesus talked to Peter about his future and things that would come to pass when Peter was older and more spiritually mature: “*Very truly I tell you, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go.*” (vs. 18)

-In particular, Jesus was talking about Peter’s death and how it would glorify God, which history tells us was by crucifixion.

-Finally, Jesus reaffirmed Peter’s true calling, which was not to be a fisherman, but rather a “fisher of men” – *Then he said to him, “Follow me!”*

III. Jesus reminded all of what is the true call for every disciple—“*You must follow me.*”

-Peter and Jesus left the group and walking together along the beach as John (*the disciple whom Jesus loved*) followed closely behind them.

-When Peter asked about what would happen to John in the future, Jesus corrected Him gently but plainly: “*If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you? You must follow me.*”

-There are many examples of the Apostle Peter after this moment which display his incredible spiritual maturity, godly leadership, and God-given wisdom (see **1 Peter 5** below).

Other Scriptures Referenced:

John 21:1-14: *Afterward Jesus appeared again to his disciples, by the Sea of Galilee. It happened this way: 2 Simon Peter, Thomas (also known as Didymus), Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two other disciples were together. 3 “I’m going out to fish,” Simon Peter told them, and they said, “We’ll go with you.” So they went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.*

4 Early in the morning, Jesus stood on the shore, but the disciples did not realize that it was Jesus.

5 He called out to them, “Friends, haven’t you any fish?”

“No,” they answered.

6 He said, “Throw your net on the right side of the boat and you will find some.” When they did, they were unable to haul the net in because of the large number of fish.

7 Then the disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, “It is the Lord!” As soon as Simon Peter heard him say, “It is the Lord,” he wrapped his outer garment around him (for he had taken it off) and jumped into the water. 8 The other disciples followed in the boat, towing the net full of fish, for they were not far from shore, about a hundred yards. 9 When they landed, they saw a fire of burning coals there with fish on it, and some bread.

10 Jesus said to them, “Bring some of the fish you have just caught.” 11 So Simon Peter climbed back into the boat and dragged the net ashore. It was full of large fish, 153, but even with so many the net was not torn. 12 Jesus said to them, “Come and have breakfast.” None of the disciples dared ask him, “Who are you?” They knew it was the Lord. 13 Jesus came, took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. 14 This was now the third time Jesus appeared to his disciples after he was raised from the dead.

John 13:37-38: *Peter asked, “Lord, why can’t I follow you now? I will lay down my life for you.”*

³⁸ Then Jesus answered, “Will you really lay down your life for me? Very truly I tell you, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times!”

1 Peter 5:1-4, 10-11: *To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder and a witness of Christ’s sufferings who also will share in the glory to be revealed: ² Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, watching over them—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve; ³ not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. ⁴ And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.*

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¹⁰ And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast. ¹¹ To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen.

Other Quotes/Resources:

“God does not love us because Christ died for us. Christ died for us because God loves us.” –John Stott

“There is more mercy in Christ than sin in us.” –Richard Sibbes