

## **John 21:1-17 “Tend my Sheep”**

- (Overheads in Bold Print)
- **“After these things Jesus manifested Himself again to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias, and He manifested Himself in this way. Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and 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 also come with you.” They went out and got into the boat; and that night they caught nothing. But when the day was now breaking, Jesus stood on the beach; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. So Jesus said to them, “Children, you do not have any fish, do you?” They answered Him, “No.” And He said to them, “Cast the net on the right-hand side of the boat and you will find a catch.” So they cast, and then they were not able to haul it in because of the great number of fish. Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, “It is the Lord.” So when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put his outer garment on (for he was stripped for work), and threw himself into the sea. But the other disciples came in the little boat, for they were not far from the land, but about one hundred yards away, dragging the net full of fish. So when they got out on the land, they saw a charcoal fire already laid and fish placed on it, and bread. Jesus said to them, “Bring some of the fish which you have now caught.” Simon Peter went up and drew the net to land, full of large fish, a hundred and fifty-three; and although there were so many, the net was not torn. Jesus said to them, “Come and have breakfast.” None of the disciples ventured to question Him, “Who are You? Knowing that it was the Lord. Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and the fish likewise. This is now the third time that Jesus was manifested to the disciples, after He was raised from the dead.” John 21:1-14**

Recap-Only Book of John records this event at Galilee. Jesus instructions in Matthew. Matthew recounts disciples went to a mountain in Galilee, importance of reading each account. If you read Mark and Luke you would never know that His ascension happened in Galilee. If you read only read Luke, you would think He left them at Bethany. Careful study of the scriptures. God calls us to diligence.(Jer29:13)

- **“Then Jesus said to them, “Do not be afraid; go and take word to My brethren to leave for Galilee, and there they will see Me.” Matthew 28:10**
- **“But the eleven disciples proceeded to Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had designated.” Matthew 28:16**

Once again, just like Pastor Craig taught us last week, it was John who was first to believe at the tomb, we see John is the first to recognize that it is Christ on the beach. Once again we see him describe himself as “The disciple whom Jesus loved”. God wants each of us as believers to have that type of understanding of the deep personal love Christ has for each of us. He wants us to wake up every morning with that understanding I am the disciple whom Jesus loves. The Heildlberg Confession of the 1500 begins with this great truth:

- **Q. What is your only comfort in life and death?**
  - A. That I am not my own, but belong with body and soul, both in life and in death, to my faithful Savior Jesus Christ. He has fully paid for all my sins with His precious blood, and has set me free from all the power of the devil. He also preserves me in such a way that without the will of my heavenly Father not a hair can fall from my head; indeed, all things must work together for my salvation. Therefore, by His Holy Spirit He also assures me of eternal life and makes me heartily willing and ready from now on to live for Him.**

Peter shows his zeal by jumping in the water, maybe he was still miffed at losing the foot race to the tomb. They arrive on the beach towing the net which has a great number of big fish, yet is not damaged. Jesus already has fish on the fire as well as fresh bread, after His feeding of the 5000, this should seem like an easy task for the Creator of the Universe. But why include this story. Surely it shows how Christ can provide when our efforts are exhausted. But here is some fisherman insight. Fished at night- nets less visible, same today even though better nets. Fish caught after daybreak, even greater provision by Christ. Why 153 fish? Significance? Wanted to record eyewitness account of this event. Not spiritual insight, but fisherman insight/suspicion. Fishermen work hard a lot of days for little or no catch, but remember best days and for certain species they remember not only that day and every thing about it but the exact number of fish caught. (I remember best days). I believe this one cast of the net was greater than any catch ever seen by any of these men,(maybe 3x) I believe this one miracle and Who was responsible was spread to the entire fishing community. Fisherman love to tell of their greatest days. Spread by all who handled this net and Who provided.

Underlying lesson here is the special provision that Christ brings to our lives. The disciples could recall this miracle as well as others as they shared their experiences with Christ. The gospels were written to document the life of Christ. In our encounters with unbelievers, part of our witness, is sharing Christ's provisions in our life. Being quick to acknowledge him in all our ways. Maybe we don't have a miraculous event like this net full of fish, but we can attest to the forgiveness of God, to His peace, to His hope, and to His provision through difficult times. Right now the world needs His message of hope. Now the passage gets personal.

- **“So when they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, 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 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.” John 21:15-17**

The passage is now focused on Christ's personal call to Peter. Peter is being called to be the leader of the disciples. In all lists of the disciples he is named first. But he is being called to total commitment to Christ. Just like last's week's piercing question “Whom are you seeking” we are faced with another question from Christ.

- **DO YOU LOVE ME? (Jesus-“Agape”-Peter-“Phileo”)**

Note questions not asked( sleep in garden, denial x3) 3 fold lesson. Difference in the words used for love. Jesus calling Peter to a total commitment. Peter answering with reluctance, knowing his past great failure (willing to die, denied Him 3X) Jesus ? 3x. Peter “You know all things”, honest-best he could do, submission and trust. Encounters with those that have failed, even believers, get back into the faith, God's forgiveness, verses, favorite from Joel, great failure of Israel—

- **“Yet even now,” declares the LORD, “Return to Me with all your heart, and with fasting, weeping and mourning; and rend your heart and not your garments.” Now return to the LORD your God, for He is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger, abounding in lovingkindness and relenting of evil.” Joel 2:13**

Use of scripture in witnessing, rend tear-change in heart, not tearing clothes-outward appearance.

What would it be like to be facing the resurrected Christ and have Him ask us one on one; Spurgeon-  
“Vain-Sabbath not Lord of S, Sanctuary-not High Priest, Wedding Feast-not bridegroom.” (Today)

- **“DO YOU LOVE ME?” (“AGAPE ME”)**

Our witness for Christ will have its greatest influence by how we live out our love for Christ. Do we really love Christ? Do we love Him supremely? Is that love reflected in our lives?

(Note: put following scriptures on slides by themselves)

- **“If you continue in My Word, then you are truly disciples of Mine” John 8:31 (AGAPE?)**
- **“If you love Me, you will keep my commandments.” John 14:15 (AGAPE?)**
- **“Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.” I John 4:7 (AGAPE?)**
- **“If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life for My sake and the gospel’s will save it.” Mk.8:34-35 (AGAPE?)**
- **“Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of Worship.” Romans 12:1 (AGAPE?)**
- **“But speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ.....” Eph. 4:15 (AGAPE?)**
- **“He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will all also reap bountifully.....for God loves a cheerful giver.” 2 Cor. 9:6-8 (AGAPE?)**

Jesus adds to His challenge to Peter but also to us

- **“Do you love Me more than these?”**

Some commentaries believe Jesus was referring to the other disciples, others the fish. But I believe Jesus knew Peter’s heart for the sea and I can just picture Jesus pointing to the boat, the folded net, the beach and the unbelievable and record catch. Jesus was asking Peter to leave his beloved livelihood and be devoted solely to the Gospel. I can really relate to Peter here. I loved the sea, the challenge and pursuit of the catch, and the reward of unloading the fish.

What are the these in our life that competes with our love for Christ? Does our lives reflect a life that reflects that type of love for God and His truths.

Encounters-Communicate commitment-Challenge- following Christ is truly loving Him with all our heart, all our mind, and all our soul. Be ready to speak against concepts like “I have accepted Christ as Savior but I am not ready for Him to be Lord.” Jail experiences. Of course when we are challenging others, we should be continually be reminding them of the benefits of Christ. Christ gave His life for us, it is time to give back to Him which is truly rightfully His in the first place.

Jesus next challenge-

- **“Shepherd My Sheep” “Tend My Sheep”**

Christ was calling him to be the leader of the disciples, to be shepherd, to guide, to guard, and nourish by his unfailing and uncompromising love for Christ.

But this is also a lesson here for us. He has called each one of us personally and particularly. When we have opportunities to share, we are also going to have to learn to also be a shepherd. It will call us to “Tend Sheep.” (There are some sheep that will really need tending) It will impact our time, our talents, even our money and resources. We may be asked to spend days or months or even years reaching out to someone God has put in our path.

This particular part of this passage reflects the very personal call of Jesus on Peter. But we must also realize that God has not changed, as a believer He has called us personally by name, He has drawn us to Himself, He has revealed Himself to us in Christ, and by His grace has even given us the faith to believe. One of my favorite verses that should remind us of this truth is:

- **“Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are Mine!” Is. 43:1**

Do we sense that personal call of Christ on our life? Have we heard the Spirit of God tug on our heart and say “Do you love Me” “Do you love Me more than these” and in the sharing of our faith are we ready to “Tend His sheep.”

I had hoped to add one more lesson from the next couple verses:

- **“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 has spoken this, He said to him, “Follow Me!” Peter turning around, saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following them; the one who also had leaned back on His bosom at the supper and said, “Lord, who is the one who betrays You?” So Peter seeing him said to Jesus, Lord, what about this man?” Jesus said to him, “If I want him to remain until I come, what is that to you? You follow Me!” John 21:18-22**

Recap-Christ now calling Peter to not only be shepherd of the disciples, but to die in His service. Peter-What about John? Jesus What is that to you “YOU FOLLOW Me”. Personal note-impact of this verse. Also used in discipling---Mission. Encounters-Don't be distracted by failure of world, others, Christ is calling you to His forgiveness, His new life, His hope and His eternity.

Have we heard from Christ this morning?

- **“Do you love Me? (AGAPE?) More than These? Follow Me!”**

Closing Prayer

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Benediction-(Read together)

- **“Now may the God of Hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you will abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.” Romans 15:13**

