

H O U S E o f W I S D O M

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## John 21 - Part II

Do You Love Me?

Read John 21:12-14:

The disciples had fished all night and caught nothing. Jesus shows up and has them to cast the net on the right side of the ship, and the net is filled with fish. They recognize the Savior, and he invites them to have a breakfast of bread and fish. He also asks them to bring out of the fish they had caught, verse 10. Jesus has performed a supernatural sign that contains some spiritual lessons, some of which were discussed in the last study: 1. A net is a mind-set, in this case represents the capturing the thoughts of people with a worldly understanding (water of the sea, Isa 57:20; 51:10) and have them consider God's way of thinking (water from heaven, Dt 32:1-2).

1. What spiritual lesson can be learned from the bread & fish Jesus furnished & the fish the disciples caught? Jn 6:51, 56 life; Mt 16:5-12 teachings; 1Cor 9:13-14 life in gospel; Pr 18:21 power of the tongue

{Water is a symbol for thoughts: From a human perspective - sea = thinking we have gotten from the worldly; land/earth = thoughts from self; heaven = how we initially understand God. From a Divine perspective, they represent the areas God addresses to straighten out our crooked thinking. Figuratively, this is what Jesus does by giving us bread & fish. We in turn share what we learn. The fish furnished by the disciples, as explained by Paul, is directing us to live by what we teach - i.e. don't say, and not do - Mt 21:28-32; Jam 1:22-25.}

2. John specifically mentions that it is the third time Jesus appeared after his resurrection. What spiritual lesson might be learned from his statement? Lk 13:32; Hos 6:1-3

{The Greek word for "perfected" is *teleioo* <sup>g5048</sup> which means *to make perfect, or complete*, of which the number three is a symbol. The NIV put *I will reach my goal* & the ISV put *I will finish my work*. Both translations are inaccurate interpretations, based on how they understand the Son of God. Here is an example where John applies *teleioo* both outward & inward: Jn 17:4, 23. The cross completed Jesus' understanding of the human nature & weaknesses thereof, Heb 4:15; cf Jam 1:13, which he struggled with in the O.T., Ex 32:9-14.}

Read John 21:15-25: Jesus questions Peter as to his love.

Jesus: Simon, son of Jonah, do you love (*agapao* <sup>g25</sup>) Me more than these? (Cf Mt 26:33; Jn 13:37)

Peter: Yes, Lord, You know that I love (*phileo* <sup>g5368</sup>) You.

Jesus: Feed My lambs (*arnion* <sup>g571</sup>)!

Jesus: Simon, son of Jonah, do you love (*agapao* <sup>g25</sup>) Me?

Peter: Yes, Lord, You know that I love (*phileo* <sup>g5368</sup>) You.

Jesus: Shepherd My sheep (*probaton* <sup>g4263</sup>)! (cf Jn 10:11)

Jesus: Simon son of Jonah, do you love (*phileo*<sup>g5368</sup>) Me?

Peter: Lord, You perceive all things, You know that I love (*phileo*<sup>g5368</sup>) You! (Peter was grieved that He said to him a third time, Do you love (*phileo*<sup>g5368</sup>) Me?)

Jesus: Feed My sheep (*probaton*<sup>g4263</sup>)!

Most focus on the denial of the Lord by Peter three times, and now Jesus confirms his love three times.

3. What else might be learned by the questions and use of the words for love?

{The first question is different from the last two in that Peter is asked who does he put first in his love. The last two questions differ in that Jesus used *agapao* in one and *phileo* in the last. *Agapao* is a deeper, warmer love than *phileo*. Where *phileo* is more of a friendly love, in eastern cultures portrayed by the kiss, of family, friends, and to show respect and honor.

In the first statement of Jesus in answer to Peter's confession, *Feed my lambs* (immature sheep); the second, *Shepherd my sheep* (mature); and the last *Feed my sheep* - i.e. feed those immature in the gospel and understanding of the cross; lead, guide and protect them in their maturity; and continue to feed the mature more and deeper spiritual things. In the O.T. on the surface, we see more of a jealous and conditional love, SS 8:6; Dt 10:15, in that Israel was chosen above all nations; Jacob loved Rachel and Joseph, Gen 29:30; 37:3. However, the idea of true love is in "cleaving" to the one loved, as Adam was instructed to cleave to his wife. This is illustrated in the story of Ruth, Ruth 1:14-18. In the N.T. Jesus set about to correct the idea of love being conditional. Both the O.T. and N.T. attitudes can be seen at the supper in Simon the Pharisee's home, Lk 7:37-48. Moreover, Jesus was condemned by Jewish leaders for associating with and showing love toward sinners, Mk 2:16-17; Lk 15:1-2.}

4. Why do you think Peter felt "grieved" at the third question?

{The third question cut to the heart of Peter, reminding him of the three denials which caused pain to his Savior and anguish in his own heart. Peter was brought face to face with the deeper issue of what caused him to deny Jesus. All, like Peter, will have to face deep seated issues which distract us from whole heartedly serving God. Jesus' concluding statement, *Feed My sheep* was a testament by Jesus to Peter that he was forgiven. As we grow in our understanding and continue to reflect on our own lives, there will be times we realize we were denying Jesus Christ. However, mercy is always there for the repentant heart.}

1 Corinthians

11 *When I was an infant, I spoke as an infant, I thought as an infant, I reasoned as an infant. But when I became a man, I caused to cease the things of the infant.*

12 *For now we see through a mirror in dimness, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I will fully know even as I also was fully known.*

13 *And now faith, hope, and love, these three things remain; but the greatest of these is love. LITV Amen!*