

VII. JESUS' POST-RESURRECTIONAL APPEARANCE AND LESSONS FOR HIS DISCIPLES

John 21

A. THE BACKGROUND BEHIND JESUS' THIRD APPEARANCE TO HIS DISCIPLES AFTER HE WAS RESURRECTED (21:1-14)

1. When Peter and several other disciples had gathered together, Peter determined to go fishing. This led the others to do the same thing. (1-3)

We should note that whatever we do it has a profound impact upon others. No man is an island and when someone purposes to do something it always influences others for good or for bad.

2. When the disciples had done what they had determined to do they had been unsuccessful (3). They caught nothing. From this we can see the results of being out of the Lord's will.
3. When morning was come Jesus stood on the shore and inquired of them but was not know to them (4,5).
4. When the disciples had reported their failure at fishing, Jesus told them where to cast (6). Here we see the importance of knowing and doing the Lord's will.
5. When John declared it was the Lord who spoke, Peter cast himself in the sea to meet Jesus (7).
6. When the disciples drew their net to land it was full of 153 great fish and it was not broken (8-11). Here we see the results of being in the Lord's will.
7. When the disciples were ashore Jesus invited them to a breakfast He had prepared for them (12-14). And they ate bread and fish with the resurrected Saviour.

Notice there's a banquet prepared by the Lord for His servants who carry out His will in this life as well.

B. THE RESTORATION OF PETER IN THE LORD'S SERVICE (21:15-17)

1. Peter's restoration came at a particular time (15).

Notice it was after they had dined. This suggests to us the need to meet the physical needs of others oftentimes before we can meet their spiritual needs.

2. Peter's restoration was done publicly.

It was needful for the other disciples to realize that the Lord had forgiven Peter and restored him to service. John for one knew and recorded how Peter had denied the Lord and so did the others.

3. Peter's restoration involved a personal examination of his love for the Lord (15-17). Peter was

asked if he loved the Lord in a “self-sacrificing” way. Peter replied with an admission of having fallen short in this respect. He was grieved when the Lord asked him the third time if he loved Him with a lesser kind of love. Peter gave an honest response which was a response of genuine repentance. Jesus’ response to Peter’s replies showed His acceptance and restoration of Peter to be reinstated in His service.

C. THE REASON WHY JESUS REBUKED PETER AND THE LESSON FOR HIS DISCIPLES (21:18-22).

1. Jesus had spoken to Peter about how he would glorify God in His death (18,19).

From this statement we as believers can be assured that the time and the manner of our death is in the Lord’s hands. Note also Rev. 1:18.

2. Afterwards Peter began to inquire about the Lord’s will for John (20-22).

Note Jesus’ rebuke to Peter should serve as a personal guideline for each one of the Lord’s servants. We should be personally concerned with doing what the Lord has called us to do and not with what He has called someone else to do.

D. THE CLOSING WITNESS WHICH JOHN GAVE CONCERNING THE LORD JESUS (21:23-25).

1. John thought it necessary to correct an untruth being spread which Jesus did not say (23).

History attests to the fact that John lived longer than the other disciples but John died obviously before the Lord’s promised return.

2. John affirmed that his testimony of Jesus was not only true but that others knew it to be true (24).

3. John testified that Jesus had done more things than could ever be written of Him (25).

This truth is substantiated when we consider the inexhaustible riches in Jesus and the immeasurable ways He has worked in the lives of those who know Him and serve Him (Col. 2:3).

QUESTIONS WHICH WE MAY APPLY TO OUR LIVES

1. What lesson do we learn about influencing others from verse 3?

2. What does verse 3 illustrate about being out of God’s will?

4. How may we apply verse 7 when it comes to the way we dress?

5. Why do you think the Lord Jesus questioned Peter in front of the other disciples and how does this relate to service? _____

6. What application should pastors make from the use of the word “my” in verses 15,16,17?

7. What lesson should we learn from verse 21? _____

8. What lesson should we learn from verse 22? _____

9. What does verse 18 reveal and how can we apply this to our own lives? _____

10. What kind of attitude does John display by referring to himself in the third person?

11. How does this relate to serving the Lord? _____

EXPOSITORY NOTES

- 21:7** The word “naked” means “stripped for work” and does not mean Peter was completely naked. When he realized it was the Lord ashore he put on an outer garment and cast himself into the sea to get to Jesus.
- 21:15-17** “More than these” refers to the other disciples. Peter had before boasted that he loved the Lord more than they (Matt. 26:33). In the Lord’s interrogation here He used the word love (agape) which means a self-sacrificing love. Peter on the other hand responded with the word love (phileo) which means a fondness for another. In verse 17 the Lord and Peter used phileo. These three questions no doubt reminded Peter of his three denials. But notice the Lord’s command indicates a public restoration of Peter for service.
- 21:22** “Follow thou me” is a present imperative and literally means “keep on following me.”
- 21:15, 17** Notice the word feed in verse 15 means to nurture or tend. Feed means to provide food as as of a pasture for sheep. Tend refers to the tender care which a shepherd would give to his sheep.

