

J.J.

LOVING JESUS
JOHN 21

John 21 ¹⁵When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me more than these?"

"Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you."

Jesus said, "Feed my lambs."

¹⁶Again Jesus said, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me?"

He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you."

Jesus said, "Take care of my sheep."

¹⁷The 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. ¹⁸I tell you the truth, 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." ¹⁹Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him, "Follow me!"

²⁰Peter 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?") ²¹When Peter saw him, he asked, "Lord, what about him?"

²²Jesus answered, "If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you? You must follow me."

INTRODUCTION :

Last week, we talked about how time flies so fast. 2 Sundays from now it's already February and 3 Sundays from now it's Valentine's day.

February is called the month of love.

Girl: "Do you love me?"

Boy: "Yes, Dear."

Girl: "Would you die for me?"

Boy: "No. Because my love for you will never die.

For the past 2 Sundays, we talked about our Labour in the Lord and then last Sunday we talked about the Days of our Lives here and why we should spend it serving the Lord and others.

Now we'll talk about the REASON WE LABOUR behind it... we do all these things because we love our Lord Jesus. What does it mean to love Jesus?

PRIORITY, UNCONDITIONALLY, SACRIFICIALLY, PERSONALLY

***I. LOVING HIM IS PRIORITY**

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

What is the more than these?

If you read the whole of John 21, Jesus rose from the dead, the disciples already knew this but Jesus wasn't always with them, so Simon, Thomas, Nathanael, James and John and two other disciples decided to go fishing. REMEMBER THEY WERE FISHERMEN. They fished all night and they caught nothing.

Until Jesus stood on the shore and they did not recognize Him and here's the rest of the story.

*John 21: 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.***

Here's a lesson I gleaned from this before we continue

- **There are times that God will allow failures and droughts in our lives.**

Remember, these people were PROFESSIONAL AND EXPERT FISHERMEN, AND THEY WERE FISHING ALL NIGHT AND THEY CAUGHT NOTHING.

Isn't that what happens to us sometimes, we are really trying and doing our best and yet there are no results. Or we are eating the right food, exercising and yet we still get sick.

Why would our Lord allow the failures and droughts?

- **For us to really realize that everything comes from Him.**

You have to go back again and they were fishing the whole night and here's Jesus (whom they haven't recognized at this point), asking them to *"Throw your net **on the right side of the boat and you will find some.**"*

What? If you're going to think about it, **the suggestion is ridiculous because you're on the same boat, in the same spot**, so what's the difference if they throw their net on the other side.

But Jesus commanded it to make them realize that everything comes from Him - our jobs come from Him, our schooling comes from Him, our health comes from Him.

That's the reason why when they were so blessed with so much abundance this time miraculously, they knew only JESUS CAN DO THIS.

7 Then the disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord!"

As the story goes, **Jesus had prepared for them breakfast** until Jesus talked to Peter and asked, ***do you truly love me more than these?***

THE **"THESE"** ARE THE BLESSINGS IN OUR LIFE!!!

And God knows that blessings, money and all that money can supposedly bring like vacations, houses, travels, even the friendships (which I'll show you later) and etc is one of the greatest hindrances for us to follow Christ.

That's why our Lord said,

Matthew 6: 24 "No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted(committed) to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money."

There's a reason why 70% of millennials in the western countries are either atheists or are cold towards God. It's because life is much easier here compared to other countries and we here people in Canada can easily forget God simply because we think we don't need Him without realizing that everything comes from Him. And sometimes, the only way God can get our attention is take away everything from us.

Illustration : It's like the mom who is talking to her kids who are watching TV (a source of pleasure) and she's trying to get their attention and the only way she can do that is turn off the TV,so that they will listen.

II. LOVING HIM UNCONDITIONALLY.

Winning the lotto : The story of is told of a girl who regretted breaking her engagement and wrote this letter:

"Dearest Tommy, No words could ever express the great unhappiness I've felt since breaking our engagement. Please say you'll take me back. No one could ever take your place in my heart, so please forgive me. I love you, I love you, I love you! I love you!"

Yours forever,

Marie

PS: And congratulations on winning the lotto.

To love Jesus is to love Him unconditionally. Let's look at the two words used here for love.

John 21 15 When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me (agapao) more than these?"

"Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love (phileo) you."

Jesus said, "Feed my lambs."

16 Again Jesus said, "Simon son of John, do you truly love (agapao) me?"

He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love (phileo) you."

Jesus said, "Take care of my sheep."

17 The third time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love (phileo) 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 (phileo) you."
Jesus said, "Feed my sheep."*

Etymology : lexically (meaning) it's the same, the difference is in the action

Agapao – it's voluntary (I have decided to love you even if...)

Phileo - it's involuntary (I can't help but love you... because you're pretty, you're nice to me and etc)

I love the NIV translation : ...do you truly love (agapao) me?"

In short : True love is agapao...it is more than a feeling, it's a commitment. We love even if...or in spite of...

Illustration : There's this movie called "Crazy Stupid Love" where a line goes like this "I have loved her even when I hated her... only married couples'll understand that one..."

It is because true love is more than a feeling of high when everything is nice and dandy. True love is a commitment that you decide to love the person even during times you want to kill your husband or your wife or time when it's boring or times when you have nothing.

And what is Jesus asking if we love Him.

"Feed my lambs."

"Take care of my sheep."

"Feed my sheep."

QUOTE : The proof that we love Jesus is obedience.

John 14:15 "If you love me, you will keep my commandments."

John 14:23 Jesus replied, "All who love me will do what I say."

In short, the natural overflow of our committed love to Jesus is to obey Him.

Important : Christian Living 101 is about a loving relationship with the Lord. We obey the Lord out of love...we serve others because we love the Lord...we go to church because we love the Lord and we want to see the brethren whom we decided to love. We pray because we want to be with the One we love.

QUOTE : FOCUS ON LOVING THE LORD AND OBEDIENCE IS THE OVERFLOW

III. LOVING HIM SACRIFICIALLY.

John 21: 17"Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you."

Jesus said, "Feed my sheep. 18 I tell you the truth, 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!"

Verse 18 : shows that Jesus is saying to Peter that to love Him, it's not your plans or your ambitions or yourself that is going to lead

Verse 19 : And part of the plan is that you will die on the cross because of me. Stories go around that Peter died on a cross but he died on an upside down cross.

Let's go back to Peter again : Jesus is saying to Peter, "Peter do you love me even if..." and Peter would answer, "Lord, you know that I can't help but love you."

Remember, BEFORE, Peter was professing to follow Jesus before because He thought Jesus will become King at that time and since he is a disciple of Jesus, he will get all the benefits. And what is the benefit of being friend of a king – riches, wealth, pleasures and etc.

And now Jesus was saying to Peter, "Ok you love me, I know you love me and to love me means to give up everything for me, I'm your priority and you will even greatly suffer for it and even die a gruesome death because of me."

Application : To truly love Jesus is to love Him even if our plans do not pan out or our dreams do not come true or even if everything else is taken away from us.

Now let me say this when we truly love our Lord.

Story : A young man came home one time and said to his dad, "I'm ready to marry Maria." The dad said, "How are you so sure?" It's because today when I brought her home, I kissed her and went on my way. While I was walking home, my left leg was bleeding. It's then I realized that while I was kissing her, her dog bit me and I did not even feel a thing.

It's just like that when we focus on loving the Lord, yes there will be sacrifices but the joy of loving him makes us all forget the sacrifice we will undergo through.

Illustration : Hudson Taylor, the great missionary who reached out in China went home one day and he really had a tough time there, imprisoned, insulted, slandered, experienced extreme poverty. An interviewer asked, "It must have been a great sacrifice" He replied, "I never made a sacrifice."

I call serving Christ and others as "loving sacrifice"

IV. LOVING HIM PERSONALLY

To commit your life to Jesus is a personal call.

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."

Remember, we don't follow other sheep. We follow the shepherd.

The question our Lord is asking you today, is _____ do you love me?

CONCLUSION :

You have to look back again at the story, the reason Peter replied, *He said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you."*

He's saying this, because at this point, He really saw the love of Jesus that in spite of what he did to Him, to deny Him, our Lord is still calling him to serve Him.

In ordinary circumstances, if a person denies you and betrays you, you wouldn't trust that person already. It's like, "Why would I trust Peter to serve in My Kingdom when he denied me?" But still the Lord forgave Peter and commissioned Him to Kingdom work.

Why? LOVE ALWAYS GIVES SECOND CHANCES

From one pastor I admire :

The secret of loving Jesus is not to focus on your love for Him but to focus on His love for you.

Disfigured face Story :

There was this young boy who was always being accompanied by his mom to school but he doesn't want his classmates to see him with his mom because her mom had a badly deformed face and he is greatly embarrassed by it. Her mom knows about it but everytime she says goodbye, she always hugs him and kisses him and says "I love you." But he would just quickly say his goodbye and immediately go to his classmates hoping he wouldn't be seen being accompanied by the mom. Everyday, he would do that. His mom would bring him to school and pick him up. But his mom would obligely stand far from the school simply because she knows his son is embarrassed by how she looks like.

But one day, his classmates saw what his mom looked like from a distance and begun to tease her son. The son got irritated because he was so embarrassed that he got into a fight. So the mom was called to the principal's office. The mom entered the principal's office and told her what happened. The boy was seated outside the principal's office but he can still hear their conversation.

He heard the principal asking why her mom's face was deformed. He heard her mom reply that when he was a baby, their house was on fire and she went up to his room to save him. Unfortunately, a big beam that was on fire fell from the ceiling and she had to sacrifice her whole side of the body so that he won't get burned.

After hearing this, he realized the love of his mom for him that when the school bell rang, he called his mom and introduced her to his friends in school.

Just like Jesus, He died on the cross for us to save us from the fires of hell, if we realize the intensity of that, we would be introducing Him to the people around us and profess our love for Him.

1 John 4:19 We love Him, because He first loved us.

S.G.D.