

SERMON FOCUS: When I fail, I must be restored.

SERMON FUNCTION: The hearer will learn from the restoration of Peter.

BACKGROUND:

We've been talking for a couple of weeks about Christ's resurrection. Not really knowing what else to do, the disciples go back to fishing, and have another encounter with the risen Christ.

SCRIPTURE READING: John 21:15-19

INTRODUCTION:

Have you ever made a mistake so bad that you knew you could never get past it? You likely remember that the night Jesus was arrested, Peter denied Him three times. Mistakes don't get much bigger than that, particularly when Christ does return from the dead. Here, we see that Jesus fully restores Peter. In the same way, I must be completely restored.

MESSAGE:

1. I MUST BE COMPLETELY RESTORED

a. (15) "Simon, son of John, do you love me *more than these?*"

i. Peter told him, "*Even if everyone falls away* because of you, I will never fall away." -- Matthew 26:33 (CSB)

1. A few days earlier, Peter had claimed to love Jesus more than everyone else did.

2. That same night, he would cower in fear and deny the Lord.

ii. Note that Jesus calls him *Simon, son of John*.

1. Jesus responded, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but my Father in heaven. And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overpower it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will have been loosed in heaven." -- Matthew 16:17-19 (CSB)

2. The night of Jesus' arrest, Peter had been anything but a rock of strength.

iii. This first question is a chance for Peter to repent of his arrogance and be humbled. Peter is then given the task, "Feed my lambs."

b. (16) "Simon, son of John, do you love me."

i. The second time Jesus asks is without the comparison to how others love Jesus.

- ii. This time, Peter answers simply, as he did before, and Jesus repeats the task, "Shepherd my sheep."
- c. (17) "Simon, son of John, do you love me?"
 - i. This is the time that we see that Peter is truly sorrowed.
 - 1. He is grieved that Jesus asks him the third time.
 - 2. He is likely reflecting back to the night of his three denials.
 - 3. It hurts Peter to think of what he has done.
 - ii. This time he says, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." Instead of trying to convince Jesus of his love, as he did before the arrest, Peter says, Lord *you know*!
 - iii. Again, he receives the task, "Feed my sheep."
- d. In Scripture, three is a number of completeness.
 - i. Peter had denied Christ three times, or completely.
 - ii. Now, he has confessed his love for him completely. In his complete confession, Peter was completely restored.
- e. If I am to be any good for Christ, I must be completely restored. I must have repented of all my previous ways and committed my love completely to Him. If I am doing that, I will obey the commands that Christ has given.

2. I MUST MAKE DISCIPLES

- a. In Matthew 4:19, Jesus had found Peter and Andrew fishing in the Sea of Galilee and called to them saying, "Follow me and I will make you fishers of men."
- b. Three and a half years later, Jesus finds the disciples fishing in the same sea but this time he gives a different command.
 - i. This time Peter is given the command to shepherd.
 - ii. All the apostles are given the command at the Ascension to make disciples.
 - iii. This is not just "catching them" like fish. This is caring for them and shepherding them. This is discipling them.
- c. This is also our responsibility. It is the responsibility of each believer to train up the next generation of believers. Jesus had modeled this in his relationship with the Twelve.
- d. So we see, I must be completely restored, I must make disciples, and I must not be afraid.

3. I MUST NOT BE AFRAID

- a. When Peter had denied Christ, he did so out of fear of crucifixion.
- b. (18) "Truly I tell you, when you were younger, you would tie your belt and walk wherever you wanted. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands and someone else will tie you and carry you where you don't want to go." He said this to indicate by what kind of death Peter would glorify God.
- c. As Jesus stretched out His hands on the cross, so would Peter.
- d. But this time, Peter did not need to fear, and we see that he is quite fearless in the book of Acts.

- e. We must also be willing to follow Christ to the cross without fear.
- 4. THE GOSPEL IN SIMPLE FORM (adapted from Dr. James Merritt).
 - a. Bad News: We are all sinners separated from God.
 - b. Worst News: There is nothing we can do about our sin problem.
 - c. Good News: Christ did for us what we cannot do for ourselves.
 - d. Best News: Salvation and eternal life are a free gift, but you must receive it.

INVITATION HYMN # 285 Wherever He Leads