

Bible Stories for Adults

Feed My Lambs

John 21

Opening

Gathering: What can be done to mend a broken relationship after one friend has wronged another?

Today's Focus: Jesus helped restore Peter from his guilt of denial by having him confess his love for Jesus three times.

Key Verses: *"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." John 21:17*

Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written. John 21:25

Opening Prayer

Lesson

Jesus Appears to the Apostles (*John 20:1-25*)

To whom did Jesus first appear after His resurrection?
John 20:3, 9-11, 14

When and where did Jesus first appear to His apostles?
John 20:19

Did the apostles immediately recognize and believe it was the risen Jesus?
John 20:20 (Luke 24:36-43)

What command and gift did Jesus give them during this visit?
John 20:21-23

Were all 11 of the apostles present?
John 20:24-25

Jesus' Second Appearance to the Apostles (*John 20:26-29*)

When and where did Jesus appear to His apostles the second time?
John 20:26

Did Thomas need to touch Jesus' hands and side before he believed?
John 20:27-28

How did Jesus respond to the apostles' lack of faith without seeing?
John 20:29

Jesus' Third Appearance to the Apostles (*John 21:1-14*)

When and where did Jesus appear to His apostles the third time?
John 21:1, 14

Why had the disciples left Jerusalem and gone to Galilee?
Matthew 28:8-10

What did the disciples do to pass the time while they waited for Jesus to come to them?
John 21:1b-3

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Fishers of Men (*Luke 5:1-11*)

Where had Jesus first called some of these apostles?

Luke 5:1-3

How did Jesus reveal Himself to Simon, James and John this first time?

Luke 5:4-7

Who responded emotionally to Jesus' miracle?

Luke 5:8

How did Jesus use this great catch to call them as His apostles?

Luke 5:9-11

A Second Fishing Trip (*John 21:4-11*)

Who showed up after the apostles had spent another fruitless night fishing?

John 21:4-5

How did Jesus reveal Himself to Simon Peter, James and John this second time?

John 21:6

Who responded emotionally to Jesus' miracle?

John 21:7-8

Did Jesus expect them to leave the fish and boat as before to follow Him?

John 21:10-11

In the story of Mary and Martha, didn't Jesus teach us to forget our duties and follow Him?

Luke 10:38-42

Jesus Cares for Our Needs (*John 21:9-14*)

How did Jesus show His concern for the apostles' physical needs?

John 21:9, 12-13

What might the apostles have remembered when they saw the coals with bread and fish?

1 Kings 19:3a, 5-6

What was the purpose of that meal?

1 Kings 19:7-8

What other meal by the same sea might the apostles have remembered?

John 6:9-11

The Rock of Faith (*Matthew 16:13-23*)

Who had been the first to confess that Jesus was the Messiah (the Christ) and the Son of God?

Matthew 16:13-16

How did Jesus respond to this confession?

Matthew 16:17-18

How convicted was Peter's faith?

Matthew 16:21-23

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A Tested Faith (*John 18:1-27*)

Was his faith strong enough to stand up for Jesus?

John 18:3, 10-11

Were there any limits to Peter's faith?

John 13:37-38

Was Peter's faith really so weak that he'd disown Jesus 3 times in the next 12 hours?

John 18:15-18, 25-27

How did Peter feel when he realized what he had just done?

Luke 22:61-62

A Questioned and Recommitted Faith (*John 21:15-17*)

Now by another fire with Peter, did Jesus ignore Peter's denial or did He question him about it?

John 21:15

What did Jesus mean by *do you truly love me more than these*?

Matthew 26:33

How did Peter compare his faith to that of the others?

John 21:16

What proof did Peter give for his faith when Jesus asked him a third time?

John 21:17

Note: Peter denied Jesus three times. Jesus gave him the opportunity to confess his love three times.

Jesus called Peter by his full name each time to make it personal.

The Four Loves

Sanskrit has 96 words for love, ancient Persian has 80, Greek has 4, English only 1

Storge - Affection

Fondness through familiarity; Natural affection such as that between family members

Philia - Friendship

Strong bond between people who share a common interest or activity; Includes loyalty, virtue

Eros - Romantic Love

Can include sensual desire; Not necessarily sexual; Sees beauty within, Not based on pleasure

Agape - Unconditional Love

Charity; Used in Bible to denote total commitment or self-sacrificial love

Agape is most common word for love in the New Testament; All other references use *Philia*

Do You Love Me? (*John 21:15-17*)

In today's story, the NIV translates *philia* as *love* and *agape* as *truly love*

What word does Jesus use the first two times when He asks Peter, "Do you love Me"?

John 21:15a, 16a

Aware of his recent triple denial, how did Peter answer these questions?

John 21:15b, 16b

How did Jesus change His question the third time?

John 21:17a

Did Peter recognize the change?

John 21:17b

Why is this such an important question even for us?

Matthew 22:36-40

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Feed My Lambs (*John 21:15-17*)

What did Jesus mean by *Feed My Lambs* (v15)?

1 Peter 2:2-3 (1 Corinthians 3:2)

What did Jesus mean by *Take Care of My Sheep* (v16)?

1 Peter 5:2

What did Jesus mean by *Feed My Sheep* (v17)?

Hebrews 5:11-16:1a

How do these commands also apply to us?

Matthew 16:18

Peter's Future Faithfulness (*John 21:18-19*)

What did Jesus say that comforted Peter about his past weakness of faith?

John 21:18

Besides saying that Peter would see old age, what did Jesus mean?

John 21:19

Was Peter able to forget his past failure and stand up for the Jesus' good news (gospel)?

Acts 2:1, 4, 14, 40-41

Acts 4:18-20

Acts 5:27-29

What About Him? (*John 21:20-25*)

Did Jesus have anything to say about any other disciple's future faithfulness?

John 21:20-22

How did the disciples misunderstand Jesus' simple statement?

John 21:23

Who was this other disciple that Jesus had talked about?

John 21:24

Had this disciple tried to record all of his memories?

John 21:25

Then what was his purpose in writing?

John 20:30-31

Closing Prayer

Response - Consider and meditate on one each day this week

1. In what ways does *storge* (family affection) describe my love for Jesus?
(*Genesis 29:13-14; Psalm 133; Matthew 12:48-50; 23:8-9; 25:40; Philemon 15-16; Heb. 2:10-18*)
2. In what ways does *philia* (friendship) describe my love for Jesus?
(*John 21:15-17; 11:32-36; 16:27; Luke 7:34; Romans 12:9-13; James 2:23; 4:4; 1 Peter 1:22*)
3. In what ways does *eros* (desire for inner beauty) describe my love for Jesus?
(*1 Samuel 16:7; 1 Chron. 28:9; Psalm 24:1-6; 27:4; 113; 145; Jeremiah 29:11-13; Matt. 16:36-40*)
4. In what ways does *agape* (unconditional love) describe my love for Jesus?
(*John 21:15-17; 15:9-15; Mark 8:30-33; 1 Corinthians 8:3; 13; 1 John 2:5-6; 4:7-21; 5:1-3*)
5. How do I feed Jesus' lambs, shepherd His sheep and feed His sheep?
(*John 21:15-17; Genesis 18:19; Deuteronomy 4:9-10; 6:6-9; Acts 20:28; 1 Timothy 4:6-16*)