

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 = Mary Magdalene, the apostles (Peter and John) went home confused

When and where did Jesus first appear to His apostles?

John 20:19 = Easter evening, in a Jerusalem house behind locked doors

Did the apostles immediately recognize and believe it was the risen Jesus?

John 20:20 (Luke 24:36-43) = No, He had to show them the holes in His hands and side

What command and gift did Jesus give them during this visit?

John 20:21-23 = *I am sending you; gave power to forgive sins*

Were all 11 of the apostles present?

John 20:24-25 = Thomas wasn't; Wouldn't believe until he saw - just like the rest

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 = A week later, behind the same locked doors

Did Thomas need to touch Jesus' hands and side before he believed?

John 20:27-28 = No, Jesus offered but he confessed faith after seeing Jesus

How did Jesus respond to the apostles' lack of faith without seeing?

John 20:29 = *Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed*

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

When and where did Jesus appear to His apostles the third time? = Tiberias - emperor in 14AD

John 21:1, 14 = Later, by Sea of Tiberias (Roman name for Sea of Galilee),

Why had the disciples left Jerusalem and gone to Galilee?

Matthew 28:8-10 = Jesus told women to send apostles to Galilee to meet Him

What did the disciples do to pass the time while they waited for Jesus to come to them? = 7 of 12

John 21:1b-3 = Went fishing - what they did before they met Jesus, back to pre-Jesus lives

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

Where had Jesus first called some of these apostles? = Gennesaret is plain on NW shore

Luke 5:1-3 = Lake of Gennesaret (Sea of Galilee), preached from Simon's boat

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

Luke 5:4-7 = Gave them an excessive catch of fish after a fruitless night

Who responded emotionally to Jesus' miracle?

Luke 5:8 = Simon fell at Jesus' knees and repented, (Jesus later called him Peter)

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

Luke 5:9-11 = *From now on you will catch men...they left everything and followed*

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

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

John 21:4-5 = Jesus, the apostles didn't recognize Him in the morning dawn

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

John 21:6 = Gave them an excessive catch of fish after a fruitless night

Who responded emotionally to Jesus' miracle? = Only loincloth was worn while fishing

John 21:7-8 = Peter, put on his robe, jumped in water, swam 100 yards to shore

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

John 21:10-11 = Couldn't follow yet, Had them take care of fish, 153 big, net ok

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

Luke 10:38-42 = No; Don't be obsessed with duties, but set our priorities on Him

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 = He cooked and fed them breakfast after they worked

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

1 Kings 19:3a, 5-6 = The meal God's angel provided for Elijah as he ran to God

What was the purpose of that meal?

1 Kings 19:7-8 = Gave Elijah physical nourishment for 40 day journey thru desert

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

John 6:9-11 = Feeding the 5000 with 5 small loaves and 2 small fish

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 = The apostle Simon

How did Jesus respond to this confession? = Renamed Simon as Peter

Matthew 16:17-18 = Peter's confession would be the solid foundation (rock) of Jesus' church

How convicted was Peter's faith? = Strong but misdirected faith

Matthew 16:21-23 = Scolded Jesus for saying He would be persecuted and killed

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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 = Cut off high priest's servant's ear to protect Jesus

Were there any limits to Peter's faith?

John 13:37-38 = Peter said he'd even die for Jesus, Jesus knew better

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 = Denied Jesus 3 times as Jesus had predicted

How did Peter feel when he realized what he had just done? = He knew that Jesus knew

Luke 22:61-62 = Devastated, *he went outside and wept bitterly*

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 = Didn't specifically raise issue, but asked Peter about his love

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

Matthew 26:33 = Peter had claimed he would stick to Jesus even if others fell away

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

John 21:16 = He didn't, he only said *Yes, Lord, you know that I love you*

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

John 21:17 = *Lord, you know all things, you know that I love you*

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 = *Do you agape Me?*

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

John 21:15b, 16b = *Yes, Lord, you know that I philia You.*

How did Jesus change His question the third time?

John 21:17a = *Do you philia Me?*

Did Peter recognize the change?

John 21:17b = Yes, and was hurt by it; He still couldn't commit more than *philia*

Why is this such an important question even for us? = *Love the Lord your God with all ...*

Matthew 22:36-40 = It is the most important question we can be asked

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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) = Teach the baby Christians

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

1 Peter 5:2 = Be a shepherd to God's flock

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

Hebrews 5:11-16:1a = Teach the mature Christians

How do these commands also apply to us?

Matthew 16:18 = By commanding Peter, Jesus was also commanding the church

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

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

John 21:18 = Told Peter about his future

Besides saying that Peter would see old age, what did Jesus mean? = Called him again: *Follow Me*

John 21:19 = He would stand up for his faith and be crucified for it

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

Acts 2:1, 4, 14, 40-41 = Spoke to crowd at Pentecost and added 3000 to church

Acts 4:18-20 = Stood before Sanhedrin and refused to be quiet

Acts 5:27-29 = Told high priest, *We must obey God rather than men!*

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

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

John 21:20-22 = Peter asked about John, Jesus said it shouldn't matter to Peter

How did the disciples misunderstand Jesus' simple statement?

John 21:23 = They thought He was saying that the other disciple would live forever

Who was this other disciple that Jesus had talked about?

John 21:24 = The author of this book – John

Had this disciple tried to record all of his memories?

John 21:25 = No, there was too much to write

Then what was his purpose in writing?

John 20:30-31 = To feed His (Jesus') lambs and sheep

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*)