

Text: John 21:15-19

Meaning: Jesus reiterated Peter's call to ministry

Big Idea: Jesus calls imperfect people to fulfill His perfect plan

Objective: I want the hearers to follow Jesus

Theme:

GET BACK IN THE GAME

FOOTBALL ILLUSTRATION

In football there are players, there are coaches, and there are fans. The coaches call the plays, the players execute the plays, and the fans respond to the plays.

In an NFL example – The Father is the owner, Jesus is the GM, and the Holy Spirit is the coach.

What do fans do? They buy the jersey and the hat. They purchase a ticket. They find their seat and cheer or jeer the team.

Fans – just watch what goes on down on that field

Fans – critique every move the leadership of the team makes

Fans – celebrate when the team does well, but complain when they struggle

BELOVED – JESUS DOESN'T HAVE FANS. HE ONLY HAS

FOLLOWERS. True Children of God are the ones on the field of faith and ministry moving the ball down the field.

Follower – when we think of follower in today's culture we think of social media. We think of following someone's timeline or getting the news or liking someone's post they put out.

Follower – someone who is in the game for Jesus. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, are the owner, the GM, and the Coach. We all have a role to play on the team. Just like in football someone has to block, someone else has to run, someone else has to catch passes,

someone else has to tackle, someone else has to cover receivers. So too we all have a responsibility in the body of Christ.

READ JOHN 21:15-19

At the end of the gospel of John we have two beautiful stories of reconciliation, Thomas and Peter. Thomas said he had to see it to believe it, so Jesus showed up and presented himself to Thomas. Here, Peter has gone back to fishing, his old vocation, his old way of life, but Jesus meets him there and graciously restores him to his rightful calling and way of life.

THREE INTRODUCTORY STATEMENTS: ALL ON ONE SLIDE

OUR GOD IS A REDEEMING GOD

Just like Thomas and Peter we all too must be reconciled to God. Our sin separates us from Him, but through Christ's atoning sacrifice for us, when we confess our need of Him, we are reconciled to God. No longer at enmity with God, now friends with Jesus.

TODAY – GOD DOESN'T WANT TO PUSH YOU AWAY. HE WANTS TO BRING YOU INTO THE FAMILY AND USE YOU IN HIS KINGDOM SERVICE. GOD DOESN'T USE PERFECT PEOPLE. HE PERFECTS BROKEN PEOPLE AND MAKES THEM USEABLE.

Here Jesus asks Peter 3 times if he loved Him. Peter denied 3 times around a fire. Now Jesus asks him about his love and loyalty 3 times around a fire. Jesus gives us the supreme example here for how address sin in the life of another brother or sister in Christ. He blessed Peter with a catch of fish, invited him to a meal, let him be at ease in his presence, then brought up his need to return to his call.

Galatians 6:1

Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness.

IT TAKES RELATIONAL EQUITY TO LEAD OTHERS TO CHRIST

Peter is grieved that Jesus asks him 3 times here if he loved Him.

Jesus that he said, according to Matthew 26:33, Peter answered him, "Though they all fall away because of you, I will never fall away." But fall away he did, and Jesus is trying to get Peter to just get real about it. Acknowledge the sin, acknowledge that he is trying to turn back to his old way of life, then help Him get right with God and the calling on His life.

Finally, with the third question Peter GETS REAL with Jesus. The first two were Sunday School answers. But the third time was genuine.

Lord – you know everything. You know what I did. You know my very thoughts. Yes Lord, I do love you.

IN ORDER TO GET RIGHT WITH GOD WE MUST GET REAL WITH GOD

Half hearted responses and off-the cuff answers don't work in the life of discipleship. It's only when we get real with God that we get right with God.

Once Peter got real, He learned that JESUS IS LORD OF OUR PAST, OUR PRESENT, AND OUR FUTURE.

How do you follow God?

1. LOVE JESUS

3 times Jesus asks Peter, "do you love me?" He doesn't ask him "how much money have you given?" He doesn't ask "How many hours have you worked for me?" He doesn't ask him "How much of the Bible can you quote to me?" He asks, "do you LOVE ME?"

The Christian life is all about loving God.

Matthew 22:37-40

And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. ³⁸ This is the great and first commandment. ³⁹ And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. ⁴⁰ On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets."

HOW DO YOU LOVE GOD?

Chrystal Illustration – Dating and engagement

Appreciation – when you love someone you are grateful for them being in your life and caring enough to serve you or stay with you

Admiration – you admire their gifts, talents, beauty, personality and you want to spend time with them.

Communication – You want to talk to the one you love. The same is true with Jesus. When you love Him you want to pray, to talk to Him and hear His voice.

Consideration – When you love someone you are glad to serve them.

2. SERVE HIS CHURCH

Its interesting to me here that after Jesus asks Peter if he loves Him he then reminds him of his role in the church. He doesn't ask, "Do you love me?" then say, "Good, just enjoy the ride." He doesn't tell Peter, "Great, just sit back and I'll do the rest". No, he tells Peter to feed and tend the sheep.

I said this last week, but it needs to be said right here as well – GOD SAVES US TO SEND US. WE ARE SAVED TO SERVE GOD AND HIS CHURCH.

CHURCH IS NOT AN EVENT TO ATTEND. IT IS A PEOPLE TO LOVE AND SERVE. IT IS A FAMILY TO EMBRACE. IT IS A BAND OF BROTHERS AND SISTERS TO LIVE ON MISSION WITH. THAT IS THE CHURCH!

1 Peter 4:10

As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another

While it is true that the Holy Spirit equips people to serve as shepherds (Pastors), and gives these people to churches (Eph. 4:11ff), it is also true that each individual Christian must help to care for the flock. Each of us has a gift or gifts from the Lord, and we should use what He has given us to help protect and perfect the flock. Sheep are prone to wander, and we must look after each other and encourage each other.¹

FEED – The Word of God

The Bible is our meal, and we need a daily helping of the Word of God if we are going to be healthy. The preaching and teaching of the church is the foundation. One of the most important reasons we gather every Sunday and worship is to hear from the Word of God. In this example of feeding sheep, there is one thing you can count on with livestock. When its feeding time they come running. We lived on a farm before moving here, and we would help feed the cows from time to time. The moment we pulled out there in

TEND – The Care of the Body

Jesus says serving in God's Church is like raising livestock. You have to make sure they are fed well. You have to make sure they are protected. You have to make sure they get the medical attention they need.

¹ Warren W. Wiersbe, [*The Bible Exposition Commentary*](#), vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 398.

FISH – The Mission of the Church

Right before this Jesus told Peter and the disciples fishing with him to cast their nets on the right side of the boat for a catch. They hadn't caught anything all night, but when they obeyed Jesus they hauled in 153 fish in one cast.

Remember – Christ's initial call to them was "follow me AND I WILL MAKE YOU FISHERS OF MEN."

The Shepherd is called to care for the flock and fish – AND SO ARE THE PEOPLE. Serving God's Church means feeding it the Word of God, tending it through prayer and care, and fishing to bring more disciples into the flock.

TRUE FELLOWSHIP INCLUDES ALL 3 OF THESE COMPONENTS – FEEDING, TENDING, AND FISHING

3. FULFILL YOUR CALLING

WE GAVE UP THE RIGHT TO DO WHATEVER WE WANT TO DO THE MOMENT WE GOT SAVED.

The day you got married you gave up the right to do whatever you want to do. The day you had children you gave up the right to live only for yourself. The day you took that job you gave up the right to set whatever schedule you want.

When you're young you get to do basically whatever you want; however, when you grow up and have a family you can't just do whatever you want. You have a responsibility to care for others.

This is the imagery Jesus gives Peter for serving God's Kingdom.
Spiritually speaking, as a Child of God, I have given up the right to do whatever I want.

Sometimes in the church we can present the gospel in the wrong way. We talk so much about grace at times and we fail to refer to our responsibility as stewards under the Master's charge.

Today, if you're a Child of God know that you and I have a responsibility before God. We have a gifting and a calling to fulfill.

We all are called to GIVE
We all are called to SERVE
We all are called to SEEK GOD
We all are called to INVITE