

How God Restored Peter

© Tim Dubberly, November 5, 2000

Text: John 21:1-25 (read-15-19)

Introduction:

God understands each of us as individuals. He is quite aware of our mindsets and moodswings. He knows what we are going through and he is ready help us in times of trouble. Especially when we start drifting or backsliding away from God.

Such was the case with Peter; he had denied Christ three times before He had died. Peter's remorse and shame hung over him like the sky. Jesus knew Peter's condition and chose this time to restore him. So Jesus came to Peter with a challenge that would either cause him to be restored or run from God.

Peter desired to be back at home in his heart with Jesus. He wanted to feel that relationship healed and God's love flowing again. I'm sure Peter was saying in his heart "there's no place like home with Jesus."

g How can we forget some of the final lines in The Wizard of Oz when Dorothy keeps saying, "There's no place like home, there's no place like home." Most of us feel the same way. Man has always felt a fondness for that dwelling called home. Adam and Eve were grieved when they were cast out of the garden of Eden--their home. Noah and his family listened as the waters covered their homeland. Moses left his homeland to follow the will of God for his life. Jesus found that a prophet was not without honor, except at home. The prodigal son knew that even as a servant, home was better than the pigpen.

We rejoice today as we round the corner to "our home." Whether it be a cardboard box in an alley, or a fine air-conditioned bastion of comfort in the stifling heat, we are glad to get home.

As temporary as the structures on earth are, our home in heaven will be permanent. God **challenges** us to live daily in preparation for that great eternal home that He is preparing for His children. It will be untouched by the elements of nature, unscarred by strife, pure, clean, and holy, and yes--IT WILL LAST FOR ETERNITY!

Do you feel as good about the home God is preparing for you as the one that may be gone tomorrow? If we anticipate that home with joy, how wonderfully we will live our lives today! May God bless us unto that end.

May CD

God is truly challenging us every day to live like heaven is our home. He tells us not to love the world. It was time for Peter to make a choice between following Christ and the world which he had known. In this text we see several challenges made to Peter; however, I want you to notice the specific "challenges" that Jesus made.

I. Jesus challenged Peter's memory.(1-14)

- A. He challenged Peter to recognize his voice. Although He had not revealed Himself to the seven on the boat, He waited to see if they would hear and obey.
- B. He challenged them to recognize His power. Though they had caught nothing all night long, He told them to cast the net on the other side of the boat. No doubt they were tired but they obeyed and caught a boat load. John instantly said in verse seven, "It is the Lord!")
- C. He also challenged them to recognize His person. This was the third time He had appeared unto them. Peter's action tells us that he could not wait to get to Jesus, so he dove into the water and swam to shore. His impatience shows us his need for Christ.

II. Jesus challenged Peter's heart. (15-19)

- A. He questioned Peter about his love. Jesus wanted him to deal with his relationship with God. Some scholars say that the word Jesus uses for love and the word Peter uses for love are different. Jesus wanted to know if Peter had *agape* love, but he only had *philo* love, which is affection not sold out giving love.
- B. He questioned him about his devotion. Jesus told him to "Feed my lambs," which dealt with Peter's feeding and leading the flock of God. God wanted him to realize that He was raising him up as a leading in His stead, and would he love God enough to serve Him.
- C. He questioned Peter also about his obedience. He revealed what kind of death Peter would meet. In verse 18-19, Jesus revealed that one day when Peter had grown old he would be lead to a place where he did not want to go. Then He called out to Peter to make a decision when He said, "Follow Me!"

III. Jesus challenged Peter's commitment.(20-25)

- A. We wanted him to deal with his own commitment. This commitment is one unto God where that person realizes that he belongs to God. And everything that he does he does unto for the will and glory of God.
- B. He wanted Peter to deal with his individual sacrifice to God. Like Paul taught in Romans about being a living sacrifice who lives to prove the good, acceptable, and perfect will of God. And what you go through for Christ cannot be measured or compared to someone else.
- C. He also wanted him to deal with his personal commitment. Peter had to deal with following Christ regardless of death, family, job, ambitions, dreams, plans, health, etc. Jesus said, "Follow Me!"

Conclusion:

Jesus had touched Peter's memory to remember who was Lord. He also touched his heart and helped him realize his spiritual condition. Then He helped Peter to make a commitment to serve the Lord and even die if that is what it takes. This was 'How God Restored Peter.'

What about us today, are we ready for that commitment. Today, I believe that God has touched someone's memory today, and also He has touched your heart so that you know your spiritual condition today. And now He is dealing with your commitment, will you come and follow Him.

g The difference in a contribution and total commitment is usually the difference in failure and success.

A chicken and a hog were walking past a church building one day when they noticed the Sunday morning sermon posted on the outside bulletin board, "Helping the Poor." They walked a ways when the chicken suddenly came across with a suggestion. "Say, Brother Hog, why don't we give all the poor people a nice breakfast of ham and eggs?" The hog thought a moment and replied, "That's all right for you to say because for you it is only a contribution, but for me, it's total commitment!"

Jesus succeeded in His mission because He was totally committed to the task before Him. He was willing to give up everything, even His life, for the cause He believed in. No one really succeeds in life until he reaches the point that he is willing to lay down his life.

Jesus said, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone." Disraeli said, "Nothing can resist a will that will stake even existence for its fulfillment!"

May CD

Are you just contributing this morning or are you full committed.
There is a difference, a committed person puts his life into it like Jesus did.

g Vince Lombardi was a master at getting the most out of his players. He demanded a high level of commitment from his players. One of his favorite sayings was: "If you aren't fired with enthusiasm-you'll be fired with enthusiasm."

May CD

Let's be enthusiastic about our commitment this morning. By considering the "challenges" of Jesus, we now see that God has a loving way of bringing His children back into focus. The only question that still remains is "Will you follow Him?"

References

May, Steve (1999) 1001 Contemporary Illustrations. Raleigh, North Carolina: Heaven Word Inc.