

REBUILD—REVIVE—RESTORE

JOHN 21:15-25...LAST LESSON IN THE BOOK OF JOHN

Lesson #58 prepared by Gerald E. Cumby

Jesus is in business to Reclaim the sinner...to Restore the individual back to full spiritual health...to Repair the ways/failures of sinful man.

The goal of the Godhead (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) is to provide a way out of the mess we put ourselves in!

In the book of Isaiah, God calls His people to repentance, promising restoration: "Come now, let us reason together, says the LORD. Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool" (Isaiah 1:18)

I think we all need to be reminded every once in a while, as to who we were before we met Jesus...and the compassion and restoration God provides for us as sinners. We also need to understand that the Lord wants us to know He will help us overcome the problems of everyday life.

John 21:15-17, So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Feed My lambs." He said to him again a second time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Tend My sheep." He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You." Jesus said to him, "Feed My sheep."

- After their breakfast Jesus spoke directly to Peter.
- Jesus had already met with Peter individually on the day of His resurrection (Luke 24:34, 1 Corinthians 15:5). The Word does not tell us what they talked about. It would be only speculation on our part.
- Nevertheless, it was still important for Jesus to restore Peter in the presence of the other disciples.
- Note that Jesus addressed Peter as Simon, not Peter. It could be that it was a subtle reminder to Peter that he had not lived up to "the rock (Petrica) of faithfulness" Jesus had given Simon earlier in His ministry.

- Jesus asked Peter to compare *his* love for Jesus to the love that the *other disciples* had for Jesus. (Before he denied Jesus three times, Peter claimed to love Jesus *more* than the other disciples did)...(Matthew 26:33).
- Jesus wanted to know if Peter still had a proud attitude about his love and devotion to Jesus.
- Jesus asked Peter not so that He (Jesus) would know – He already knew, and Peter was aware that Jesus knew.
- Jesus wanted Peter to self-examine himself as to his attitude and commitment.

“There are preachers of the gospel among us who have dragged a full net to shore (brought in a harvest); they have been great and successful workers, but this does not prevent the need for the Lord to examine them as to their hearts. He bids them to take a deep breath, put up their nets for a while...and commune with him.”
(Spurgeon)

Feed My lambs...Tend My sheep:

- After Jesus asked and Peter answered, Jesus twice gave Peter an instruction regarding how he should act towards God’s people.
- Jesus emphasized that they were *His* lambs...His sheep, not Peter’s.

Lambs...Little ones. Sheep...Older; more mature.

Tend and Feed: “The verb used here has a somewhat broader meaning. It is ‘Exercise the office of shepherd’ over against simply ‘Feed.’” (Morris)

Tend My sheep:

- I think this means that it is not sufficient for the preacher/pastor/teacher merely to offer the bread of life (salvation) to the congregation, but he must take care that the sheep be properly attended to and guided.
- As a teacher of the Word, I know that our Lord’s meaning here is that this was a challenge not only to Peter and to the rest of the disciples, but to all the pastors and teachers in the Christian community.
- **“Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You”:** Peter understood that Jesus knew him better than he knew himself.
- Jesus to Peter (not necessarily in word, but addressing Peter’s inward conscience)... Like Jesus saying, “Peter, I love you, too. I just want you to understand your responsibility to the world around you. You are to feed, weed, heed, and lead.” **VERY IMPORTANT TRUTH!**

- ✓ **Feed** and tend MY lambs and sheep.
- ✓ **Weed** = weed out the thorns of your life and then you can help weed out those who are playing a part to hide a part.
- ✓ **Heed** = My word will come to you as the Spirit leads.
- ✓ **Lead** = Be the man of whom the Holy Spirit prepares for success.

JESUS TO PETER: “I’M LOOKING FOR A REPENTANT HEART, PETER...YOU MUST NOT JUST THINK ABOUT IT AND SAY YOU WILL DO IT...JUST DO IT.”

- *Jesus restored Peter in the presence of the other disciples by causing him to face squarely his point of failure; then Jesus challenged Peter to set his eyes and heart on the work ahead.*

John 21:18-23, “Most assuredly, I say to you, when you were younger, you girded yourself and walked where you wished; but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will gird you and carry you where you do not wish.” This He spoke, signifying by what death he would glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He said to him, “Follow Me.” Then Peter, turning around, saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following, who also had leaned on His breast at the supper, and said, “Lord, who is the one who betrays You?” Peter, seeing him, said to Jesus, “But Lord, what about this man?” Jesus said to him, “If I will that he remain till I come, what is that to you? You follow Me.” Then this saying went out among the brethren that this disciple would not die. Yet Jesus did not say to him that he would not die, but “If I will that he remains till I come, what is that to you?”

- **Most assuredly:** Meaning: What He was about to say needed to be remembered.
- **When you were younger:** Reminder to Peter: When you were young, you went where you wanted and did what you wanted to do.
- **When you are old, you will stretch out your hands...and die:** “You won’t like this; but, you will understand it better by and by.”
- It would be by this **death he would glorify God**.

Now Peter knew that continuing to follow Jesus would mean a certain death by crucifixion. Peter was once again challenged to follow his Messiah, Teacher, and Lord.

WHAT ABOUT JOHN?

- *Peter’s first response to the personal challenge and prophetic knowledge was to deflect it by wondering what Jesus wanted to do regarding someone else.*

The Simple Truth: Peter represents most all of us!

This is a response a child might say when he IS told to clean up his room...or take out the trash!

“What about John? What about Sherry? What about Bob?”

- **Jesus did not deflect the question. He simply said, “Peter, you do what I asked you to do. Do it to the best of your ability. Don’t worry about whether John will have to follow in your footsteps.**

NOTE: Concerning the statement to Peter about John = Jesus **did not say to John that he would not die**...but simply used the possibility of **that as an example to Peter**.

- **Rumors about John (the author of this Gospel): He would be alive when Jesus came back. Jesus squelched that idea...and John knew the rumor was not so. IF YOU KNOW THE SCRIPTURES, THEN YOU WOULD KNOW THE TRUTH!**

John 21:24-25, “This is the disciple who testifies of these things, and wrote these things; and we know that his testimony is true. And there are also many other things that Jesus did, which if they were written one by one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written. Amen.”

- Here John explains that *he* was the unnamed disciple referred to in several previous places. John gave solemn testimony to the truth of what he wrote.
- **His testimony is true.**
- John wrote the truth about Jesus, but it was impossible for him or anyone else to write about all the truths/miracles/works that Jesus did as the Son of God.

The works of Jesus continues throughout the world: People being born-again, People dying for the cause of Christ.

- ✓ **People writing about Jesus: Stories, devotions, Bible Studies, “How to Pray Dynamically” and “How to Walk and Talk with Christ” books, etc.**
- ✓ **Websites: People from every Country of the World are able to read about the works of God...and Jesus dying for the sins of the world.**

AND THE STORY DOES NOT END...IT KEEPS GOING AND GOING AND GOING!

1 John 2:1-2, “My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

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