



Growth Group Questions
May 11, 2025
“Restoration”

CONTEXT

This week we look at the second part of John 21 as the attention turns to Peter and his restoration. Peter had been very confident that he would never walk away from the Lord. He had stayed close to Jesus all the way to the courtyard of the high priest. But there in the courtyard, he had failed. He denied knowing Jesus three times.

The gospel of John affirms that for someone to become right with God and gain a sense of release from past failures that person needs to face the reality of where the deviation or sin occurred. Thus, the three line questioning as well as the charcoal fire that was also present in the courtyard of the high priest.

The questioning of Peter by Jesus concerning his love for Jesus brought the disciple from a response of something like “of course!” to a sense of grief with the third one. Jesus was not going to let Peter off without dealing with the brokenness that Peter was experiencing. He had let Jesus down and he was carrying the weight of his denial.

Jesus had a task for Peter, but not for the Peter of the pre-resurrection. Peter needed an encounter with the risen Lord in order to be fully restored. He needed to hear the words from Jesus about his own future. Jesus affirms that Peter will lose his life and then in verse 19 reiterates what he had said to him back when he called him to be a disciple – “follow me.” Peter’s life would not be defined by failure, but by being a follower of Jesus.

As Peter and Jesus are walking, Peter takes his eyes off Jesus, and he notices the “beloved disciple” who is more than likely John. Peter wants to know about what is going to happen to the beloved disciple and Jesus reminds him that he only needs to worry about his story and his calling and not the calling of someone else. Peter needs to be concerned with loving Jesus and taking care of the people Jesus entrusts to him.

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 26:33-34

³³ Peter replied, “Even if all fall away on account of you, I never will.” ³⁴ “Truly I tell you,” Jesus answered, “this very night, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times.”

John 21:15-23

¹⁵ When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?” “Yes, Lord,” he said, “you know that I love you.” _Jesus said, “Feed my lambs.”

¹⁶ Again Jesus said, “Simon son of John, do you love me?” _He answered, “Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.” _Jesus said, “Take care of my sheep.”

¹⁷ The third time he said to him, “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. ¹⁸ Very truly I tell you, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go.” ¹⁹ Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him, “Follow me!”

²⁰ Peter turned and saw that the disciple whom Jesus loved was following them. (This was the one who had leaned back against Jesus at the supper and had said, “Lord, who is going to betray you?”) ²¹ When Peter saw him, he asked, “Lord, what about him?”

²² Jesus answered, “If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you? You must follow me.” ²³ Because of this, the rumor spread among the believers that this disciple would not die. But Jesus did not say that he would not die; he only said, “If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you?”

Isaiah 6:5

⁵ “Woe to me!” I cried. “I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the LORD Almighty.”

Romans 2:4

⁴ Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, forbearance and patience, not realizing that God’s kindness is intended to lead you to repentance?

Theodore Roosevelt: “Comparison is the thief of joy.”

1 Peter 5:2-3

² Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, watching over them—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve; ³ not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.

QUESTIONS

1. The title of this week's sermon is "Restoration." What does "restoration" mean?
2. What does the Bible tell us about what it means to receive God's restoration?
3. What are the characteristics of a life that has been restored by God?
4. What lessons can we learn from how Jesus acted toward and spoke with Peter in John 21:15-23?
5. How can we apply the lessons we learned from Peter's restoration to our own lives, especially when we experience failure to obey or to follow Christ?
6. What is the meaning of Jesus' instruction to Peter to "feed my lambs," "take care of my sheep," and "feed my sheep"?
7. What does it mean to you to truly love Jesus?
8. Pastor Paul said that we are all called to feed the lambs, take care of the sheep, and feed the sheep. What does that mean to you and how are we to "feed the sheep" today?
9. Pastor Paul also said that to truly love as God wants us to love is hard work. Why is this so? How can we increase our ability to love as God wants us to love?

PASTOR PAUL'S SERMON QUESTIONS

1. Do you need to "take a walk with Jesus" and ask him to restore something so that you can follow Him more completely?
2. Is there a place in your life where comparison is stealing your joy?