

SERIES: SAINT OR SINNER: 4/7/24 (#8) PASTER NATE

- Pastor Nate relays personal story of his Dad's recent passing and his last words: "you are my wife and I love you". Today's sermon will focus, largely, on Jesus' last words to Peter.
- Recounting our Series' characterization of Peter...in review...he is the 'Saint and Sinner'...'leader of the pack' of disciples...impulsively rightly and wrong and so exuberant.
- Reviewing the state of mind of the apostles at this given moment: they had been with Jesus for three years as part of His ministry...in dedication, had given up their prior careers...had watched Jesus' execution and witnessed His re-appearance as the resurrected Christ.

Jesus Reveals
Himself For
A 3rd Time

John 21:1-3— After this, Jesus revealed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias, and He revealed Himself in this way. (2) Simon Peter, Thomas (called the Twin), Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee (James and John), and two others of His disciples were together. (3) Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We will go with you." They went out and got into the boat, but that night, they caught nothing.

- So here are the 7 disciples...kind of befuddled....out of kilter....lost, after devoting the past three years to the Messiah...seeing execution...a brief return...now gone again...imagine their 'emotional whiplash'! Also, they had given everything (jobs, etc) to follow Him...now what? So they decide to return to their roots...instinctively, and as a practical means of support. But... they catch nothing!.....so no money...no fish to eat! Then, Jesus reappears!!!

The Disciples
....'And Peter'
Respond
With Joy!

John 21:4-8— Just as day was breaking, Jesus stood on the shore; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. (5) Jesus said to them, "children, do you have any fish"? They answered Him, "No." (6) He said to them, "cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some." So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in because of the quantity of fish. (7) That disciple whom Jesus loved therefore said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment, for he was stripped for work, and threw himself into the sea. (8) The other disciples came in the boat dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, but about a hundred yards off.

Lots of
'Connective
Imagery'
With Jesus'
Ministry

- Story sounds familiar...because it happened before. When Jesus meets Peter, James and John at the start of His ministry, the same thing happened....the men had caught nothing... Jesus tells them to lower the nets again....success! So in this latter scenario, John remembers and exclaims, "its the Lord"! And the impetuous Peter jumps in the water with joy and excitement and very, very anxious to fix his relationship with Jesus (remember his 3 denials!).

John 21: 9-14— When they got out on land, they saw a charcoal fire in place, with fish laid out on it, and bread. (10) Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish that you have just caught." (11) So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, 153 of them. And although there were so many, the net was not torn. (12) Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast." Now none of the disciples dared ask Him, "Who are you?" They knew it was the Lord. (13) Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and so with the fish. (14) This was now the third time that Jesus was revealed to the disciples after he was raised from the dead.

Jesus Resets
Relationship
With Peter -

And Challenges
Peter To
Love Him -

Scripture
Defines This
Love -

Peter Shows
Love in Ultimate
Sacrifice!

Jesus
Challenges
All of us
to love Him!

- This 'Jesus breakfast' is loaded with imagery....and His desire for the disciples to remember certain important aspects/events in their ministry together (ie. The fish/bread multiplied to feed the 5,000; the breaking of bread at The Last Supper; the charcoal fire...conjuring memory of the charcoal fire in the courtyard of Peter's denials simultaneous to Jesus' torture).
- Regarding the courtyard experience, Peter is, in many ways, 'stuck there'. As he rushed to shore toward Jesus, what was he thinking about...surely the barrier he perceived created by his denials.
- Jesus knows Peter is stuck! And, note below, He goes about resetting the relationship.

John 21:15-17— When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, 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." (In V. 16 and 17, Jesus reads the question a 2nd and 3rd time and Peter grievously responds similarly but stronger- -the third time adding: "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.")

- Recalling the earlier scene in which the Angel told the women at the tomb to go tell the disciples AND PETER.....Jesus is, still again, singling out Peter. AND, knowing that Peter is still stuck back in the Courtyard, He connects the earlier event (three denials) by seeking Peter's affirmation of his love of Jesus three times. As he is prone, Peter finally answers, exasperatingly, and in a slightly rebuking tone.
- At the core of Jesus repeated question, what did He mean by the term "love"? Refer to the following passages where Jesus speaks of "love". First, Mark: 12: 30-31 (ie. ...love God with all your heart, soul, mind, strength AND love your neighbor as yourself.). So, love with your entire being! Math 5: 44 (ie....love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you). So, "love" extends well beyond those whom are easy to love! John 13:34 (ie. ...love one another as I have loved you). Jesus is saying..."I am the standard; love one another with the same intensity and quality that I extend in my love for you!" John 14:15 ("If you love me, you will keep my commandments"). So, love leads to action consistent with His Will! Finally, John 15:13 ("Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends"). So, to Jesus, "love is self-sacrificing and complete!!
- Love is also a 'decision. Pastor Nate tell a calamitous story in which a wife, in love, make a decision to stick by her victimized (attacked) husband even, 'post recovery' while he couldn't even remember who he was. He, then, made the corresponding decision to re-initiate familiarity, and following, renewal of love with his wife.
- So, Jesus want Peter to embrace all of the above and love Him intensely and in every way possible. The three time repeated questioning of Peter serves to emphasize this.

John 21: 18— "Truly, truly I say to you, when you were young, you used to dress yourself and walk where ever you wanted, but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will dress you and carry you where you do not want to go."

- So, Jesus is effectively asking....'do you love me to the extent you would give your life for me? You Peter, in the Upper Room, said you were willing to die for me...did you mean it'?
- Of course we know the sincerity/genuineness of Peter's answer as reflected in his willing upside-down crucifixion years later.
- This and all Scripture is given for our instruction.....the question "Do you love me" is not just a question for Peter....it is the Lord's personal question for us all! Other questions (ie "Are you sorry?... "Do you promise to do better"... why am I so weak"...etc.) are more likely the questions we superimpose on ourselves. All of these latter questions flow from shame and our innate sinful humanness, and serve to create a barrier with Jesus.
- Undoing this barrier is love...love of God and of each other! (He already loves us!!!)

*****DO YOU LOVE ME?...FEED MY SHEEP.....FOLLOW ME!!!!*****