

Peter's Fishing Lessons

by Duane Troyer

This sermon emphasizes the importance of loving God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength, as well as loving our neighbors as ourselves. It delves into the stories of Peter's encounters with Jesus, highlighting his reactions, failures, and ultimate restoration. The message also touches on the significance of non-resistance, loving one's enemies, and the compassion of God towards even the most undeserving.

Scripture: Mark 12:30, John 21:15, Revelation 2:4, 1 Timothy 2:1, Hebrews 4:12, 1 Timothy 6:10, Proverbs 15:28, Matthew 5:44, Matthew 22:37, John 21:1

Topics: "Love for God", "Compassion for Others"

Description

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Transcript

I just want to greet everybody in Jesus' name this morning. Yeah, I was thankful for what was shared this morning and took a little bit of time to realize how much it, how much it pertains to me. Yeah, just like letting, letting, letting circumstances dictate our actions to the point of wrong, you know.

It reminded me of something I read not so long ago. It said two Christians met on the sidewalk and one of them asked the other one, how are you doing? The other one said, well, under the circumstances I'm doing all right. And the first one said, what are you doing under there? We need to be overcomers, not, not under the circumstances.

Let's, let's stand and pray and we'll get started. Oh great God and Father, thank you for loving us and calling us as children. We thank you for all your mercies.

We acknowledge that they're new every day. We ask that we could just embrace, embrace them. That we could be merciful to our fellow man.

Fill us with your love and your spirit and guide and direct us. I pray Lord for your help and guidance as we look into your words. That you would, that you would teach us.

That you would enlighten us and help us, help us to get, to get some, some good thing out of, out of your words here today. That would help us be better men and better women. And I just pray Lord for your blessing on the day.

In Jesus name, amen. How many, how many people like to go fishing at least once in a while? A lot, a lot of people at least, a little bit. Most people that like to go fishing like fishing stories.

Maybe even some that don't go fishing might like fishing stories. Well, we're gonna, we're gonna look at some fishing stories today. But first let me, let me talk a little bit about love.

Here in Mark, all, I think all the, for sure Matthew, Mark and Luke all contain something very similar to this. This, this in Mark is in Mark 12. And I will just, I'll start reading here in 28.

There was some, there was some discussion going on there between Jesus and the Pharisees and religious leaders. And then here in verse 28 it says, One of the scribes came and heard them arguing and recognizing that he had answered them well, asked him, What commandment is the foremost of all? And Jesus answered, The foremost is, Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord, and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this, you shall love your neighbor as yourself.

There is no other commandment greater than these. This, there's, there's other places where he, he talks about, he even says the second is like unto it. He's, he's, he's saying these are like the two sides of one coin.

They're, they're, they're very much alike. He also says that one place on, on these two commands hang all the law and the prophets. If we would, if we would, if we would get this to its extent, it would be all we need.

I'm, I'm sure there's a reason the Bible's thicker than that. But, but, but still, if you would, if you would have these two and you would apply them to, to, to their extent, it would take care of nearly everything. So it's, it's rather important that we have some, some understanding of what this means.

This word love here, there's, there are several words in Greek and Hebrew that can be translated as, as love. But this, this one and one of the more common ones is the word agape and it's the highest form of love. It's a sacrificial love.

It's active. It's dutiful. And it doesn't solely rely on feelings.

It involves faithfulness. It involves commitment. And so when it says that we shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.

I want to, I want to just, I want us to think about that for a little bit. Maybe I'll, maybe I'll write those up here. So he says, with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.

If we were to separate these out a little bit, there would be, there would be some, a lot of instances actually where I think the heart, when it talks about like with all your heart and stuff, it would, it would include nearly all of these. For sure these first two and for sure usually the first three. But, but here he separates them out and I think there's kind of a reason for it.

And for that reason we're going to define, we're going to define heart here as feelings. Maybe I should use a different color for the definition. Oh, maybe I don't have that option.

That one doesn't write. Okay. Feelings, emotions, emotions, affections.

I'm not the greatest speller. So if some of this is not right, you'll probably get it. With all your heart.

So, so we ought to love God with those. That's obviously not the extent of it, but, but it ought to affect our emotions and our emotions and our affections, our feelings ought to be of love toward God. And, and our soul is kind of like, kind of like that, that deep desire within us.

Our, our desires, something that drives us. Because emotion should never be necessarily the driving factor. It's a factor in our life.

It's a real thing, but it should not, there's something else that really, really drives us to something. Our desires. We could say our spirit.

I think there's something else I had. Oh, just our life. Like, remember how, like our soul was breathed in, like when, when, when God breathed in Adam a breath of life, what, what did he become? He became alive.

He became a living soul. So, so just our whole life. Now our mind is kind of our understanding.

It's something, our understanding, our reasoning, could be our imagination. These are all things we do with the mind. And then our strength is like, another word for it is our power.

I would say it's, it's our, it's our actions. It's our physical ability. So let's write that on here again.

Physical abilities. Okay. So with all those things, we ought to be loving God.

And I, we possess all four of these. We possess a heart. In the biblical definition of the heart, these emotions, we, we possess a soul, a mind, a strength.

We may not necessarily all possess, like these, these may not all be distributed equally. We don't, an obvious one is we don't all have the same physical strength, obviously. But, but all of us who are alive and have, have these things.

And the greatest and foremost commandment is that we, is that we agape. We have this sacrificial commitment and faithful love in all these areas to God. We have, these, these two, especially, kind of dwell outside of our physical, our physical being.

Our mind is our brain. It's physical. And, and, and we have, and of course our strength is our, our physical being.

We have a lot of control over this. Nearly, nearly complete control. That's not saying God can't turn our bodies around or make our arm do something or another.

But, but still like, if, if we do something, well let's start up here. We have, we probably have the least control over this. We, it's not that we can't control it.

And, and we can and we should and we should train it. But we can't always control that. We can be, we can be in a, I told this story some time ago about this.

I, I gave this story about a, a person in early, early America. Some, some family living way out in the wilderness somewhere. And the man goes on a, has to go back into the civilization.

He's gone for weeks. Now he's traveling back home. And he's, he's on the last stretch of his journey.

He's got a couple more hours to go. And, and he's filled with this emotion of love and desire to, to be back with his family. And all of a sudden, the, the wilderness, the woods around him erupt with howling wolves that are on his trail.

Can he just maintain that loving feeling? No, he, he can't. He's going to have shivers running up and down his spine. He's going to, he's going to be filled with fear and dread and terror.

And he can't necessarily control that. And then, and then this, we might have a little more control and this a little more. And this, of course, we have a great deal of control over.

So, we, we meet people. I'm sure we've all met people who we, we felt like maybe they love God here. They seem to have some kind of a heart, a feeling, some kind of expression.

But, but, but you look at some of their life and their understanding, their understanding and their reasoning, their interpretation of Scripture and their actions and you're like, something is really, really missing. And we don't, we don't understand God that way. We understand that the love that Jesus wants goes, goes further than this thing that's, that we barely, that we barely have full control over.

But what about, what about these two? Have you ever met Christians? Who seem to kind of have these two, but there really seem to be a lack of this? I think I have. I think they're actually more common in the church. In, in, at least in the kind of settings we, we would mostly find ourselves in.

People, and, and it's a common, it's a real common thing with second and third and fourth generation people of, of movements that have like, people have, have, have made radical steps toward Christ and removed themselves from dead corrupt systems. And, and after a few generations something comes missing. It happened in the church of Ephesus that, that first love got lost.

And it was, there was, when you read that revelation, what Jesus said there in the revelation, he said, Jesus was pleased with their deeds. He was pleased with their labors. He was pleased with many things that they were doing.

And he said, yet I have this thing against you. You've lost something that you first had. And, and it was that first love.

There, there would be people, I think Jonah would be a good example of someone who, who loved God here, but reluctantly. And, and he might have done a little bit of this, but this, this was not there. He just, he had very little heart for what God said.

He had no desire to go there and do what God said. He was trying to get away of it. And finally, you know, God intervened enough that he, he did this, and he did this.

And God knows, I mean, Jesus spoke well of Jonah. I, I'm not condemning Jonah, but surely Jonah missed out on a great blessing. And he did not love the Lord with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his mind, and with all his strength.

Or, or if you would look at 1 Corinthians 13, where it starts in by saying, If I, if I, what's the first words? If I give all my good to the poor and die a martyr, if I do all these things, if I, if I speak with tongue of men and angels, and if I give, give my goods to the poor, it's actions, right? He's talking about actions that are good actions. He's saying, if I do all these things, and I don't have any of this, it's rather hollow. It's like a clanging cymbal.

There's, there's just not, it's not the real thing. There's not much substance there. That doesn't mean, and this would be one point I want to say is, I think we probably all go through times in our life.

Have you ever gone through a time in your life when you just felt real empty? Things were dry? You didn't, you didn't feel the presence of God? Like I surely have. Feeling like going through a desert, and it was dry. That, that's okay.

That doesn't mean you don't do this. That doesn't mean you don't turn your understanding on, and you reason, and you say, but God is real. I know it.

And I know what he's taught, and I'm just going to do it whether I feel it or not. You've got to kick these things in, and you've got to stay faithful. But, but our heart should never, our goal should never be satisfied with one, or just two, or just three, but with all four.

So we want to have this, this sacrificial and active devotion in our entire being, in our heart, soul, mind, and strength. And is that possible? Yes, I think it is possible. Unlike somebody, some, some, some school of thought in Christianity that would say all this is to show us that this is not even possible.

I don't think that's the point. I don't think that's what Jesus is communicating. Think about it.

If, if you would know somebody, and all he would think about is money, and, and he has this deep desire to make as much money as he can, and nothing touches his emotions as much as if he turns a good profit. He, he, he studies, and he understands finances, and he, and he works long and hard for that one goal to make money. Would we not say this man loves money with all his heart, soul, mind, and strength? Surely.

Or what about an athlete who, who, who has one, one desire, one goal, and that is to, to, to, to play this game, to be the best player, and to win the game. And he devotes his whole life to it. He studies the sport.

He practices everything he eats, everything he works, everything he buys, everything he does has this goal at the end. Would we not say that, that this man loves this sport with all his mind, all his heart, mind, soul, and strength? Surely it's possible. There's many people who love the world that way.

They love the world with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength. Jesus said to his disciples, if you were of the world, the world would love you as its own. But I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.

Someone once said, and I really like this, he said, love, love is to know and to be known, to know and to be fully known by another. Now that's, that's really deep when you think about that. To love, to love, that true deep love is to, to know someone and to have them know you.

Fully. Fully. Some of the people that I in my life have sensed the most love from are not necessarily the people that are the easiest to get along with.

It's because love, love is something deeper than a friendship. It's, it's, it's not just a friendship to where if somebody, if two people act friendly toward each other, they get along and they kind of love each other, but as soon as the friendliness wears out, so does the relationship. It's not this kind of love.

That's not agape. That's not the faithfulness and the commitment of an agape love that God, that God is asking for us in this first and greatest commandment. It's shallow.

That's shallow, a shallow love if it, if it can even be called love. To know and to be fully known by another. When someone, when someone knows your sinfulness and still loves you, and still loves you.

And, and I'm, by saying that, I'm not, I'm not talking about someone who lives in some gross sin and you, and there's no consequences, there are no, there are no ramifications for it. That's not what I'm talking about. I'm talking about like, missing, missing the mark.

Did you know that like in the, in the, in Hebrew, the word sin, it, it, it can have a few variations, but it's, it's katah. Katah is I think how you pronounce it. At least one of, one of the words that often gets pronounced is sin.

And the real meaning of it is, is, is missing, like missing the mark. There, there in Judges, where it talks about those 700 left-handed Benjamites, who could sling a stone at a hare's breath without katah, without missing. They could, they could, they could, with their left hands they could throw a sling, hit, hit the breath of a hare and never miss.

Never miss. You could never katah. And so, at least one of these definitions of, of, of sin is missing the mark.

And that's what I'm, that's what I'm talking about. Someone who deeply knows you and, and, and they know where you missed the mark, but they don't, they're not always berating you for it. They don't slander to others about it.

They care about you. And they help you see it without destroying you. That's how Jesus loved us.

That's how Jesus loved us. He said, I did not come to condemn the world, but to save it. He causes us to see this katah in us without destroying us.

And there's a few fishing stories that I think demonstrate that. I wanna, I wanna make it clear that there does come a time when God will destroy the wicked. But, but I don't think there, there will be a single person who, who will come to that judgment day and be destroyed by God because of his katah, because of his sin, that did not have a chance to see it.

With, with maybe the exception of children, or, or people with some handicap that, that, that I think will be found innocent anyway. Um, I think, I think God has, has left himself a witness. I think we have consciences, and, and I think people will have had a fair chance to see that.

I think that's the meaning of what Jesus said to the Pharisees. If you were blind, you would have no sin. But since you say we see, your sin remains.

This deep love to know and to be fully known by another takes an openness, uh, where we, we know the, the, we know the good, bad, and ugly of, of someone, but we love them anyway. And, and when it comes to God, there's nothing bad and ugly about God, of course, but, but there is a terror. There is a, uh, there is a, uh, severity, there is a sovereignty that is, that is, that is to reckon with.

Um, and, and we know that. He wants us to know that. He wants us to really, really know that.

Not just know about it, not just here, but here. And here, He wants us to know those things. Because, you know what? The fear of the Lord, which fear is an emotion, it's a feeling.

Something without that, without that, there is seldom victory over sin. Okay, so let's get to these fishing stories. And they're in the Bible.

So, we're going to read a little bit in Matthew, um, in chapter 4. So, Jesus is just beginning His ministry. He, He has, uh, uh, He has, John the Baptist has been preaching, announcing this thing that's coming. Jesus has been baptized.

He's been in the wilderness for 40 days. He comes back into, uh, into civilization or whatever. And, um, and He starts, He starts preaching and He starts announcing the good news of the kingdom.

Um, and He walks here along the Sea of Galilee and, and, and starts performing some miracles. And in verse 17 of chapter 4 in Matthew, it says, From that time, Jesus begins to preach and say, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. This, we talk about this a lot.

I know, I know you all are not ignorant to what, what we mean when we say the kingdom of God. But this is interesting. I think it's interesting.

So, kingdom, um, okay, we understand what a king is, right? Um, and, and you don't pick this up in the English language. Like, you have a king, which is a person, that reigns. We know what reign means, but in English, king and reign don't sound much alike, or I don't know where the connection is.

But, uh, in, in, uh, in Greek, there's a, there's a connection. Um, I don't remember the, but it's just like this, they have the same root word. Same way in Spanish.

Harvey taught me this when I was down in, in Honduras. And in Spanish, king is rey. And, and reign is, uh, reynado, if that's said right.

Um, there, there's a connection there. There's, they come from the same word. Now, kingdom, whenever you add that suffix dom on a word, like it, it refers to a domain, and it turns a, it turns a verb into a noun.

For instance, like the word boredom. It's the state of being bored. Or freedom, it's the state of being free.

Um, kingdom is the state of being reigned. It's, we are, we are in a new, in a new state, we're in, um, it'd be like the state of being kinged over, or reigned over. That's the kingdom.

And Jesus is claiming to be this king, and, and starting this, this revolution. We go on here in verse 18. Now, as Jesus was walking by the sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon, who was called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen.

And he said to them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. And immediately they left their nets and followed him. And going on from there, he saw two other brothers, James, the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in the boat, with Zebedee, their father, mending their nets.

And he called them, and immediately they left their boat, and their father, and followed him. Now, that's all pretty familiar to us. I think we've probably heard that a lot of times, that, like, Jesus just was walking along the sea of Galilee.

He meets Simon, and Peter, and Andrew, and says, Follow me, and they just get up and follow him. And then he goes a little further and meets James and John, who were mending nets with their father. Says, Follow me, and they leave everything and follow him.

But Luke gives a way more detailed account of what I'm persuaded is this same thing. And that's common for Luke to do that. He starts his whole letter in by saying that he's carefully investigated these things, he's interviewed multiple first-hand witnesses about these things, and he's put them together in an accurate account.

And in many cases, he gives a whole lot more detail. Now, if what we are going to read here in Luke 5 is the same, as I'm persuaded that it is, there is a little bit, somebody, either Matthew and Mark or Luke, are a little bit off on some chronological things. Like, there's a few miracles that, according to Luke, would have happened before this, according to Matthew and Mark, would have happened after this.

But the way this ends, especially, is what persuades me that it's the same happening, and there's no account in Luke before this that he has called disciples yet. So, here in Luke 5, we have a similar background. John the Baptist is preached.

He's come back from the wilderness. He starts preaching. He does a few miracles.

And now here, in chapter 5, it says, Now it happens that while the crowd was pressing around him and listening to the words of God, he was standing by the lake of Gennesaret. By the way, the lake of Gennesaret is the same as the Sea of Galilee. And he saw two boats lying at the edge of the lake.

But the fishermen had gotten out of them and were washing their nets. And he got into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little way from the land. And he sat down and began to teach the people from the boat.

And when he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch. And Simon answered and said, Master, we worked all night and caught nothing. But I will do as you say and let down the nets.

And when they had done this, they enclosed a great quantity of fish. And their nets began to break. So they signaled to their partners in the other boat for them to come and help them.

And they came and filled both of the boats so that they began to sink. But when Simon Peter saw that, he fell down at Jesus' feet, saying, Go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man. For amazement had seized him and all his companions because of the catch of fish which they had taken.

And so also were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, Do not fear. From now on you will be catching men.

When they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed him. So, Peter and Andrew had a little boat. And James and John had a little boat.

They were fishermen by trade. And here, this morning, they had fished all night, which was a common thing for fishermen. It was the right thing, the right time for fishermen to be fishing.

And then in the morning they would bring in their catch and sell it. And there would probably be people who would then have places, booths or whatever at the market who would buy the fish from the fishermen and go and sell them again. And, but this, and apparently they were, it would appear to me like they were kind of like business partners.

James and John and Peter and Andrew kind of partnered up with their fishing business. And they had worked and toiled all night and it was a fruitless night. No catch, not a single fish.

All, the only thing they had to show for their efforts was nets full of seaweed and whatever else junk from the sea. And so, the night was over, the day was there, and they were there washing their nets. I would say, if I'm accurate, that this is the same account as the other time where James and John's son, father, James and John's father, Zebedee, was somewhere there too.

It was a discouraging, fruitless, laborious night of work. They had just washed their nets, had laid them in the boat, were ready to call it quits and leave everything there ready for the next time they would go fishing. And here comes Jesus and a whole crowd of people and the crowd is pressing on to Jesus and Jesus comes there and gets into one of the boats, which was Peter's boat, and says to Peter, push out a little ways.

And so, Jesus is in the boat, Peter's in the boat, they go out just a little ways and there, with a little bit of water distance where Jesus could address the crowd better, He starts teaching and He starts preaching to them. Remember that this boat, it's a major part of Peter's life, right? It's his career, it's his livelihood. All his livelihood is gotten from this boat and Jesus just kind of takes over.

He just kind of gets in this boat and says, hey, push out a little bit for me. And if that wasn't so bad, after all, Jesus had a benefit by having a little bit of space there so He could address the crowd better and He was a good teacher. I don't think this is the first time that Peter met Jesus.

For sure, I don't think so about James and John because if I understand right, they were cousins with Jesus' family. Joseph and Mary and Peter and Andrew were business partners and I think they knew each other probably from a long time ago. And so Jesus is there and He's teaching and it doesn't say what He's teaching but He's surely teaching the good news of the gospel, of the kingdom, of being reigned, of being kinged over in a new way and with all kinds of these implications that He's the king, He's the one who reigns.

That's common teaching for Jesus, especially early here in His ministry. But what happens next is what really tests Peter. It's here in verse 4 and 5. So, when He had finished speaking, Jesus said to Simon, Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch.

And what we have recorded here is Simon's answer and he says, Master, we worked hard all night and caught nothing. But I will do as you say and let down the nets. I think there's more, I think there's more being communicated here than what's just recorded and I think so, especially by Peter's response at the end.

Here, here's a carpenter, Jesus, telling a fisherman what to fish or how to fish. And, and this is after they had toiled all night and something, something in Peter's response seems to indicate that he thinks this is a ridiculous request. Something, I'm reading into this, but I'm hearing Peter say something like, Look, we've fished all night, our nets are clean, we're done for the day, we're ready to go rest.

You, this is the wrong time of the day to go fishing. You don't understand fish and their habits. I've been in this business for a long time.

Nevertheless, he says, he addresses him as master and he says, I'll do as you say. And so he pushes out into deeper water. And, I, I think this would be one of those areas where Peter, Peter is in here somewhere, he doesn't feel it.

He doesn't desire it, that's pretty obvious. But he reasons, I am convinced this is the master and I understand how I should respond to the master. And so I put power and action and physical abilities to it and I just do it.

And all of a sudden, he drops those nets in and all of a sudden those nets start jerking and shaking and straining and he begins pulling and there are so many fish that the nets start tearing and breaking. And Peter, Peter calls, motions, beckons his partners over, come and help and they bring that other boat in and they fill it so, both boats so full of fish that the boats start sinking. They go way down.

When Peter realized this whole situation, when he analyzed what just happened, he fell at Jesus' feet and he said, just go away from me. I'm a sinful man. I've missed the mark.

Something, something that, something about how all that happened and how, I think things not quite recorded here, maybe just a communication that Jesus and Peter had by looking at each other, Peter realized like, I have missed it, I have missed the mark, I have underestimated how much you know about fish, I have overestimated my own capability, I have missed what all you are master over. And he just, he just said to Jesus, just depart. Just, just go away from me.

But Jesus, Jesus says, don't fear. From now on, I'll make, I'll make you catch men like this. And I think he's communicating that it will be much the same way.

You, you think you'll know how and when and where and you think you'll know when it's time to quit. But let me and my word be in your vessel and just do what I tell you. And this is the result.

Unexpected and amazing results will happen if you just do that. It says they brought their boats to land. It would appear to me, again, I'm kind of combining these two, this account in Matthew and Mark with the one in Luke here, but it would appear to me that they brought the boats to land and maybe James and John kind of started fixing, mending these nets that got broken.

And Jesus might have had a few more words with the crowd. I don't know for sure how all that went. But at the end, Jesus says, follow me and I'll make you fishers of men.

And they left everything. Everything. They left boats.

They left fish. They left nets. They left their Father.

And they followed Jesus. A love, a love that affected all four of these areas of their lives. Their heart, their soul, their mind, their strength, gripped Him.

And for the next three years, they followed Him and they were taught by Him. And they were committed and they were faithful. They fully believed that this was the long-awaited one who would come and establish His kingdom and they came to know and to be known by Jesus.

They came to know and to be fully known by Jesus. Through the good times and the hard times. Peter was so confident.

He was so confident about who Jesus was that he said there toward the end of Jesus' life, he said, I am ready to die with you. But in that, in that all-critical moment, in that great test for Peter, he ended up denying Him three times and saying, I don't even know the man. And the next day, Jesus died and was buried.

It's hard for us, I think, to fathom the fear, the failure, the sorrow, the distress, and the confusion that Peter and the Apostles went through in this time. They had locked themselves behind doors. They were afraid.

They were confused. I mean, Peter had vowed to be the superstar here, but he fumbles the ball in the most critical moment and the game seems to be over. He dreadfully missed the mark.

And it would seem to me that being troubled by this great kata, this great missing of what he should have hit, he reverts back to going fishing and to just being a fisherman. We read this account in John 21, and this is after after the death of Jesus. Something happened here and the way it's worded, it makes me think that Peter Peter thinks his chance is over.

He thinks he's missed the mark. He's lost it. He's just going to revert back to what he was used to and just become a fisherman.

And one of the reasons maybe I even think so is because it's a really common thing. It's a really common thing for people to do that. People start following Jesus in this way as narrow and difficult.

They knew that, but it's even more so than they thought. And it's a challenge. It's a challenge to maintain all this.

It's a challenge to maintain all this love from your heart, your soul, your mind, and your strength. And we missed the mark. In Peter's case, he missed it majorly.

Here. And it affected this. And now he's discouraged.

And that's a really... It's just a really common thing to happen. Most often, when people start following this narrow way, the real true way of Jesus, and it becomes real hard, most commonly, once it becomes too difficult, they'll go back to whatever had brought them security beforehand. Whatever they were used to and whatever they were comfortable with, whether it's kind of a religious setting that they had found security in and left, or whether it's the world, it's kind of what they go back to.

And instead of seeking for more grace and more faith and more trust, we end up seeking for security. And what we end up finding is chains that really, really secure us, but in a really bad way. So here in John 21, I'll start reading.

Remember, this is, this is, I'd say three years later, give or take. And in chapter 21 of John, it says, After these things Jesus manifested himself again to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias. And he manifested himself in this way.

Simon, Peter, Simon Peter, and Thomas, called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples were together. And Simon Peter said to them, I'm going fishing. And they said to him, We will also come with you.

And they went out and got into the boat, and that night they caught nothing. But when the day was now breaking, Jesus stood on the beach, yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. So Jesus said to them, Children, you do not have any fish, do you? And they answered him, No.

And he said to them, Cast the nets on the right-hand side of the boat, and you will find a catch. And so they cast, and then they were not able to haul it in because of the great number of fish. Therefore the disciple who loved Jesus said to Peter, It is the Lord.

So when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put his outer garment on, for he was stripped for work, and threw himself into the sea. But the other disciples came in a little boat, for they were not far from land, but about a hundred yards away, dragging the net full of fish. So when they got on the land, they saw a charcoal fire already laid, and fish placed on it, and bread.

And Jesus said to them, Bring some of the fish which you have now caught. And Simon Peter went up and drew the net to land full of large fish, a hundred and fifty-three. And although they were so many, the net was not torn.

There are so many similarities here. They had been toiling all night, and there was no catch. And here, here in the dim morning light, there is a man that stands there on the shore, and they don't recognize who he is.

And he asks him, Have you any fish? And they say, No. And he says, Cast your nets on the other side. And again, these nets start jerking, and shaking, and bobbing, and straining.

And as soon as that happened, John says to Peter, That's the Lord. How did he know? How did he know it was the Lord? He had seen this before. He had seen these results before.

It was a little different from the last time. The first time, the first time, Peter had recognized Jesus as Master. And for that reason, he cast a net against these things.

He cast his net out, and the result was nets full of fish. This time, he didn't recognize that it was the Master, but he did it anyway. And the results convinced him, This is the Lord.

This is the same result. Another difference here, this time, is Peter, Peter is not alone in the boat with Jesus. Instead, it's Jesus, or it's Peter and his fellow laborers.

It's Peter and his companions. They're in the boat. And I think, I think Jesus is communicating something here.

Something like, I'm going to be going away. I'm going to be, I'm going to leave, I'm going to depart, but I don't want you to revert back to your old ways. Remember, I called you to be fishers of men.

And when you left all to follow me, I showed you how. I showed you how. Don't revert back to your old ways.

You collectively, you disciples, you men, you're going to carry on the work. You're going to have the same amazing results. The same things will happen, if you obey my word.

So when they come to shore here, I mean, Peter was so overtaken by this, he just jumped right out of the boat and started heading for the shore to be with Jesus. The other ones, Peter seems to be a really, really emotional man. A really, he had a strong measure of all of this, didn't he? Anyway, that was his response.

Anyway, the others brought the fish in. And when they came to shore, and this is interesting, I think, when they came to shore, Jesus already had a few fish there. He had a fire going.

There was some fish on it. Not of these 153. These were fish that were already broiled or being made.

And there was some bread there. And Jesus said, bring some of the fish you caught and we'll eat together. The Lord wants us, His church, to be at work.

He wants us to bring the fruit of our labor together with His. He wants to partner with us. And there, I hear this thing being said from, it kind of comes from the false gospel, the idea that God doesn't want any of our labors.

God doesn't want our efforts or nothing. He does everything. And that's just not a full picture.

It might be true if you would say He doesn't need our fruits. He doesn't need our labors. Could be a true statement.

But it's for sure not a true statement that He doesn't want them. He really wants them. Jesus said, herein is the Father glorified that you bear much fruit.

That's what really brings the Father glory. Not just when we acknowledge all these great attributes of God. We should do that.

But one of the things that really glorifies the Father is when His people bear much fruit. They labor, and they toil, and they bring forth the works of Christ. The same works.

We'll read on here in John 21. So here they're all together now on the shore. And Jesus says to them, come and have breakfast.

And none of the disciples ventured to question Him, who are you? Knowing that it was the Lord. And Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them and the fish likewise. And this is now the third time that Jesus was manifested to the disciples after He had been raised from the dead.

So when they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these? And he said to him, yes, Lord, you know that I love you. And he said to him, tend my lambs. And he said to him a second time, Simon, son of Jonah, do you love me? And he said to him, yes, Lord, you know that I love you.

He said to him, shepherd my sheep. And he said to him the third time, Simon, son of John, do you love me? And Peter was grieved because he said this, 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.

And Jesus said to him, Tend my sheep. Truly truly I say to you, when you were young, you used to gird yourself and walk wherever you wished. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hand and someone else will gird you and bring you where you do not wish to go.

Now this, he said, signifying by what kind of death he would glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he said to him, follow me. This is a beautiful restoration.

Peter had miserably failed, but he didn't cast him out. He didn't destroy him. And you see what he's doing.

He's saying to Peter, do you love me? Do you love me more than these others? Do you love me with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength? And Peter says, yes, I do. And Jesus says, well, then love your neighbor as yourself. Or in other words, go tend my lambs.

Go feed my sheep or shepherd my sheep. Don't stop following me. Don't revert back to your old ways.

Don't just go back and be a fisherman. Don't choose your own path. I set you on a mission to fish for men and to cast that good news out like you were casting your nets.

Do it at my command, and you'll score. And love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength. And love your neighbor as yourself.

I'll just close with that. Why don't we say a word of prayer? Our Father, we just ask you that you would help us, that we would love you with all our heart and all our soul and all our mind and all our strength, and that we would love our neighbor as ourself. Just pray, Lord, that you would help us to never, never forget what all you are a master of.

Just help us to walk in your ways. Ask your blessing on the rest of this day. In Jesus' name, amen.

Feel free to comment and share thoughts or direct us. Amen, Brother Dwayne. I think you lacked enthusiasm, though.

You need a little more enthusiasm. It was very good. It really encouraged us to be fishers of men, and even fishers of fish, if you know how to fish.

But yes, thank you. I know John D. Martin said that all sin is selfishness. Basically, sin is selfishness.

It's not a biblical thing, but I think he's right for that. Analyzing Peter, you did a great job, I think. And I could be wrong.

I think to Peter, when he was following the Lord, I think it was because he was a common man, a fighter. He wanted to beat the Romans, get the Romans out of here, like the zealots, let's get rid of the Romans. In fact, not only did he cut the guys off, after Jesus rose from the dead, he said, hey, it's a time now.

We're going to get the Romans, restore the kingdom. It was, of course, that. But some of those terms, I think, heart, soul, mind, and strength, I think they overlap.

Like in Hebrews, the Word of God is living and active, and they go. And the love words, I think, overlap, too. Agape, and Eros, and Zoe.

And you know better than I, Dwayne, but the heart is deceptively wicked above all things. I know for myself, when I listen to a worldly song, a worldly love song, I can get tears in my eyes. Some of the songs

I grew up with, you know, worldly songs, and it's phony.

It's not real love, but it's in... I never saw *The Passion of Christ*, that movie, but I know people who went there, they saw that, and they started crying like a baby. And I even had that little book, *The Passion of Christ*, and I got rid of it. But when I look at those pictures, it can make them cry.

These are actors, and you know, some of them would not really be true disciples, but you know, the heart is deceptively wicked, and who can understand this? One of the things, a small point about money, as you mentioned money, the richest man in the world, when I was growing up, was J.P. Getty, and he had a pay phone in London. He had a pay telephone. So he was so stingy, you gotta use your quarters to get a phone, but anyway.

And when we do have problems or struggle with our mind, our mind, as Brother Walter liked to say, it's always moving, Walter said. It's always fluid, and it's moving, and it's so true. Especially at nighttime when you can't sleep, your mind is always going.

And so I think one possible thing is, whatever is pure, and noble, and lovely, and kind, and dwell on it. And I think of you brothers a lot, you know, and that helps me. The Lord be magnified.

Yeah, thank you, Duane. It's really encouraging just to hear the gospel. And just realizing just how true the gospels are, and just how much life is in the gospels.

Life and light, it just really shines just with truth. And it's just encouraging. I had this thought, I wondered if Jesus was just in, like what he looked like, because when he came to the disciples in John 21 there, it says, Jesus said unto them, come and dine.

And none of the disciples did not ask him, who are you, knowing that it was the Lord. I just wondered if, what, did Jesus look different? You know, because they just knew it was him. And I feel that way even today, just, I think the Lord talks to us today through brothers.

And we just, just feeling his presence. Anyways, just thank you for the message. Yeah, I really appreciated the message too.

I was, I didn't catch the whole opening, but I think I got enough to kind of understand, and then through some of the comments. But one of my favorite quotes is, I don't remember who said it, but it's something like, circumstance doesn't make the man, but it reveals him to himself. And I often think about that quote when I'm going through trying situations, or trying circumstances, because it really helps me to just consider like, all these things that are arising, you know, in my heart are who I am.

And then I could respond appropriately, more so just, but, the verse that I thought of for the opening was, a righteous man steadieth to answer. Just, just how, when we're in these situations, if we just stop and kind of consider what's going on before we act or say something, there's really a wisdom there. And yeah, so I just, circumstance doesn't make the man, it reveals him to himself.

Like a lot of these situations we go through, they're just showing us who we are. And if we, if we use the Gospels, if we use the wisdom of the Bible to direct us out of these situations, then that's a really, really good thing. Thank you, Brother Walter, Brother Duane, appreciate the messages and yeah, amen to what was said.

And just First Timothy two, and then I was just definitely feel convicted also on the message about just how the beginning, just thinking how, yeah, I definitely tend to lack in the heart and soul, the number one and number two on the board. And I'm just really grateful for the, like as Darren already shared, just the life, just all the, those accounts, how poignantly, how all the four of those things are displayed, like even the strength is, as Duane was sharing, just how there's this pulling, like, I don't know, maybe we don't, I don't always think about the way I've read it so many times, but just the toil that would have, you know, whether it was 153 or the maybe even more that were causing the boats to sink. And so, yeah, I just feel convicted that like I would definitely fall into the Church of Ephesus rebuke.

So I just wanna, I wanna just read, I'll just finish by reading. If you'll suffer me and just read Revelations two, just an excerpt from that, what he said, what Christ said to the Church in Ephesus. I know your works, your toil and your patient endurance.

I know that you cannot tolerate evildoers. You have tested those who claim to be apostles, but are not, and have found them to be false. I also know that you are enduring patiently and bearing for the sake of my name and that you have not grown weary.

But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first. Remember then from what you have fallen, repent and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent.

Yet this is to your credit. You hate the works of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. Let anyone who has an ear, listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches.

To everyone who conquers, I will give permission to eat from the tree of life that is in the paradise of God. Yeah, there's so many thoughts, so many, so many things to talk about. I appreciated the emphasis and the message.

There's a couple thoughts I had kind of tied in with Jonah and also with the Lord. And like with Peter, you know, he asked him, do you agape me? And Peter said, I love you as a friend. And I think it's interesting the difference there.

And, you know, like Peter, talk about reactionary people. We know that he was the most reactionary, I guess, out of the disciples. And we can see that in some of his reactions, like before he received the Holy Ghost and then after he received the Holy Ghost, like before he ran away and just jumped in, you know, and did things that were not the Lord's will.

And he was rebuked many times. But after he received the Lord's will, after he received the Holy Ghost, he followed the Lord because the Lord said, I don't come to do my own will. I only come to do the will of my father.

And he always, he was always being questioned, like, why are we doing this and why are you doing that? And he said, well, I just, you know, it's not time yet. The Lord hasn't given me that, that okay or, you know, he didn't come to serve his own will. He came subjected underneath somebody else, you know, under his father, which is, you know, the example of a kingship or a kingdom being reigned over.

And then after Peter received the Holy Ghost, he was part of the disciples who turned the world upside down and ended up yielding his life as a testimony to the Lord. And I think that's the idea of like, he doesn't need our own strength. Like, it's kind of a, I don't know how to like, how to balance that all out.

But like, what he needs us to do is yield our will to his and he being the king can look over the kingdom, can see what needs to be done as opposed to just us thinking in our own wisdom. This is what needs to be done as opposed to seeking him for what we need to do. And like the example of Jonah, it's kind of interesting because it's like the Old Testaments, this glimpse of what true non-resistance is and true loving one's enemies is like, Jonah had every right, naturally speaking, to hate Nineveh.

Like what I understand about Nineveh, they were kind of like ISIS. They would go around and they would cut the heads off of the nobles and the princes of a city they conquer and they pile them up on the city gate. And as an example, like we had conquered the city and it was a small region.

It wasn't like ISIS way, thousands of miles away doing something. It was, you know, in that region. Like they were close enough to know how much they terrorized and I'm sure he knew people or friends and different things that have been brutalized and terrorized by these people.

And yet you can see the Lord's love and compassion for a great city. And it was, you know, it's just kind of like that. Like you had brought up about loving someone with their sin, like God had loved this wicked nation enough to send a man to tell them that this was their end.

They were going to be destroyed and then Jonah, you know, hating and despising this people. And I just find it interesting like that is the essence of what non-resistance is, like to love one's enemy, to love someone who you don't, there's nothing there that you would want to love other than the fact that they are made in God's image and the Lord himself says to love them and to show an unbiased love towards them. And I just, even Jonah, like in the end, it says like, I knew you were going to do this.

I knew you were going to have compassion on these people who I were hoping going to get destroyed and get their just reward. And even God was very gentle with Jonah, even though he was rebuked by God, he still shows that gentleness, even with him and also with the people that they were fitted for destruction. They deserve destruction.

And I think Jonah like recognized that he, even though he might have been a righteous man, according to the law, those things still ran in his heart too. The hatred he had for them and what in Christ's eyes, what difference would it made whether he killed his neighbor or just hated them, you know, it's the same hatred, the same sin that needs to be forgiven from God and repented of for man, you know. And yeah, just so many thoughts I could go on for a long time, but just a few things that I set out.

We should be far away and round the beauty farther on to the golden shore pressing on to find the beauty we shall meet to find the home Fill our hearts with thoughts of Jesus and of heaven where he has gone and where nothing we would dream to look upon far away he'll bring and round the beauty farther on to the golden shore pressing on to find the beauty we shall meet to find the home for he knows the Lord always means what children knew and his writing tell the story of our thoughts and actions too far away and round the beauty farther on to the golden shore pressing on to find the beauty we shall meet to find the home Let our sins be all forgiven make us dear for they have sung away here to sing the golden shore far away and round the beauty farther on to the golden shore pressing on to find the beauty we shall meet to find the home

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