

Just One Question

by Jim Cymbala

Jim Cymbala's sermon explores the profound question Jesus asks Peter about love, emphasizing the importance of a personal relationship with Christ over mere duty.

Duration: 38:42

Scripture: John 20:27, Acts 1:1

Topics: "Christian Life"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the importance of asking questions in communication. The setting for the question Jesus asked is at the end of the book of John, after Jesus has risen from the dead and appeared to the disciples. The disciples now understand why Jesus had to die on the cross as an atonement for sin. The speaker also shares personal anecdotes and emphasizes the need to have a personal relationship with Jesus rather than just a concept of Him.

Transcript

I'd like to talk to you today about one important question. In speech, there's declarations, there's statement of fact, there's descriptions and storytelling, and one of the things you do when you speak is you sometimes ask a question. You want to get a response from another person, you want to learn something, let's say, about them and about their life.

The setting for this question, which Jesus asked, is at the very end of the book of John that we've read through and finished this past week in our reading schedule. Let me give you the setting, because you just can't take a part of scripture without giving context. Who, what, where, when, why, all of that.

So Jesus has risen from the dead and he has appeared already to the disciples and they know he is alive. They know he's the Son of God. They now have it dawning on them why he died on the cross.

They now understand what they did not before understand, that the Son of Man, Jesus, had to give his life as an atonement for sin. He had to do that. This is why he came, the Lamb of God, who comes to remove the guilt and the stain of sin in all our lives.

That can only be done by faith in Jesus. Putting your faith, giving him your life, making him the focal point of your life and trusting him as your Savior and as your Lord. So he's risen from the dead and a couple things that are different about when he's risen compared to before he was crucified.

When he was crucified, he was with the disciples all the time. He walked down the road, they followed him. He sat and ate, they ate with him.

But when he rose from the dead, two things are different. He's not with them all the time. He appears, he disappears.

His body is very hard to describe because at times they know it's exactly Jesus, but at other times it's hidden from them who's even talking to them. He seems disguised or hard to discern at certain moments after he's risen from the dead. His body is also different in the sense that he eats food with them, but he passes through doors without them being opened, something that none of us could understand by the laws of science that we know.

His body is a spiritual, supernatural body like we're gonna have when we go to heaven. We're not gonna be in heaven with these bodies. Aren't you happy about that? Amen.

These get tired, you can break a leg, you can get sore. Our spiritual bodies that are fitted for eternity are gonna be like unto our Lord's body. And this body still had the nail prints in his hands.

It was the resurrected body, but he could show the nail prints and he could show where the spear had been driven in his side. So the disciples for 40 days had him appear, not that often, and then disappear. Then at the end he ascended to heaven giving them last second instructions, which they did and that starts the book of Acts which is the beginning of the church.

John, the apostle who writes the gospel of John, he has many stories and teachings that are not found in Matthew, Mark, Luke. And he has really from chapter about 13 on all that material is not found in the other gospels. This story is told in no other gospel.

Jesus has risen, he's not yet ascended. They don't know when he'll be with them or when he won't be with them. And one day Peter gathers a bunch of the disciples and he says, you know what, I wanna go fishing.

Not as a hobby, but probably to make a living because that's what Peter did before along with James and John. And also Andrew, Peter's brother. So they're gonna go fishing.

Here's what happens that night when they go fishing. I'm going out to fish, Simon Peter told them and they said, we'll go with you. So they went out and got into the boat but that night they caught nothing.

They fished all through the night. Early in the morning Jesus stood on the shore but the disciples did not realize that it was Jesus. He called out to them, friends, haven't you any fish? No, they answered.

He said, throw your net on the right side of the boat and you will find some. When they did, they were unable to haul the net in because of the large number of fish. Then the disciple whom Jesus loved, that's John.

John never refers to himself by his own name but he most times refers to himself as the one Jesus had a special love for. Whom Jesus loved said to Peter, it is the Lord. He knew from what was yelled out and what resulted when they threw the net down, he knew that's not just some man there.

That's the master. It is the Lord. As soon as Simon Peter heard him say it is the Lord, he wrapped his outer garment around him for he had taken it off and he jumped into the water.

Let's stop reading here. So now comes into play the other person in this drama which is Peter. I told you about what happened to Jesus, about how he died on the cross and rose from the dead.

On the night that Jesus was arrested before they crucified him, Peter who had boasted that he would be more loyal to Jesus than any of the other disciples, that he would go through anything for Jesus, it turns out that that night he denied Jesus three times. He did it publicly, he did it repeatedly three times and the third time he cursed because he was afraid since they had arrested Jesus. I don't even know this man.

What are you talking about? Now Jesus when he rose from the dead had appeared to Peter privately to restore him because after Peter denied the third time, sure enough there was a crowing of the rooster and here was Peter remembering what Jesus had said before the cock crows and announces daybreak. You'll deny me three times. He went off and wept bitterly because he realized what a flop he had been.

Now Jesus has already appeared to Peter privately prior to this event here. So Peter's been restored but when Peter hears, he's still dealing with what? Guilt, leftover guilt, a sense of weakness. When he hears it's the Lord on the shore, he jumps out there first and he's swimming to the shore to get closer to Jesus.

The other disciples followed in the boat towing the net full of fish for they were not far from shore, about 100 yards, the length of a football field. When they landed, they saw a fire already of burning coals there with fish on it. Jesus had already arranged burning coals and some fish on it and some bread being heated up.

Jesus said to them, bring some of the fish you had just caught. So Simon Peter climbed back into the boat and dragged the net ashore. He's doing everything.

It was full of large fish, 153 but even with so many, the net was not torn. Jesus said to them, come and have breakfast. The King James says, come and dine.

Come and have breakfast. None of the disciples dared ask him, who are you? They knew it was the Lord. Jesus came, took the bread and gave it to them and did the same with the fish.

Notice, he's still serving them. Is that not amazing? Always look for ways to serve people. Try to avoid people serving you.

You know the better place is to be the servant, not to sit there and have people waiting on you. Here the risen Savior is feeding them. Imagine how they felt.

They had all fled the night he was betrayed. Now he's giving them bread and fish. Amazing.

This was now the third time Jesus appeared to his disciples after he was raised from the dead. When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, here's the question. Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these? Not the fish and the work, but do you love me more than the other disciples do? Yes, Lord, he said, you know that I love you.

Jesus said, feed my lambs. Again, Jesus said, Simon, son of John, do you love me? In front of everyone. He answered, yes, Lord, you know that I love you.

Jesus said, take care of my sheep. 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.

And Jesus said, feed my sheep. By the way, where that story ends there, it's an interesting thing happens, and I'll just lay it out for you here as a free bonus for all of us to think about. When Peter gets done with that, he looks at John, the disciple who's writing to us, and he says, but Lord, how about him? How about him? What's gonna happen with him? You've been talking to me, and do I love you, but how about John? How about him? And Jesus said, if I wanted John to live until I come back again, what would it be that your business? You follow me.

And there's a great lesson there. My mother used to tell me when I was young, but not in a spiritual context. Mind your own business.

Did you know that when you serve the Lord, you can be so easily distracted by looking at other people and trying to figure out what God is doing with them and how they act and what they do right and what they do wrong? But how will that change anything for us? When you and I die or if Christ returns before we die, when my friend stands before the Lord, he's not gonna answer for anybody else in the whole world. So what does it matter what they're doing? Now, when someone's teaching false doctrine, then we have to lift our voice or make other Christians aware. Be careful of that.

That we find in the Bible all the time. But what a good rule in life it is is just concentrate in terms of what's gonna happen. Just work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

And don't get into other people's business. You know how much trouble we bring upon ourselves by getting involved with other people's business? Over the years, how many times have people come to me and said, Pastor, not so much now because they know how I answer, but back in the day. Pastor, did you see that guy with that girl in the choir? What do you think about that? I hear they're dating and that something might happen.

What do you think about it? I said, I don't think anything about it. Why are you thinking about it? You find your girlfriend or boyfriend, and don't worry about their boyfriend or girlfriend. We have opinions about things that are not even our business.

And we love to talk about it. I know I'm not getting a lot of amens, but that's because we have a comment about everything. Instead of like, whatever, if she likes him and he likes her, mazel tov, God bless them.

That's fine. So now we have this question in John 21. So let's analyze, and it's asked three times.

What's the significance of that? And he answers three times. Well, first of all, I find it very strange that Jesus didn't ask him in front of everyone, Peter, are you sorry for what you did that you denied me? I mean, that seems to me much more pertinent. Or how about this question? Peter, do you promise that you'll never do that again? Or how about this one, more theologically sound, it seems.

Peter, do you believe in me? Doesn't. He says, Peter, do you love me? Do you love me? As if the answer to that will solve everything. Okay.

Do you love me? Now notice, to love someone, you have to know them personally. And that question is what Jesus is asking all of us today. All of us.

Now, notice he didn't say, do you love coming to church? Do you love praise and worship music? Do you love a good sermon? Do you love a concept? You know, a lot of people, their religion is a concept of Jesus. A concept of theology. When I was walking in today, a kind gentleman gave me a pocketbook he

must want me to read about reformed theology.

That's a certain way of approaching scripture, of a Calvinistic slant on understanding theology. He didn't ask, do you love theology? You can love theology and not love Jesus. You can read the Bible and love putting verses together.

Oh, I've met people like that. They have very little love for the Lord. But they just love to argue about, should you worship on Saturday or worship on Sunday? Should you baptize in Jesus' name or in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, both being found in scripture? But that's not what Jesus asked Peter.

He asked, do you love me? Now, it's also encouraging to me that Jesus would have the faith in Peter to even ask that. Because you would think he would say to Peter, I know you don't love me. Because if you love me, you wouldn't have pulled that last little adventure of yours.

You know, you denied me three times. So I'm not gonna bother asking, do you love me? Not gonna ask that. Not gonna ask that.

No, but Jesus understands that you could love him and still crash. You know, we're these simplistic people sometimes who say, no, if someone really loved the Lord, they would never do that. They would never say that.

They would never go there. But Jesus said, do you love me? I know what you did, but I'm gonna ask this. Do you love me? In other words, it's possible to love Jesus and really flop sometimes.

I'm encouraged by that. How about you? He didn't rule out the way sometimes preachers or theologians rule out. Don't even ask that person if they love him.

In fact, sometimes people in the Bible we have found who really loved God, who loved Jesus, they had a bad day and they got caught in some temptation. They got caught in a trap. And even though they loved him, they were weak.

The spirit was willing, but the flesh was weak. And they fell. In fact, sometimes people never have, I got disastrous denial like Peter, but just every day they show they don't love Jesus.

Even though they do nothing sensational against him. They just have no really interest in him. So Jesus is asking Peter, I know that you flopped, but I wanna ask you this.

Do you love me? I know you can love me, even though I know you were weak at that moment and failed. Notice that to Peter, he obviously believed in Jesus. Jesus is risen from the dead with the nail prints in his hands, passing out the fish and the bread.

Oh, he believed in Jesus. Jesus is not asking that. He's asking us today, do you love me? Do you love me? Now, he asked him that three times.

Keeps going back to do you love me? Not only does it show that Jesus knows that he doesn't throw people under the bus just because they flop, they could still love him, but it also shows us that when you love someone, nothing satisfies you except that they love you back. Jesus is saying to Peter, because he loves him so much, do you love me? Isn't that the way it is with all of us? When you really, really, really, really love someone, your heart is never satisfied unless you know or hear or it's expressed that they love you back. I did that with my kids growing up.

I do it with my grandchildren. I'll just say to them, come here, come here, come here. Come here to Papa.

Levi, you love Papa? Why am I asking them that? I've asked them that like 500 times. Because inside of my heart, when he says, Papa, I love you, love is never satisfied unless it's loved back. This is why the deepest pain is to have a broken heart when you love someone and they either don't love you back or they don't show they love you back.

That's the deepest pain, human pain, because love demands to be loved back. It's just the way it is. Love requires, love is always reaching.

Peter, do you love me? I love you, despite your flop, despite your three-time denial. Do you love me? So that's what he's asking all of us today. Do we love him? This is where fervency comes from.

This is where people labor for the Lord. This is where people share their money for the work of the Lord. When you love, you're gonna do something.

You will always do something. This is the key word that the Lord is focusing on. Do you love me? Because if you love me, we're gonna work things out.

But without love, with just duty, mechanical commandments in our mind, do this, do that, don't do this, don't do that, that's not gonna cut it after the Lord has loved us so much. So he's asking, I love you, do you love me back? If you'll love me, if you'll love me, I know it'll work out because then you'll live for me, you'll honor me, you'll be sensitive to me, you'll talk to me, you'll wanna spend time with me. Well, of course, when you love someone, you wanna be with them.

Do I get a witness here? Why people don't wanna talk to the Lord, don't wanna hear the Lord's word, is because they don't love the Lord. Whoever you love, you wanna be with. End of story.

That's true all the time. People who love themselves, yeah, like that. They just wanna be with themselves.

They don't need anybody else because they love themselves. But when you love someone, you just wanna look at them and talk with them. That's how it is when you love someone.

He asked this three times, and the commentators, of course, for a long time have said, he asked him that three times because Peter had denied him three times. And there's some connection between Peter denying, I don't know who he is, I never saw this man, I don't know who he is, three times. Now Jesus is publicly asking him three times, do you love me? I don't think that's what it is about.

But the third time Jesus says, do you love me, the Bible says, and Peter was sad that Lord asked him three times, do you love me? And those of you who study a little bit deeper in the Bible and have any books of commentaries or Greek word study books, you'll know that in this passage, there's a play, a changing word for love that's in the story that explains everything. Number one, the word that they're using for love are two different words, Jesus and Peter. Jesus says to Peter the first time, Peter, do you love me, and he uses the word agape, do you love me, am I the treasure of your life, do you love me with a full committal, do you love me, this like an unconditional, this the deepest word for love, in fact the Christian religion developed the meaning of this word agape, self-sacrificing, do you love me, body, soul, mind, everything.

And Peter answered back to Jesus with a different word, maybe he was embarrassed, and he answered back and he said, Jesus, I love you like a friend, he used the word phileo, I love you like a friend, you're like a dear companion to me, I love you like a brother friend. Then Jesus asked him a second time, do you love me with this deep self-sacrificing, totally all in agape love, and Peter answered back and said, Lord, I love you like a friend, I love you like a dear compatriot, I am drawn to you, I feel affection for you. And then the third time, Jesus said to him, Peter, do you have affection for me and love me like a friend? He went and used Peter's word.

And then Peter was sad and said, Lord, you know everything, you know that I care for you as a friend, like a brother compatriot. Isn't that amazing about Jesus? His love is so tender and so kind, I don't even know how to say this. I'm afraid to say this sentence, I don't want it to sound irreverent, because I don't like irreverence at all.

It's like he'll lower himself and take any kind of love we would give him. Isn't that amazing? He died on the cross for Peter, he restored Peter. Peter can't bring himself to say, I love you all in, I'm all totally dedicated to that.

He can't say it, so Jesus said, okay, I've asked you twice that, so how about this? Do you love me like a friend? Can I be your compatriot? Do you care for me that way? This shows us that God is a God of mercy and grace. He's not like, what? After all I've done for you, you've died on me three times, I restored you, and you can't even love me the way I want you to love me. You know, when you love someone, you'll take any kind of love, isn't that true? Come on, is it not true? You just, when you're in love, maybe some of you have never been in love.

How many have ever been in love here? Lift your hand. About 11 people, that's great. I hope the rest of you are all single.

No, let's talk about that, because I'm not getting, I'm. Haven't you ever been in love? Haven't you ever just dreamed about being with somebody? Didn't you just ever want to look at someone and hear them talk to you? You don't want money from them, you don't want gifts, you don't want anything, just want to be with them. That's what Jesus wants from us.

He wants us to love him. You know why people don't love Jesus? Number one, sometimes sin so blinds us, we don't even see Jesus spiritually. We don't see him, we have no revelation of him.

We have no concept of how kind and wonderful he is. We don't spend time with him, because you know, you can't love somebody by getting a picture of them. You gotta get to know them.

You can't fall in love with a picture. A lot of people have a concept of Jesus. They want to argue, but they don't really know him.

You know, my wife's grandmother had an arranged marriage with a man much older than her, and she went to Switzerland and got married to him, it was totally arranged. Imagine those days, when somebody set you up with someone you don't know. It still goes on today, right? No, you want to be with someone you love.

Haven't any of you ever gotten a warm heart? What kind of audience am I talking to? Choir, help me here, what's going on? Aren't there any romantics in the house here? All right, let me ask you again, how many have ever fallen in love? Lift your hand. All right, how many love the Lord? Lift your hand, all right. Oh, I

feel better now.

But just to be with someone. But if you can't see the person, because you got all corruption and sin, you're doing things that block your view of the Lord, then of course you can't really get deep affection for the Lord. Or sometimes you love so many other things that there's hardly any room in your heart for love for the Lord.

You love things, you love whatever. I know people who love cell phones. No, they don't like cell phones.

They love cell phones. I see them looking at their cell phones, cleaning their cell phone, comparing their cell phone with my cell phone and saying, mine is better than yours, and just, well, you got enough things like that, cars, friends, amusement, sports, whatever. Next thing you know, there's no love for the Lord.

You know, I was on an airplane yesterday, flying back, and there's this famous wrestler on the airplane. Everybody was running up to him, wanted to take selfies with him and all that, the Undertaker. I gotta start all over here, this sermon.

I've gone off the reservation here. How many know who the Undertaker is? Just lift your hand. You know, you're all gonna start watching TV programs, other TV programs, you're gonna start to read books.

Well, anyway, he was sitting in front of my wife, and everybody was running up to him. Imagine, with a name like that. Just, oh, hi, what do you call him, Mr. Undertaker? What do you, big, monstrous guy.

I wonder if Jesus was on an airplane or walking in the airport. How many of us would run up, fall at his feet? Not ashamed. I love you, Jesus.

You know, it's possible to go to church every Sunday at Brooklyn Tabernacle and really not be in love with Jesus. That's what he's asking all of us. There was a song back, way back when I was a little boy, I used to hear them sing.

Lovest thou me more than these, my child? What will your answer be? And then the answer was, I love you more, Lord, than all of these. That brings us right down, that's what I want to leave you with here. Do you love the Lord? Because he loves us so much, he's not gonna be satisfied with anything but loving back.

When you really love someone, you are never gonna rest. In fact, it's like, it can almost haunt you. You want to just have them loving you, loving you, loving you back.

That's the way the Lord is. Do you love me? Not do you go to church, not do you read your Bible every day. Do you love me? Again, notice, it has to be personal.

Is it personal with you? I want to ask you, I want to be a friend to you because I'm preaching to myself. Is it personal, is the Lord a living person to you that you love, you sometimes cry for joy just being in his presence? Or is it just you've learned doctrine and go to church and hear the sermon and then we go home? No, Jesus said you love me. I'll take whatever love you have and then I'll try to help it to grow.

Let me ask one other question. How many love him but want to love him more? Because that answers everything. You get a choir that loves the Lord, they're gonna sing good.

I know, but how their voices? Their voices will be fine. That'll work out. If they love him, you'll know it when they sing.

You know, the soloists, let's just take the last one that sang here. It could be said for all of them. When Karen sings, you know she loves the Lord.

You think she's singing to you? She's not singing to you. I know her, she works with me. She's not singing for you.

She's singing for the Lord. She's singing for the Lord. That's the way it should be with everything.

Let's say amen to that. All right, so let's close. Now let's get back to response.

Jesus asked the question three times. Peter, now we know the difference in the wording. And now, how does Jesus answer every time Peter says, Lord, you know all things.

You know that I love you. Even though it's a different word for love. What is Jesus saying? You love me? Feed my sheep.

You love me? Take care of my lambs. You love me? Tend my sheep. You know how you show your love for the Lord? You know what the Lord wants us to do? Show that we love him.

He's in heaven, he doesn't need anything. He's at the right hand of God, interceding for me right now that I would preach better. He intercedes for all of us, he loves us.

He says, you wanna show your love for me? Take care of my people. Feed my sheep. This is probably in the top three spiritual delusions that people have in Christian circles.

The belief that you can love the Lord and be devoted to him and not care about his people. That is in the top, from what I can see, that's in the top three categories. And I know it's true because I lived under that delusion for a while myself, including when I started in the ministry.

I thought you could love the Lord and then love his word, spend time with the Lord, his people. I don't have time. So Jesus answers to Peter, feed my sheep, tend my lambs, feed my lambs, tend my sheep.

Now you might say to me, but listen, pastor, Peter was gonna be a leader, he's an apostle, he was gonna be a real key apostolic figure, he's gonna write some of the New Testament. So no wonder Jesus said that to Peter. Peter, come on, do your work, take care of my sheep.

But it's true for all of us. You wanna show love for the Lord? Give somebody a hug today, slip them a \$10 bill. Or a \$50 bill.

Hear what they're crying about. Or spend some time and ask them. You have no time for them, then you have no time for Jesus.

Because that's Jesus. Jesus is her, Jesus is my friend, Jesus is her. That's the only Jesus you're gonna run into today.

When you did it to the least of these, you did it unto me. And this is a big delusion for us, including with preachers. I just wanna write a book and preach a sermon.

The people, I don't care about. They have their problems, I just want them there when I preach and I want their applause. No, no, Jesus said, you really love me? Peter, do you love me? Brooklyn Tabernacle, do you love me? And if we say, yes, Lord, you know I love you.

He'll say, good, take care of my people. Help them. It's hard, it's hard.

It's hard, people go through stuff. People get attacked in ways that you and I don't know about. Isn't it true that you, look at the people who came forward earlier.

Isn't it true you and I have been attacked by the devil and been discouraged and hardly anyone else knew? If that's ever happened to you, lift your hand up. Okay, so what do you think's happening with other people? As I was going across the row here, just holding up the hands of the people that were in the front. Yeah, they see the tears and hear the prayers that were going up.

These folks are going through things. So Jesus, do you really love me? Give somebody a hug. Take them out to lunch.

Buy them something. Give them something. Just don't sit there.

Do you love me? Then help my people. And is that not also true to life as I close? If you love me and you want to make me happy, do you think you should give me something? No, if you know anything about me, don't give me a thing. Now, Levi, that's another whole thing.

My children, be kind to James. Do something for Chrissy or Sue or my grandchildren. Oh, are you kidding? My heart will be just, it won't be able to contain the joy I'll have.

Then I'll know, boy, they love me. They love me. I know they love me.

What'd they give you? Nothing. They did it for one of my children. But I know love for me was in it.

Because when you love someone, you love their family too. Am I right? And Jesus is saying to all of us, lovest thou me? I don't care if you flopped. Oh, thank you, Jesus.

How many are happy that even though he knows we flopped, he'll still take our love? Would you lift your hand up high? Oh my goodness, that verse is such a blessing. And even if our love is not what it ought to be, he'll reduce, he'll, I mean, what kind of Savior is that? How could you not love Jesus? How could you not love Jesus? How could you be here today and not love Jesus? He's willing to meet you where you are. He doesn't stand on some mountain and say, what's wrong with you? Climb up here.

What do you mean you're struggling? Why are you tripping and why are you falling back? Get up here where I am if you really love me. No, he'll reach out his hand and he'll carry you up himself. How many have ever had that happen? Put your hands together.

It's love. All right, I have a word to say to somebody here. Just came to me, I want to say it.

It's in my heart. There have been times in my life when the Lord has shown his love to me when I felt so unworthy. And he knows this is true where I've said, Lord, leave me alone.

I'm not worthy, but he loves me anyway. If you're here today and you feel like, Pastor, this thing is making me very uncomfortable because you don't know. I hardly can believe that he loves me.

He loves you. Love him back. Love him back.

Respond to his love. Hear in his love, not that we love God, but that God loved us. Let's close our eyes.

Lord Jesus, increase our love. Help us to love you more. Help us to love you all the time.

Help us to not put substitutes, religious substitutes into loving you before loving you instead of loving you. Church is great, fellowship is great, but we love you, Jesus. If they shut up the church and we can't worship together, we still will love you, Jesus.

The church didn't die for us, you died for us. Lord, make it more personal for all of us. Some of us have our minds clouded.

We're choked up in our hearts because we love so many different crazy things that we hardly have room to love you. Save us from things you can't serve God and mammon. Take away the love of money, the love of things, the love of fame, the love of being noticed.

Take away all of that so we can love you, Lord. Help us to show that love today by taking care of your sheep. We're here today because someone loved you enough that they took care of us, talked to us, prayed for us, encouraged us, put their arm around us.

That's why I'm here today, Lord. I'm here today, yes, you love me, you did everything for me, but there were people who loved you so much that they took time with me. Me, me, inconsequential, weak me.

Wrong me, they took time. Help us to be that way. Help us not to judge people, but to love people.

Anyone can judge people, but Lord, save us from that. You didn't say judge my sheep, you said feed my sheep. Not criticize my lambs, but feed my lambs.

Finally, Lord, we pray that when people walk in this building, visitors from France or Germany or Trinidad, Tobago, Nigeria, wherever they might be from, help them not to notice the pastor or the choir or the pretty building you've given us. Help them to experience the love of God. Help them to be so loved and so sweetly talked to and treated that they'll leave saying, I don't know everything that was going on in there, but man, the love of God is in that building.

The love of God is among those people. You've given me, Lord, I say this publicly, what I think is the sweetest, most loving congregation any pastor has, but we need more. We need more.

We need more love for you, more love for one another, and we need to take care of each other a little bit better, Lord. So now we know you'll never be satisfied. Full satisfaction only when we love you back.

Love us thou me, Peter. Lord, you know all things. I do love you.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/27/SID27102.mp3>
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