

Ransomed, Healed, Restored, Forgiven

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- [0 : 0 0] Well, we thank God for giving us the opportunity to praise him. And now, let us read again from the chapter we read a few minutes ago in the Gospel of John, John chapter 21.
- I would like to read the next section of that chapter from verse 15 down to the end of verse 19. 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, that is, Jesus said to Peter, Jesus saying to Peter, feed my lambs.
- Jesus said to him a second time, Simon, son of John, do you love me? Peter said to him, yes, Lord, you know that I love you.
- And Jesus said to him, to Peter, tend my sheep. And Jesus said to him the third time, Simon, son of John, do you love me?
- [1 : 1 2] Peter was grieved because Jesus said to him the third time, do you love me? And he said to him, that is, Peter speaking to Jesus, Lord, you know everything.
- You know that I love you. Jesus said to him, feed my sheep. Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were young, you used to dress yourself and walk wherever 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. This is said to show by what kind of death he was to glorify God.
- And after saying this, he said to him, follow me. Follow me. Let's bow our heads in a word of prayer to God.
- May our innermost patience, Lord, be bowed down before you in prayer, giving you honor. And abasing yourselves at your foodstool.
- [2 : 3 4] Because you are God. You are God who is in heaven. And we are here on the earth.
- And in one context, your word reminds us of your great uncreatedness. And our finite creaturehood.
- And we are asked to honor you with few words. Let our words be few. It is our hearts you want, Lord, above all else.
- And so, Lord, enable us tonight to give ourselves to you in true worship. As we meditate on your word. And as we seek to learn from the great teacher.
- Lord, send forth your light and your truth, we pray. Let them be our guides. That we might be led to the holy hill where God dwells.
- [3 : 3 5] And that we might see Jesus. That we would be prepared, Lord, for the day that is coming ahead of us. The Lord's day. Where we wish and desire to remember the Lord's death until he comes.
- Help us, Lord. And prepare us for that, we pray. Through your word. By your spirit. Be with each one of us here tonight. And be mindful of those who are perhaps unable to be here.

Whose desire it is to be here. Be also with those who have no desire. Lord, be merciful. Lord, in a day of your power. Make a people willing to come and draw to yourself.

Such as are to be saved. In your sovereign grace, Lord, speak to people. And woo them to yourself. Demonstrating them to you.

Demonstrating yourself to them. In the greatness of your love. And showing them that God is indeed wanting to save.

[4 : 46] More than we are wanting him. Lord, forgive us for our failures and our weaknesses. And help us to be strengthened and encouraged. By what your word has to teach us this evening.

We thank you, Lord, for the services of this communion. And the times of fellowship. And all that goes on. We pray that you will bless this congregation. We pray especially for those who have responsibilities at this time.

By way of leadership and organization. We think of our brothers, the elders of the congregation. And all the responsibilities they have. And the deacons as well.

And all that comes to their hand. We thank you, Lord, for your spirit strength. In enabling us to do even a very little for you.

As we seek to serve you. And glorify you. Bless our brother, Mr. Coggle. The interim moderator of this congregation also at this time.

[5 : 53] And be with him as he administers his own responsibility in the congregation from week to week. And bless him in his own home congregation also.

Watch over him. And bless him in every aspect of his pastoral ministry. We pray, O Lord, for any here tonight who are truly seeking the Lord.

But who have not yet cast their lot into the Lord of Christ's people. Into that assembly of God's saints.

We pray, O Lord, that the leading of the Holy Spirit may be in their lives. We pray for those, Lord, who are feeling weak and weary on the way. For those who are feeling that they have let the Lord down.

And sometimes that they have done so to the extent that the Lord perhaps doesn't want them. Lord, take away thoughts such as these which the devil can use against us.

[6 : 58] And help us in our weaknesses. May our weaknesses be used by you to take away self-consciousness. Being conscious of ourselves.

And give us to be self-forgetful. And to be mindful of the Lord Jesus Christ in all that he has done for us. So hear us now.

And go before us, we pray. In Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Well, let's turn to the last portion of John's Gospel.

The last portion of Chapter 21 in John's Gospel that we read together. And I want to look at this section as a unit.

Because this is one of the Scripture recordings. One of four Gospel recordings pertaining to the denial of Peter.

[7 : 56] This particular section in John's Gospel is actually not recorded in any of the other Gospels. But here we have the other side of the coin of Peter's denial of the Lord.

Which we looked at for a short while last evening. And if there's anything we can say with regards to the Lord's relationship to Peter.

And Peter's being drawn back into the favor of the Lord Jesus Christ. In some ways, the Lord's love for Peter never waned.

But that was not true of Peter's love for the Lord. Because the Lord Jesus himself held Peter's love in question. In putting these questions to him.

You'll remember that Peter denied the Lord three times. And each time he denied him, his denial of him seemed to become more intense.

[9 : 02] And more focused on himself. And we saw briefly how things came into play. In his own, if you like, self-centered life.

That took away his focus from the Lord Jesus Christ. There was pride and fear of man. Fear of what other people might do or say.

There was cowardice. And there was the pride, which is arguably one of the root sins that belongs to us as fallen human beings.

The pride and lack of humility which Jesus and the spirit of Jesus has come to address in our lives. I don't want, as I said last night, to focus on the negatives.

But sometimes the negatives in the scriptures have to be brought out in order to see the brilliance of the positives that scripture has come to put in the negatives' place.

[10 : 11] Is it not true that it is darkness? As we heard at the question meeting this morning. That the light came to banish the darkness.

And that is what's true in the experience of all who come to know the Lord Jesus Christ. As Paul writes to the Corinthians. The God who said in the creation let there be light.

Has shone with his light. With his glorious light into our hearts. To bring to us the light of the glory of God. In the face of Jesus Christ.

And Peter with another two on the Mount of Transfiguration. And particularly then saw some of that glory. And was it not Peter who suggested that they build tents for them just to stay there.

But the Lord had other ideas. And he said to his companions to arise and let us go. We'll go away from here.

[11 : 17] We've got this work to be done. And the Lord himself had work to do. So our focus must be on the positives. And it is the dark nights on the darkest valleys.

That the lights above can shine at their brightest. The denial of Jesus by Peter was. We cannot belittle how blatant and how cruel it was.

And it's very easy for us. Not only to make excuses for ourselves. In our weaknesses. But also to make excuses for others as well.

And what we have to bear in mind is that. There was a power of darkness at work in Peter's denials of Jesus. You remember in his third denial.

He brought curses down on himself. And the powers of evil were very much at work there. In his denial of Jesus.

[12 : 20] The light that had been shining in Peter's life before. Was very much being eclipsed by Peter's weaknesses. And his giving in to the world, the flesh and the devil.

But in contrast, what we find is that Jesus graciously. As we have it in this account. And yes, this is after the resurrection.

We are here at a communion season. Just coming up to the time of remembrance of the Lord's death. Until he comes again. But there are some of us perhaps who are coming thinking.

Asking perhaps the wrong questions. Am I good enough to be numbered amongst the Lord's people. Who partake of the Lord's Sabbath. Am I worthy of this? And these questions can be misguided.

But let us go back to the scripture we have here. The contrast between what Peter did in his denial of the Lord Jesus Christ.

[13 : 28] And what the Lord himself does here. In his gracious restoration of people. It cannot. We can't take it for granted. Sometimes we hear people talk about easy believism.

Easy grace. Cheap grace. There is nothing of the kind in the gospel. There is no cheap grace. And Jesus' compassion shown for Peter here.

It can't be taken for granted. Nor can it be underestimated in terms of its compassion. And what can be called nothing but agape love.

Shown by the Lord to a guilty and failed disciple. Here's a question for you and for me. Do you think you're a failure?

And I'm sure that if you're saying no to that answer. Well you are blind. If you're saying no to whether you're a failure or not.

[14 : 33] You're blind. Because by definition this is what the gospel is all about. Addressing our failure. As sinners before God. All have sinned.

And come short of the glory of God. We have failed God in his moral law. And Peter is addressed in terms.

In a very real sense. Of this moral law. The ten commandments summarized for us. By Jesus. In supreme love for God.

And supreme. And secondarily. Love for our neighbor. As ourselves. He asks Peter. The supreme commandment. Lord.

Peter. Simon rather. Son of John. Do you love me? That is the question. That's outstanding. For us. All our lives.

[15 : 30] In this world. Until God comes. To call us away. From the scene of time. Well. The denial of Peter.

Is recorded. In the four gospels. And I said last night. There must be a good reason. For that being recorded. In the four gospels. Because of its gravity. Because of the darkness.

Associated with it. And as a warning to us. How easy. It is for us. To slip and slide. And fall by the wayside. Before we know it.

Again. Peter himself. Later. Was fully aware of that. Of the devil. Going about as a roaring lion. Seeking whom he might devour. Well. You might think.

Might you not. That Peter. Had gone. Beyond the pale. Peter had just. Gone too far. No hope. And this is where the grace of God.

[16 : 25] Comes. To our attention. So much. Not only. Did he disown the Lord. But. As we mentioned. He did it.

Right. At the end. When he. Just. Before the cock. Crew. Three times. Before the cock. Crew. Twice. He had denied him.

Three times. Peter didn't. Exactly. Use. What you might call. Proper language. Well. In any case. He was a Galilean. Who were supposedly.

Quite rough and ready. In the way they spoke. To each other. And this was one of the. The characteristics. That was raised against him. In identifying him. As being.

One of. Of the disciples. Of Christ. Which. He. Denied. Knowing. And what Peter. Was doing. Basically. Was denying the Lord.

[17 : 20] Jesus Christ. Denying. Knowing him. And saying it. I don't know. What you're talking about. I don't know. And. It's almost as though.

He's saying. I don't want. To know. What you're talking about. And he's. Sort of. Putting. The Lord Jesus. To the back. Of his life. He is.

Shunning him. Out. Of the reckoning. And this is. A classic. Statement. Of denial. It's still heard. In casual. Circumstances. In our own.

Day and age. With perhaps. The odd. Choice word. Thrown in as well. I don't know. What you're talking about. Well. It is.

It is. Sad. That. The context. We have here. That we always find. It is. Good. That we find. The grace.

[18 : 12] Of God. In a sad. Situation. And. It is. In these. Situations. That. The Lord. Shines. At his. Brightest. This passage. From John. Is the classic.

Example. Or one. At least. Classic. Example. Of the Lord's. Gentleness. In restoring. And reinstating. Somebody. Who has failed him.

And failed him. Miserably. Peter had. A quite. A significant position. Amongst the disciples. He was one of the. Inner circle.

So to speak. Peter. James. And John. And. When. As we say. When the chips were down. Peter was well. And truly beaten. We don't realize.

How. Protective. Of us. Is the Lord. Jesus Christ. When we would falter. And fail. And flounder. And fall. Were it not.

[19 : 10] For the Lord's grace. Paul himself. Says. And no doubt. Often. Expressed. In different ways. By the grace of God.

I am. For. What I am. Were it not. That God. Is on my side. That God. Is not. On our side. It writes. The psalmist. Peter is.

In a sense. He is. In some senses. Like Job. Who was allowed. To be tempted. By the devil. The devil. Was given.

A controlled. Reign. Against Job. And Job. Went through. A lot of difficulties. But the difference. Between Job. And Peter. It would appear.

Is that. Job. Never. Sinned. Against the Lord. In spite. Of all. That was thrown at him. And that wasn't because of Job.

[20 : 07] It because. God. Was showing his own glory. Through Job. In sustaining. Him. Through. The. Sufferings. That he was.

But here we have. In a mysterious way. The Lord. Allowed. Peter's denial. To take place. Also. In order. That his glory.

Be shown. In the gracious. Restoration. That he is able. To afford. To the guiltiest. Of sinners. Whoever. He. Or she.

Might be. Peter's restoration. Then. Is an example. Of. We might call. Love. Or better.

Way to call it. An example. Of the love of Christ. Overcoming. The lovelessness. That. The apostle. Peter. Had shown.

[21 : 01] Earlier on. And. Which Peter. Was guilty of. When it's all. Analyzed. Any denial. Of our Lord. Jesus Christ.

Is. The contrary. Of. Love. For him. We either. Love him. Or we don't. And here.

Is. Where faith. And love. Are so tightly. Bound together. As the apostle. Writes. What is not. Of faith. Is. Sin. Lovelessness.

And it is. This sin. This lovelessness. That Jesus. Has come. To address. And here. He addresses it. In a very. Real. And positive. Way. I want.

Just briefly. To look at this passage. In three ways. First of all. I want to look at it. From the point of view. Of. The questions. Or. Question.

[21 : 56] That Jesus. Asked. On three occasions. Three occasions. The second thing. I want to look at. Briefly. Is. The answers. Or. The responses.

That Peter gave. And thirdly. The directives. That. Jesus. Gave to Peter. Ending up. With. The two words. At the end.

Of. Verse 19. Words. Which must have been familiar. To Peter. Or should I say. To Simon. Because that is the way.

The Lord addressed him. First of all. And this is the way. He was brought. To Jesus. At the first. By his brother. Andrew. Simon. Was brought.

And it was later on. That. The name. Peter. Was given to him. When. When the Lord. Declared. His own. That is. Jesus's own.

[22 : 49] Foundation. Of the church. On this rock. I will build my church. And the gates of hell. Will not prevail. Against it. Peter. Was to be one.

Of. The pillars. Of the New Testament. Church. With. The other. Appointed. Apostles. By Jesus. So there's questions. From Jesus. Answers.

From Peter. And directives. From Jesus. And not only. Are these. For Peter. To pay heed to. But also. For you.

As a child of God. Perhaps. As a weary. Child of God. Perhaps. As a. Feeling. Failed. Child of God. God.

But it's also. For anyone. Who would come. To the Lord. Jesus Christ. To receive. To receive. An instigation.

[23 : 43] Not. A reinstatement. But. To be brought. Into the fold. Of Christ. Whatever. You may be guilty of. It is the blood. Of the lamb. That cleanses.

From all sin. And. Here we have Jesus. Asking. Peter. To be an under shepherd. Of. His own flock. We'll see a little of that.

Later on. As we go. First of all. Then. Questions. From. The Lord Jesus. To Peter. Now. There shall not. In this. I. We would spend.

This. This could go on. For a few sermons. But I just want. To bring this. To our light. In order. To help us. Be prepared. To come in the right way. To the Lord.

As sinful creatures. And to remember him. In his death. Jesus. By this time. Had died. The death on the cross. And had risen again.

[24 : 40] And. Jesus. Questions. Peter. Who was. We could say. In common language. He was in the dog house. Since. His denial. Of his Lord earlier.

He had gone out. And. Wept. Bitterly. He was aware. Of what he had done. To some extent. At least. That he had. Let his Lord down. But. I'm sure.

He was away. Of the gravity. Of his failure. And sin. Against the Lord. There's another account. Given to us. In another gospel. Whether it was the same occasion.

I'm not sure it was. Here we have at the beginning. Of chapter 21. John. This. Narrative. Of. The disciples fishing.

And remember another time. Another account of this. When. The disciples were asked. To cast out. On the other side of the boat. And it was Peter. Was it not? Realizing. The lack of faith.

[25 : 35] That they had. In catching. The fish. That they. That they were going out. To. To catch. He was so aware. Of God's. Jesus.

His. Sovereign. Power. And ability. To provide. For them. Depart from me. Oh Lord. For I am a sinful man. I'm sinful.

Because. I didn't trust you. I'm sinful. Because I didn't believe. In the abundance. Of your grace. And what you are able. To provide.

For me. One of the. One new. New testament. Commentator. Warren. Wearsby. He says. That this issue.

The issue. Behind the questions. Of Jesus. Was. Peter's. Love. For Christ. And that is the question. Of your life. And my life.

[26 : 28] That is what my life is. All about. That is the yardstick. Of my life. How much. Do I. Or do I not. Love the Lord Jesus Christ. And that is.

For every one of us. This evening. And of course. Jesus. Reminds us. That. Love for him. Is obedience to him. If you love me. Obey me.

Keep my commandments. If a person. A man. Or a woman. Or a boy. Or a girl. Really. Loves Christ. Says. Warren.

Weersby. His life. Will be devoted. And dedicated. To. The Lord. Jesus Christ. Now. You might be saying. Well. It's easy for you.

To say. You're a minister. Ah yes. Well. I'm retired. Actually. As a minister. But. No. I'm not retired. And a Christian. Never. Does. Retire.

[27 : 22] From. This work. Of. Loving the Lord. This is what is asked. Of us. In the word of God. That is not what earns. Our salvation. It is the result.

Of our salvation. That. We love the Lord. Our God. As much. As. By his grace. We are enabled. To do. For it is by the fruit.

That. They are known. Is it not? Well. Three times. Jesus asked Peter. As though he was systematically. Erasing. The negativity. Of Peter's three denials.

Of Jesus. Earlier. Three times. Do you love me. More. Than these. Is what.

The text says. There are different ways. In which we. Can understand that. Jesus asking. Three times. Er. Er. Recalls.

[28 : 19] Er. We suggest. The three denials. And. I am sure. Peter was aware. Of that. Remember. When Jesus was asked. How many times.

Should we forgive. Somebody. And the reply. Of Jesus was. You forgive them. As much. As you can. Seventy times. Seven. Which is.

Basically. Symbolizing. There is no limit. To the amount. Of forgiveness. That you. As a disciple. Of the Lord. Jesus Christ. Forgives. Others. Because. This. Is what.

The Lord. Jesus. Has done. For you. Paul exhorted. The Ephesian. Believers. To live. In such a way. He said. To them. To be kind.

To one another. To be tender. Hearted. Forgiving. One another. Why? Even. Even as God. For Christ's sake.

[29 : 15] Has forgiven you. Is forgiveness. In your life. Do you take that. To be something. That God. Has enabled you.

To forgive. A brother. Or a sister. Whom. You might. Deem. Has offended you. Or are you holding. A grudge. Against somebody.

There is no place. Amongst the Lord's people. For that spirit. Of bitterness. And hidden. Anger. Do you love me.

More than these. What did he mean by that. Perhaps it is not too important. But what it could mean is. Do you love me more than these. That equipment. That you are so used to.

The nets. And the boats. And I am sure Peter was proud. Of his tools. As any tradesman. Can be. But were these his idols.

[30 : 14] Were these things. Coming between him. And his love for the Lord. Or perhaps. The Lord was asking him. Do you love me. In a greater degree.

Than. These. Other disciples. As you love. Greater than them. How much more than them. Do you love me. It could be understood. Like that. That. Or it could be understood.

Could you. Do you love me. Than you love. The actual disciples. That are with you. Do you love me. More than them. Not. Do you love me. More than they do.

But do you love me. More than. They. Than you love. Is your love for. For me. Greater. Than for them. Well this is where we. All have to start.

Our love must. First of all. Start with. Love for the Lord. And then. Our love for. Other things. Will be done. In the right way. And put. Into the right context.

[31 : 14] So that. Others. Will be loved. By us. As. Those. On the one hand. Who may be our brothers. And sisters. In the Lord. What greater reason.

Do we have to love them. Than that. Because. They are the Lord's. They are brothers. And sisters. Or do we love. The things that God.

Has given to us. The gifts. That he has given to us. The abilities. That he has given to us. To put into use. On our day. To day living. That they are.

Means. That God. Has enabled us. To be taking part of. Because our Christianity. As those who follow Christ. Is. A holistic thing.

It takes every part of our lives. Into account. From the smallest nail. That we can use a hammer for. To the largest thing. That we can use in our lives.

[32 : 09] Well Jesus. Is asking Peter. With regard to his love. And. Peter's answers. Secondly. Are what.

Is really. Very interesting for us. The way. The Lord. Asks Peter. He addresses him.

By his name. Simon. Son of John. This is going back to. Peter's fundamental. The beginnings. Of things. He's taking him back.

As it were. Right to the beginnings. Of his discipleship. Not only by his name. But what he asks. To him. To do. Later on. At the end.

Of verse 19. These two words. Which we refer to. Peter's answers. Are in the affirmative. Yes.

[33 : 05] Do you love me? Yes Lord. You know. That I love you. Tend my sheep. Says. Says Jesus.

We'll come to that. In a few minutes. Another. Second time. He asked the same question. And. He's asking me. And you. Tonight. The same question.

My dear friends. Do you love me? Let's not. Exercise. False humility. By saying. Well I don't know.

I'm not sure. You don't need to be. A hundred percent. Sure. But is there a desire. In your heart. Of loving the Lord. And it only has to be.

Like a mustard seed. But it's still there. It's only got to be. As. The weakest. Strand. Of copper wire.

[34 : 01] In an electrical circuit. It still. It still carries current. Do you love me? Three times.

He was asked. Do you love me? We have the psalmist. Response to that. I love the Lord.
Because my voice. And prayers. Heeded here. I. While I live. Will call on him. Who bowed.
To me.

His ear. And this is one of the things. That. Is implanted. In the hearts. Of those. When
God. When God. Against the good work. This line of communication.

Is created. Line of prayer. But Peter. Humanly. Responding. To Jesus. Lord.

[34 : 56] You know everything. You know. That I love you. And at the end. He's becoming
frustrated. With Jesus. At. This. Repeated. Questioning. Which is.

Jesus's way. Of working. Peter. Back. Into. A meaningful. Positive. Positive. Relationship.
With. Himself. And this is.

The Lord. The shepherd. Tending. One of his sheep. And that sheep. Of his. In the
person. Of Peter. Experiencing. What David.

Experienced. My soul. He doth. Restore. Again. And me. To walk. Doth make. Within the
paths. Of righteousness. Even.

For his. Own. Name's. Sake. And that is. What Jesus. Is able. To do. For you. As the
hymn writer. Put it. More full.

[35 : 51] Of grace. Than. Eye. Of sin. Who can't. Get our heads. Around that. The devil. May. Make
us. Think. That we're not. Good enough.

That we've. Gone. Beyond the pale. That we failed. The Lord. To such an extent. That he
will not. Deliver us. Or have anything. To do with us. And yet. The Lord.

Still. Calls us. Come. Come. Keep on. Coming. Peter's answers. Were. In the affirmative.

You know. That. I love you. And. The word. That Jesus. That Peter. Uses. In. Expressing.
Love. There is. It's not.

As deep. As the way. Jesus. Asked. And used. The word. Love. From his own mouth.
Peter. Seemed to be. More tentative. You know. That.

[36 : 45] I am your friend. We might say. You know. That I am. Your friend. Of what is a friend. Of
Jesus. That is. What Jesus himself. Called his disciples. You are my friends.

But it's easy. For us. To split. Tears. In. Analyzing. The meaning. And. What's underneath.
These words. Because the apostle. John. Uses.

Different words. Interchangeably. For the idea. Of love. And behind it all. Is. Peter being.
Being asked. Do you love me. Sacrificially.

Are you prepared. To leave. Everything. With me. And. Absolutely. Cast your burdens. On
the Lord. That he might. Sustain you.

That is what. Effectively. Jesus was asking. Peter. Do you love me. Yes. Lord. You know.
All things. You know.

[37 : 40] That I love you. Peter was being put. To the test. Jesus was waiting. For the positive.
Answers. And I am sure. That. God's spirit.

With. The Lord. God. The father. And God. The son. In our human flesh. Were all at work.
In what was going on here. Although Jesus. Was center stage.

In this action. This was God's will. In the life. Of Peter. Winning him. Over. And bringing
him back. What is your answer.

To that question. Which Jesus. Is asking you. Tonight. What is my answer. My. My
answer. If I am honest. And I put my own hand. And my own heart.

Is Lord. Yes. I do love you. And I am conscious. That my love. Is not perfect. But that is
not. The basis. On which you. Accept me. You only accept me.

[38 : 37] On the basis. Of the finished work. Of Christ. And that alone. It's not me. It's not about me. It's about. What you've done. What you've done. For me.

And is that. My dear brothers and sisters. Friends. What we are to be remembering. On the morning of the Lord's day. In this congregation. Remembering.

The death of the Lord. Who loved me. Says Paul. And gave. Himself. For me. What is my answer.

What is your answer. Well. I hope. Our answers together. As. Yes Lord. As Joshua said. As for me. And my house. We will serve the Lord.

We love the Lord. As for me. And my house. And I don't care. What these others. Might do to me. I don't care. Whether. The persecution. Of people. Might come to me. Is it not more important.

[39 : 32] For me. To look to Jesus. And know. That he has delivered me. From the pains of hell. From eternal loss. From eternal death.

From the wages. Of sin. Which is death. But the free gift of God. Is everlasting life. And this is what Peter. Is being called to.

This is what we are all. Being called to. And then thirdly. Jesus. Gives directives. To Peter. Peter. Now these are specific.

To Peter. But there is a lesson here. For us. To be taken. Generally. Oh well. It is very easy. For you and for me. To say. Oh well. That was Peter. But you know.

That doesn't really. Apply to me at all. Well my friend. Each of us. Is guilty of failure. And we need. The Lord's.

[40 : 27] Constant. Restoration. I was relating. To my. My brothers. John. And Andrew. Remembering.

One time. When a preacher. Didn't turn up. For. A communion season. When I was at loss. And. I was. I was left.

Wondering. What to do. And the preacher. Didn't turn up. I don't mean this. In any. Any way. But it was. The Reverend James McKeever.

I hope he's not present. But. He never turned up. For the service. And. I was left. To do something. One of the elders. Asked me. Have you got anything.

In the deep freeze. So. I remember. Going up. The pulpit. And saying. What am I going to preach on? And words. From Psalm 17. Came to my mind.

[41 : 22] Hold up. My goings. Lord. And that is what. You and I. Have to do. All the time. To ask God. Hold up. We need. To.

Put ourselves. In the place. Where. God. If he has chosen. You and me. To be his servants. If he has brought us. From darkness. To light. If he has shown. His love for us.

If he has. Imparted to us. Forgiveness of sins. Through the shed blood. Then. He has some. Role for you. No matter. How little. Or large.

It might be. You may be. A very small. Stone. In the brickwork. Of the building. Of God's temple. But that stone. May very well. Be necessary.

It's amazing. When we look at buildings. How. There are so many. Little things. That are. Invisible. Sometimes. But they're so crucial. So. Important.

[42 : 17] To keep the building. As. One unit. As it were. Working together. Interlinked. And that is what. The church of Christ. Is to be.

And here we have. One individual. Particularly. Being given a commission. And Jesus. Begins. Perhaps. At the ABC.

With. With. With. With Peter. Whatever. Peter. What I want you to do. If you do anything for me. Is. To feed my lambs.

Feed those. Who need the milk. The simple. Basic. Word. Of the gospel. But then. It's dangerous. For us. To misinterpret.

What. What. What. Jesus is saying. Here. Really. Is. He wants. Peter. To. To be appointed. To be reinstated. As. This rock.

[43 : 13] Of. The church. This pillar. Of the church. Church. And. In the three questions. Peter. He was. Prevented.

From any pride. Whatsoever. Because Jesus. Referred to him. As Simon. Son of John. Not as. The rock. He had to be reinstated.

Into. That. Position. And this is what Jesus. Is doing. Of course. This section. In the chapter. Talks to us about. How Peter.

Was going to. Give himself. As a leader. Of the church. As a sacrifice. In the service. Of his Lord. Jesus Christ. And that is the kind. Of service.

That Jesus. Is asking. Of us. When he asks us. If we love him. I have a role. For you. It may be just. A small role. In your.

[44 : 08] Fellowship. Of God's people. But you're needed there. The Lord. Needs people. Of prayer. That's not necessarily. A small role. But it doesn't have to be.

A very conspicuous one. Because it is the secret prayers. Of God's people sometimes. That. The fruit of God's people's prayers.

Sometimes goes. Unnoticed. I was. I'll share this with you. On. Last evening.

Before the service. I was very conscious. That I needed. The Lord's. Leading. And guidance. And. Back in our. Congregation. In Dundee. We have. We have.

Home study groups. Which. Because the congregation. Is so scattered. Instead of having. A. We have one. Central prayer meeting. Once. Every month. When the congregation.

[45 : 06] Gets together. But. During the rest of the month. We have home prayer groups. And the home prayer group. With which. I am. Identified. I was informed. That. They were.

Remembering me. In prayer. And you know. It's very easy for me. Perhaps. To say this. But. I have to be. I have to be honest. I was conscious. Of being upheld.

Last night. And. The Lord. Upholding. My arms. Perhaps. Aaron. And.

Her. Are in a. Very real way. Present. Tonight. As well. I am not referring. To the brethren. Behind me. But the Lord.

Is good. The Lord. Enables us. He enabled. Peter. To feed the lambs. To shepherd. The sheep. And to feed them. To take care. Of them.

[46 : 00] And. Notice. What Jesus. Says. They are my lambs. They are my sheep. They have been. Bought. With a price. And I want you.

To care. For them. I want you. By the spirit's help. When he comes. On the. On the pentecostal. Outpouring. To feed them. And.

To pass on. The apostolic. Teaching. Of the gospel. That I have given you. I received this. Says Paul. This.

I received. From the Lord. These words. Are so familiar. To us. At the time. Of the Lord's supper. Well. Time has gone. And I'm sorry.

I've taken a bit long. But I want to finish. With this. Short application. There is much more. That we can. Look into here. Jesus said to Peter.

[46 : 54] Right at the end. Of this discourse. Follow me. Going back. To early. Discipleship days. And. In that. Follow me. Statement. Or.

Exhortation. There is this. Idea of. Start the work. Continue the work. And. Under my hand. And by my strength.

You will be able. To complete it. Where God. Begins. The good work. Writes Paul. To the Philippians. He will take it on. He will.

Bring it on. And take it to perfection. Until. The day. Of the Lord. That is. Until the end. Of time. Of. God. Calls us. What a wonderful comfort is.

Applying this there. Jesus questions. Do you love me? Whoever. We are. Do you love me? It's to us all. You may feel that you're.

[47 : 50] You've lost God's favor. For one reason or another. Well. So did Peter. He must have been very sheepish. Even when he jumped. Out of the boat. This was. It was very impulsive.

But. Deep down. He must have been. A bit. Apprehensive. After having had that. Look after his denial. From the Lord Jesus.

There was an unquestionable love. In Jesus's questions. For Peter. For his lapsed disciples. It's as though Jesus was saying to him. I still love you Peter.

Because I have dealt with your sins. The very worst of them. The very worst of them. And he's asking him. Now. Reciprocate.

That love. Reciprocate it. I have shown to me. Sacrificial love. And this of course was. After the cross. After the supreme sacrifice.

[48 : 49] Had been made. And that is how it is with us as well. Historically. But here. At communion time. We're coming up. To remember. What was done for us at the cross.

And Jesus. Tells him to feed lambs. Shepherd sheep. Feed sheep. That belong to himself. I have.

A rule. For you. You are not. Insignificant. In my family. Whoever you are. Jesus. Is a forgiving.

Son of God. He is the God man who forgives. And. Forgiveness is with him. That he may. Be feared. He receives us.

When we might not. Expect. To be received. And he can use us. Also. When we least. Be expected. To. Be used.

[49 : 44] I trust that. Each of us. Will answer. In the affirmative. Whatever. Stammering. Or weak way. That is. As long as it is.

In the affirmative. You know Lord. That I love you. Amen. Let's pray.