

The Gospel of John – Part 71

“You must follow me.”

John 21:15-25

Concluding this study of the Book of John Desert Son Community Church

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I. Introduction

“Jesus does not offer us a superficial makeover to satisfy our desire for self-improvement; Jesus calls us to submit to a complete **takeover** of our lives for His glory – with eternal benefits.”

II. Jesus’ restoration of Peter (John 21:15-25)

A. Committed Christians love Christ more than **anything** else (John 21:15-17)

Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength (Deuteronomy 6:5, NIV).

Jesus replied: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind” (Matthew 22:37, NIV).

- The word Jesus uses here in John 21:15b for love is **Agapao** – which some believe is the highest form of love of the will
- Peter responds to the Lord’s question by using the word **Phileo** – which some believe is a less lofty term that signifies affection (John 21:15c)
- The term *feed* here is an agricultural term – and it is written in the present tense denoting **continual** action
- To “care for” is a **pastoral** term meaning not only to teach, but to exhort, rebuke, guide and reprove
- In John 21:17, Jesus was calling into question Peter’s less than **total** devotion to his Lord

Perhaps at long last Peter has learned that he cannot follow Jesus in his own strength and has realized the hollowness of affirming his own loyalty in a way that relies more on his own power of will than on Jesus' enablement... Likewise, we should soundly distrust self-serving pledges of loyalty today that betray self-reliance rather than a humble awareness of one's own limitations in acting on one's best intentions [cf. 2 Cor. 12:9-10]. (John, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament [Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004], 598).

1 To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder and a witness of Christ's sufferings who also will share in the glory to be revealed: 2 Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, watching over them—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve; 3 not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock (1 Peter 5:1-3, NIV).

B. Committed Christians are willing to **sacrifice** everything for Christ
(John 21:18-19a)

- The term “stretch out your hands” implies the manner of Peter's death – **crucifixion**

14 If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. 15 If you suffer, it should not be as a murderer or thief or any other kind of criminal, or even as a meddler. 16 However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name (1 Peter 4:14-16, NIV).

C. Committed Christians focus on **following** Christ's leading (John 21:19b-25)

III. Application

- A. Do you love Christ more than anything else? If not what do you love more?
- B. Are you willing to sacrifice everything for Christ? If not what are you holding on to that you are not willing to let go?
- C. Are you willing to follow Christ's leading? If not whose leading are you willing to follow, and “How is that working out for you?”