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"Set in Stone"

Called to follow

Luke 5:5-11 (NIV) Simon answered, "Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets." 6 When they had done so, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break. 7 So they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them, and they came and filled both boats so full that they began to sink. When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus' knees and said, "Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!" 9 For he and all his companions were astonished at the catch of fish they had taken, 10 and so were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, Simon's partners. Then Jesus said to Simon, "Don't be afraid; from now on you will fish for people." 11 So they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed him.

After all of Peter's highs and lows, culminating with denying Jesus in the Garden; I'm sure he played his mistakes over and over in his head, becoming utterly discouraged.

Luke 22:62 (NIV) "And he went outside and wept bitterly."

- We each fail because of our sin nature - Failure isn't final, it's an opportunity to grow. (James 1)
- Shame - the devil loves this tactic.

I am going fishing

John 21:1-6 (NIV) Afterward Jesus appeared again to his disciples, by the Sea of Galilee. It happened this way: 2 Simon Peter, Thomas (also known as Didymus), Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two other disciples were together. 3 "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. 4 Early in the morning, Jesus stood on the shore, but the disciples did not realize that it was Jesus. 5 He called out to them, "Friends, haven't you any fish?" "No," they answered. 6 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.

- Notice, Jesus meets us where we are. In this account, Jesus once again uses a miracle to demonstrate His identity, power and love for His disciples.
- The disciples' reunion with the risen Lord changed everything. Peter learned that being a disciple requires this primary qualification: humility and a willingness to follow.

Jesus restores and reinstates Peter

John 21:12-22 (NIV) Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast." None of the disciples dared ask him, "Who are you?" They knew it was the Lord. 13 Jesus came, took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. 14 This was now the third time Jesus appeared to his disciples after he was raised from the dead. 15 When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?" "Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my lambs." 16 Again Jesus said, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Take care of my sheep." 17 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." Jesus said, "Feed my sheep."

- Agape refers to selfless, unconditional, sacrificial love, the highest form of love in the Bible.
- Phileo refers to friendship or brotherly love, implying a deep affection, but not necessarily the self-sacrificial kind of love that agape embodies.
- Jesus was asking Peter for something much deeper: A call to complete commitment and covenantal love. Jesus provides Peter the forgiveness and grace to do so.
- Like Peter, as disciples, we are called to be on mission. The mission is about the Lord's sheep.

Application

In John 21:15-17, Peter was called by Jesus to 'feed my lambs', 'take care of my sheep', and 'feed my sheep.'

- Lambs and sheep cover the young and old, the mature and immature.

John 10:11-13 (NIV) "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. 12 The hired hand is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep. So when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it. 13 The man runs away because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep.

Matthew 20:28 (NIV) just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

- Psalm 23 provides a great picture of the good shepherd feeding and taking care of sheep.

This call to shepherd is not *only* for paid church leadership, but for every disciple of Christ. We are called to serve the Lord in the ministry of reconciliation, shepherding and service; in our homes, the church, our work and the world.

1 Peter 2:9 (NIV) But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

- We are chosen, saved and adopted as sons and daughters of our King for this very special purpose.
- We collectively work together to create a culture where we all care for one another.
- We are all on this spiritual journey where the Lord is growing us more and more into His image to do His will.

We are each at different seasons of our own needs and contribution.

- Seasons where we need to consume in an appropriate way – to be cared for. (2 Corinthians 1:3-4, Philippians 2:4, John 13:34-35)
- Seasons where we all learn to cooperate with leaders and others to serve as a team. (Hebrews 13:17)
- We joyfully contribute our time and talents to help others grow and heal. (1 Peter 4:10)
- God commands us not to be quarrelsome or unyielded. (2 Timothy 2:23-26, Titus 3:9-11)
- We all live in a culture, and help create one in some way. Will you help us create Jesus' 'one another' shepherding culture here in the North?

As God provides opportunities for you to walk alongside others, how will you respond?

Is He calling you to serve? What changes do you need to make to have time?

Who in your immediate spheres of influence could you shepherd?



Sample Small Group Questions
<https://bit.ly/GroupDiscussionQuestions>



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