

JESUS COMMISSIONS PETER

PLEASE do not read these comments until you have prayed and read the Bible for this lesson to learn what the Holy Spirit wants you to teach your students. Then let Him guide you in using these notes. When you follow this procedure you will be a better teacher of your students.

Lesson Aim: To love Jesus so much that we will do whatever He tells us to do for Him.

Suggestion: The teacher lesson will call attention to some important truths to teach. After the lesson, give your class next week's Student Lesson so they can share their answers in class next week.

Introduction: Jesus had called Peter and the other disciples to leave their businesses and follow Him. Peter left his fishing business to follow Jesus and learn how to fish for men. When he learned that Jesus was leaving them and returning to Heaven, he decided to go back to his fishing business. Six other disciples joined him. Jesus needed all of them to go fish for men, so He corrected Peter in the presence of the six other disciples as an example of what He expected of them. Then He commissioned Peter a second time. "If you love Me, keep My commandments" (Jn 14:15).

Why do you think Peter decided to go back to fishing and six others followed him? 21:3

They had expected Jesus would be the King of Israel and they would judge the twelve tribes of Israel (Mt 19:29). That hope was alive up to the day before He was put to death. That hope was shattered when His enemies wrongfully had Him crucified, even though He told them plainly that it would happen. He even told them four times that He would rise from the dead on the third day (Mt 16:21; 17:9, 22-23; 20:18-19), but they failed to understand. And when He told them that He was going back to His Father their hope for a Kingdom on earth was remote. So Peter and his six fishing friends decided to go back to their fishing business. They seemed to have forgotten that Jesus had called them to be fishers of men (Lk 5:1-11) and that He had promised to send them the Holy Spirit to help them in their work (Jn 16:7-11). Peter and his friends had ceased to follow the Lord Jesus and were going their own ways. How true that is of us when we forget what Jesus has called us to do. It is a recipe for failure. The disciples learned that lesson when they fished all night and caught nothing.

How did Jesus show love to His disciples, when they had forgotten to follow Him? 21:5-13

Jesus loved His disciples and love covers a multitude of sins. Peter learned this truth and told others of Jesus' love for him in spite of his sins against Him (1 Pet 4:8). Jesus showed His love by giving His disciples a huge catch of fish (153 large fish), when they had fished all night and caught nothing. He also prepared for them a breakfast of roasted fish. He knew they would be hungry after fishing all night. What a surprise! What a blessing He gave them! Jesus knows our weaknesses and He uses His love to make us strong even as He did for His seven disciples. Thank Him for His love.

What do you think Jesus meant when He asked Peter, "Do you love Me more than these?" 21:15

Was He referring to his fishing business to which he had returned with six other disciples? Or, was Jesus asking, "Do you love Me more than these other disciples love Me?" Peter had said, "Though all men shall be offended because of you, yet I will never be offended" (Mt 26:33). Maybe Jesus was not specific, because Peter had weakness in both areas. Jesus was helping Peter to focus on his love for Him in serving Him. Your love for Him will grow when you thank Him for each blessing of His love. We need to love Jesus to be effective witnesses for Him.

How did Jesus commission Peter? 21:15-17

Jesus told Peter to feed His lambs and sheep. He needed to feed them the words of God. He also told him to tend to the needs of His sheep as a shepherd. He brought multitudes of lambs to Jesus by his preaching and fed the lambs and sheep with two practical epistles he wrote.

Why did Jesus rebuke Peter for asking what would happen to John? 21:20-22

There seemed to be a little rivalry between Peter and John in serving Jesus. Peter had just learned that he would be crucified as a witness for Him, so he wanted to know what John would do for Him. Surely he could not top that kind of witness. Jesus told Peter not to be concerned about John, but tend to his own business. It is wise for us to heed that advice as well. Focus on the calling Jesus has given to you.