

## Sure you love Jesus? John 21:12-17

We talk about love a lot in church; most church people know how much God loves them. We know this without a doubt. All we have to do is to look at the cross to see God's love poured out for us. The question is not does God love? But rather, how much do you love God? Do you truly love Jesus? **God demonstrated his love for us in this, while we were sinners Christ died for us.** (Rom.5:8) I show my love for God by..... I love God so much that I.....  
C.S Lewis said: "On the whole, Christ's love for us is a much safer subject to think about than our love for him."

Before Jesus was crucified, he had told the apostles about what would happen in Jerusalem, how he was going to be killed and then rise on the third day. Peter had made a promise to Jesus. "*Even if all fall away, I will not.* Mk.14:29

Peter ended up denying Jesus three times before the crucifixion. He felt so bad afterwards and he never had the chance to ask for forgiveness. Peter felt discouraged and ready to give up. He is the one telling the other disciples. He was going to fish.

This is how John describes Peter in his gospel. One of the appearances of Jesus to his disciples was by the Sea of Tiberias (Sea of Galilee).

Peter and some of the disciples went out to fish and they didn't catch anything that night. Early in the morning, Jesus appeared walking on the beach. **Hey fellows, have you caught any fish yet?** Nothing, they replied.

**Jesus said: Throw the net on the right side of the boat for a catch.**

They did it and they could not haul the net out of the water due to the big catch. John, the writer was on the boat and said, it is the Lord. Peter got dressed and jumped in the water toward shore.

By the time the disciples and Peter made it to the shore; Jesus had a fire and fish and bread ready for them. He had fixed the apostles breakfast. "**Come and have breakfast.**" (v.12) There was silence, no one dare to ask anything to Jesus.

After breakfast Jesus asked Simon Peter a troubling question. **Do you truly love me more than these?**

**Peter answer: Yes Lord, you know I love you.**

**The Jesus said: Feed my lambs!**

Our English translations don't allow us to appreciate what is going on here regarding the use of the word love. The word used by Jesus in his question Do you love me more than these? Is the word **Agape**: *this is the love used to describe God, this is how God loves us. Sacrificially, unconditionally.* The NIV here says, **do you truly love me more than these. This is the highest form of love that there is.**

**Peter answered:** Yes Lord you know I love you (Phileo). Peter's word for love here is different in the Greek. He used the word (**Phileo**) to describe a warm instinctive feeling. This is the word for personal affection. This is the word equivalent to our word "like". When someone has strong feelings for you it means he likes you, not necessarily that he loves you. They are attracted to you, there is something about you they live. This love is changing!

**Jesus said to Peter: *Feed my lambs!*** Then he repeated the question. **Simon Son of John, do you truly love (agape) me? (16)**

Peter answer the same way: **Yes Lord, you know I love (phileo) you**

**(v.16) Jesus said to him: *Shepherd my sheep!***

**The 3<sup>rd</sup>** Jesus asked Peter he used Peter's word for love. ***Simon, son of John, do you love (phileo) me?*** (do you even like me the way you think; do you even have affection for me?)

Peter was hurt that Jesus asked him three times.

Jesus still called Peter to show his love, his affection for him by taking care of his sheep. (*Feed my Sheep*)

**Sure you love Jesus?** Every time Peter responded, Jesus told him to shepherd his sheep. It is as though Jesus said to Peter, whether you love me with the highest form of love or the lesser form of love, you must show me by taking care of my sheep. This is what I called you to do three years ago. If you truly love me, then you would take care of my sheep

**How do you know you love Jesus?** Jesus himself tells us that to love him is to do what he says. **John 14:15, 23-24**

To love Jesus is not a matter of feeling or say that you love Jesus. If you are not keeping his commands, his teaching you are not loving Jesus. There are so many people who think they love Jesus and yet keep ignoring his teachings. Peter had abandoned his calling and Jesus came back to reinstate him. Peter's love for Jesus would be demonstrated in his going back to shepherd Jesus' sheep.

**Jesus is asking us the same question today.** Do you truly love me more than these people? More than your family, your house, car, boyfriend, job? Do you love me more than your sin you keep committing?

Do you love me more than .....

***Maybe we are not truly loving Jesus the way he is asking us to love him.*** Love must be shown and Jesus said that we show we love him when we keep his teachings/ commands. *C.S Lewis was right it is safer to talk about Christ love for us than to talk about our love for Christ.*

Jesus showed his love for us in dying on our behalf. Now you know how to show Jesus you truly love him.