

Sermon ~ Sunday, April 24, 2022, by Pastor, Dwight Benoit

Text: John 21: 15-17

Title: "I LOVE You! Do You LOVE ME?"

The BILBE declares, |John 4: 8b, "...**GOD** is love."

As by-products, **HE** loves; **HE** is loving; **HE** so loved... but **GOD'S** very **NATURE is LOVE!**

JESUS, WHO is GOD incarnate [embodied in flesh], came and demonstrated *our* **LOVING GOD** on Calvary's Cross, crucified to death on that skull shaped hill called "Golgotha;"

laid and buried in a closed and guarded tomb on a Friday; but opened by **GOD**, 3 days later (Roman time) *never* to be shut again, on the following Sunday morning.

Our *conquering* **CHRIST** came forth, with *death's sting* in one hand and the *master key* to graves in the other; declaring "**ALL POWER is given unto ME in heaven and in earth.**"

Affirming, "**I LOVE You!**" And now **HE** asks, **Do You LOVE ME?**

The text, John 21: 15 reads, "...Simon Peter, **Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou ME more than these?**"

Question? What are these? Could it be the company we keep?

*John 21: 1, "After these things **JESUS** showed **HIMSELF** [*revealed HIMSELF; HE appeared* again; **HE** *purposedly* shows up in an instance, especially when **HIS** disciples fell like failures] at the sea of Tiberias (another name for Galilee); and on this wise showed **HE HIMSELF**."

*John 21: 2, notice the 'company' – "There were together Simon Peter, (this is not a first and last name but a past and present...old and new...sinner and saint) and Thomas called Didymus: The Greek language for twin denoting two, and Nathaniel of Cana in Galilee [if you read the context if John 1, beginning at verse 35, you will find **JESUS** calling **HIS** disciples (individually) but yoking them in two's... v. 40, **HE** calls Andrew and then in v. 42, **HE** calls his brother Simon (Peter)... The next day **JESUS** calls Phillip and Phillip goes and finds Nathaniel and says, **The MESSIAH, WHO** Moses wrote about in [the first 5 Books of The BIBLE and the Prophets [Isaiah, Daniel, Ezekiel, Jeremiah] wrote about; **JESUS** born in Bethlehem and raised in Nazareth, the son of Joseph has come... Nathaniel [so distracted and focus on nothing, never looked up] but said, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth? And the sons of Zebedee (James and John) and two other (no names) of **HIS** disciples."

*John 21: 3, from this company, "Simon Peter saith, 'I go a fishing.' (What kind of grammar is that?) Is he announcing, I'm through with this disciple business?

--it's been 3 years now... I (we) left these boats and nets to become "fisher of men."

(Matthew 4: 19)

--3 years of excitement—like a dream.

--the time has come to return to reality. I'm going back. John 21, 3d says, "and that night they caught nothing." John 8: 12, "Then spake **JESUS** again unto them, **I AM the light of the world: he that followeth ME shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.**"

In John 9: 4, 5 **JESUS** said, "**I must work the works of HIM that sent ME while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work. As long as I AM in the world, I AM the light of the world.**"

--3 years have passed, and the company of men are 'worn-out,' out of shape, out of practice, casting out but pulling nothing in—all night long... but in the morning, v. 4a, "...**JESUS** is standing on the shore."

Notice, when you spend all your time staying up at night, its always to early, to recognize **JESUS!!!**

Question? V. 5, **JESUS** ask, "**Children [grown men] ...catch anything [meat]?"**

[typical question to ask fishermen] Short answer, NO!

JESUS gave them some advice v. 6, "...**cast the net** [note, 'not your net'] **on the right side** [not the other side] **of the ship, and ye shall find.**"

Point: Cast out on **MY WORD!!!**

Exodus 19: 5, "Now therefore, if ye shall obey MY Voice indeed, and keep MY covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto ME above all people; for all the earth is mine."

John 15: 10, "**When you obey ME, you remain in MY LOVE, just as I obey MY FATHER and remain in HIS LOVE.**"

John 14: 14, 15, "**Yes, ask anything in MY NAME, and I will do it! If you LOVE ME, obey MY commandments.**"

Note, John 21: 11a, "Simon Peter drew in the net...with 153 large fish... yet was not the net broken."

Question? What are the these? "...Simon Peter, **Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou ME more than these?"** Could it be what we call or pursue as 'big fish?' Is it our livelihood? Our j-o-b's? My this and My that?

Note John 21: 9, "As soon as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread." STOP for moment and realize how **Good GOD—JESUS** is to us. Though we complain, we can not deny that **JESUS** is always standing on the shores of our lives... after our long nights of toiling and catching nothing... and in the morning haze, HE'S right there to comfort our discouraged hearts. Not with bread only, but fish and fire.

[Reminds me of **HIS GRACE** and my *faith* and **HIS** saving my soul...]

1. My plunging into those cold dividing water of life (I was singing deep in sin...)
2. After a long Saturday night, Sunday morning came, and there was **JESUS**, welcoming me on the shore... there was sometimes, when HE came walking on my stormy seas... and HE heard my cry, "**LORD**, save me!"
3. After some time, I realized **CHRIST** was waiting on me; expecting me, ready and prepared to except me.
4. And what a Fellowship; what a Feast of 'honey and bread; what, **JESUS** served me, in spite of me.

The last time Peter stood by a fire, made on a bed of coals—thrice he denied **JESUS!**
At the last fire you stood at, What did you do?

Question? "...Simon Peter, **Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou ME more than these?"**

In v. 15, **JESUS** first asked, Simon Peter, **Simon son of Jonas, do you love ME supremely?** (**AGAPE**) Peter responded, Yea, Lord; you know I'm fond of you."

In verse 16, JESUS asked again, *Simon* [not Peter] *son of Jonas*, 'do you love me supremely? Again, he answered, "I'm fond of you!"

In v. 17, **JESUS** saith the third time, *Simon, son of Jonas*, 'Are you fond of **ME**?'

--Peter was heart-broken. **The LORD** came to his level!

--Peter thought, I should be *growing up* to **JESUS**, not **JESUS** *stooping down* to me!

--Peter remember **JESUS** words, "For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted." (Luke 14: 11)

If you **LOVE JESUS** *supremely*—we would not spend all our time 'fishing and catching nothing.'

If we **LOVE JESUS** *supremely*—Feed **MY** Lambs (Lambs are crying and Lions are roaring).

If we **LOVE JESUS** *supremely*—Tend **HIS** Sheep.

If we **LOVE JESUS** *supremely*—Feed **HIS** Sheep.