

Order of Worship for April 7th, title, “Renewed”, text, John 21:1-19, **Communion**

Opening Song:
Welcome:

Invocation: Psalm 51

Message theme: The Lord shapes the path to renewal according to the one being renewed

Worship theme: thanksgiving for mercy and praise for His grace that he calls us into service

Opening Song:

“Blessed Be Your Name” Overhead

Welcome

Invocation: Psalm 51

Special Music: Men’s Chorus
“To God Be the Glory” Song # 56

Ministry Moment Oroville Christian School

Preparing the Heart in Song:

“Shine Jesus Shine” Song # 431
“You Are My King (Amazing Love)” Overhead

Offering and Offertory

Message: John 21:1-19 “Renewed”
Pastor John Bronson

The Lord’s Supper:

Coming to the Table
“Above All” Overhead
Invitation to the Supper and Prayers of
Confession and Consecration
Distribution of the Elements

Closing Song:

“In Christ Alone” Overhead

Parting Word of Grace and Invitation to Prayer

Sunday Evening in the Word:

5:30 pm in the Church Library
A Study in 1 Peter 1 & 2

Sunday Evening in the Word
A Study in 1 Peter 1 and 2
5:30 – 7:00 pm in the Library

“The Prayer Closet”

April 7, 2013

“Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving.”

(Colossians 4:2a)

This week let us be united in praying that:

Vance and Carol Johnson: Evangelical Theological college of the Philippines: the Lord will bring those with a passion for the gospel and the kingdom of God to study in the college; the Spirit will bring about a new understanding of the need for excellent education in how to study the Scriptures and in Christian doctrine; the Lord will call those who understand the practical application of spiritual truth

President Obama: the Lord will free him from false hopes and beliefs and ground him in the truth revealed and recorded as the Bible; the Spirit will enable him to see the nation as God sees the nation; the Father will name him and his family among the adopted children of God

AWANA and VBS: the Lord will bless both of these outreach ministries of the Children’s Ministries with a full complement of dedicated volunteers, sustained love for children and a great desire to bless them with the gospel and God’s love, an effective cross-over by the AWANA kids into the VBS ministry and then back again in the fall

Military or Public Service Personnel of the Week: Butte County Volunteer Fire Fighter Aaron Bowen (son of Randy and Ruth): that God allow Aaron to take on the full volunteer firefighting responsibilities; for success in his application to the Sacramento Police Academy

Young Adult of the Week: Caleb Bronson, University of Michigan (son of Pastor John and Nini): please pray for his finances, for decisions about attending seminary; for the last month of school in Michigan to go well; that he find someone to sublet his apartment

Please pray for the health and recovery of our church family: Carol Bernerd, Bob Boettcher, Carole Lindsey, Ellen McNabb, Randy Bowen, Volker Ladendorf, LaVerne Lee, Dick & Jane Miller, Phil Peterson, Sam Farris

(please call the office to request updates)

The text for today’s message is John 21. If you are familiar with the Gospel you know that we have actually come to the end, but I intend to go on talking for quite a while before we come to a strict conclusion! The title is “Renewed” and if you are familiar with this last chapter you know that it has all to do with the renewal of Peter in ministry [leadership].

John wrote his Gospel in order that those who read it would believe. If you look at John 20:30-31 this is what he writes; he gives an explanation as to why he wrote his gospel. *“Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.”* That statement is one of the reasons why if you are dealing with a person who has not yet come to faith in Jesus Christ, or has just made an initial sort of belief statement, John is the place to go. He wrote this in order that those who read it would say, “Oh, I see!” That is the intent [of John], so it is a great place to take either someone you are working with or a brand new believer. Tell them, “Read this, and I will read it with you.” They will come to an understanding.

However, getting back to our text, you could assume that John would have written [the above citation] and said, “Amen, go in peace.” But he doesn’t. He adds another chapter. In the last chapter, chapter 21, there is almost nothing miraculous, but there is something far more important than the miraculous, and that is what we want to take note of today. Join me as I read this whole section from verse 1 through verse 19.

“After this Jesus revealed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias, and he revealed himself in this way. Simon Peter, Thomas (called the Twin), Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples were together. Simon Peter said to them, ‘I am going fishing.’ They said to him, ‘We will go with you.’ They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.

“Just as day was breaking, Jesus stood on the shore; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to them ‘Children, do you have any fish?’ They answered him, ‘No.’ He said to them, ‘Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some.’ So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in, because of the quantity of fish. That disciple whom Jesus loved therefore said to Peter, ‘It is the Lord!’ When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment, for he was stripped for work, and threw himself into the sea. The other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, but about a hundred yards off.

“When they got out on land, they saw a charcoal fire in place, with fish laid out on it, and bread. Jesus said to them, ‘Bring some of the fish that you have just caught.’ So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, 153 of them. And although here were so many, the net was not torn. Jesus said to them, ‘Come and have breakfast.’ Now none of the disciples dared ask him, ‘Who are you?’ They knew it was the Lord. Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and so with the fish. This was now the third time that Jesus was revealed to the disciples after he was raised from the dead.

“When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, ‘Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?’ He said to him, ‘Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.’ He said to him, ‘Feed my lambs.’ He said to him a second time, ‘Simon, son of John, do you love me?’ He said to him, ‘Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.’ He said to him. ‘Tend my sheep.’ He said to him the third time, ‘Simon, son of John, do

you love me?’ Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, ‘Do you love me?’ and he said to him, ‘Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Feed my sheep. Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were young, you used to dress yourself and walk wherever you wanted, but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will dress you and carry you where you do not want to go.’ (This he said to show by what kind of death he was to glorify God.) And after saying this he said to him, ‘Follow me.’”

That is a remarkable dialogue. I probably have to amend my statement that there is nothing miraculous, for any time a fisherman catches a fish it is a miracle, and we have to be aware of that! But in the context we are watching Jesus work with a man who needs some help.

Tiberias is what the Greeks and Romans called the Sea of Galilee. This was familiar territory for Jesus and His disciples. Jesus had called Peter and Andrew, James and John away from fishing boats on the Sea of Galilee to become His disciples at the very beginning. And when He called them at the very beginning, He actually called them in virtually the same way. I am sure they had not forgotten. Jesus as now calling His men to follow Him again.

[We] recognize that things have changed profoundly. When Jesus first arrived on the scene, they didn’t know much about Him at all. He invited them to step away from the normal; it was an adventure, something exciting, something stimulating, something perhaps they thought to themselves would have profound significance. But the second time it is very different than the first. The second time around they know a whole lot more about Jesus. They know of His power, they know of His preaching, they know of His rejection by the Jews, they know of His betrayal, they know of His crucifixion. They know of His resurrection. But it is not just more about Jesus that they know. The second time around they know a lot more about themselves. What do they know about themselves? Many things I am certain, but most pertinent to the situation they know that they have failed their Lord. So they have to contemplate what it means that Jesus was calling them again.

In the moment of crisis they had deserted Jesus and left Him to die. Worst of all was Peter. Peter had done exactly what Jesus had said he would do. Peter had said, “I will not do it”, but he did. Peter had lied. He had sworn that he didn’t even know Jesus. One of the times he swore, he brought a curse upon himself: basically he said “May I rot in hell if I knew that man!”

As John notes here, this is the third time that Jesus has been with the disciples; so they know something else. They know that they have been forgiven; they know that they have received peace from Jesus. But at this point it is still the case that they have not received the Holy Spirit. Because that is true, they do not yet have the inner strength to remain faithful to the end. In other words, at this moment they are just as vulnerable as they were before the crucifixion of Christ. The last thing is that they do not yet know what it is they are supposed to do now that Jesus has gone.

All of this would have been on their minds when John the disciple whom Jesus especially loved said to them, “It is the Lord.” This is why probably why none of them said, “Hi, Jesus!” What an awkward breakfast that was! To eat and yet never say His name?

Now it is interesting and it is informative for us to watch in particular the behavior of Peter. Take note again: when John says, “It’s the Lord,” Peter responds at once. *“When Simon Peter heard it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment, for he was stripped for work, and threw himself into the sea. The other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, but about. . .”* How many have done the hundred yard dash? How many have done it through water? The basic message is that Peter loved Jesus. He denied Him; he lied about it; he had run away. He had betrayed the relationship; but he loved Jesus. When Jesus stands on the shore and Peter knows, he cannot restrain himself. He throws Himself into the water and he runs to be in His presence! John MacArthur, when I had the privilege to be at the Shepherds’ Conference, made this observation, Peter and Judas both betrayed their Lord. Peter loved Jesus, but Judas loved Judas. That is the difference between those two.

A hundred yard dash through water is not an easy feat. Even a strong fisherman would have been exhausted when he reached the shore. Peter had been up all night. Peter got to Jesus first. Jesus had a very special purpose, a very specific conversation that He wanted to have with Peter. Jesus knew that He needed to drive home something into Peter’s understanding.

One might want now to move right on to the threefold question that Jesus asked. But there is a little piece of practical information here. Notice what Jesus actually did. He delayed His conversation. Why did He delay that conversation? [It is] as practical as can be: there is no point in talking to somebody who is starved and exhausted. The first thing He said is, would you please have a good breakfast, and at least take a little time to rest and catch your breath. When we intend to meet with the Lord Jesus Christ, when we intend to come under the influence and instruction and challenge of the Holy Spirit, I hope we have the good sense to make sure we are well rested and adequately fed. Let me say right off that everybody involved in the Purity Ball last night is off that hook. I don’t know what time everybody else got home, but my wife and I did not get to bed until after ten, and you know that for me that is the same as one or two in the morning for other people. It was a great event; time well spent. But this does not alter the basic principle. A clear mind is best for a spiritually focused understanding hopefully leading to renewal. Think about it: [this was] one reason why we raised our kids to realize you prepare for Sunday morning on Saturday night.

Well let’s go on with the more important stuff. When breakfast was over, Jesus turns to Peter and He asks him these three questions, following Peter’s answers with three instructions. This is verses 15-17: *“When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, ‘Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?’ He said to him, ‘Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.’ He said to him, ‘Feed my lambs.’ He said to him a second time, ‘Simon, son of John, do you love me?’ He said to him, ‘Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.’ He said to him, ‘Tend my sheep.’ He said to him the third time, ‘Simon, son of John, do you love me?’ Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, ‘Do you love me?’ and he said to him, ‘Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Feed my sheep.’”*

There are a variety of lessons that can be drawn out of these verses, but let’s attend to the major one. This is a lesson of restoration. We know who Peter was. Peter had been the leader of the disciples. That doesn’t have anything to do with Jesus. They all knew that Jesus was a man apart. But in terms of being amongst the guys, Peter

was the man who took responsibility. He was the first to act, the first to speak. He was the leader amongst the men who followed Jesus. But he has forfeited that position. He has blown it. He's met twice with Jess, but he simply has met Jesus as one amongst the group. He is not any longer the man in front. What was Peter's failure? It is important for us to be sure that we are clear about it. Peter's failure: he was brave to join with John in following Jesus on the night of His betrayal, arrest and trial. But he was not brave enough to follow closely. Remember, he followed behind. He was not brave enough; he lacked the courage to speak up for Jesus. He lacked the courage to take a public stand for Jesus, to declare his loyalty to Jesus. As I mentioned before, he lied, denying he even knew Jesus. Beyond that, we know that when, according to Luke, Jesus looked at Peter [immediately following that denial, Peter] wept. Now Peter is heart sick and self-condemned. Since then Peter has met with Jesus twice and Peter knows that he is forgiven. But Peter also knows he is not yet restored to leadership.

That is an exceedingly important distinction that we must never forget. All people sin; all Christians sin. All people, all Christians, need forgiveness. But being forgiven does not imply that a leader who has sinned and been disqualified for leadership is now qualified. Restoration to leadership after disqualification through sin is a separate and distinct decision and action that has to be taken. That is exactly what we are watching happen here as Jesus comes and He meets with Peter and He asks him these critical questions. Three times he asks Peter whether or not he loves him. The first thing that comes to mind [regarding the three fold repetition] is that Peter had denied Jesus three times and that Jesus was now covering, as it were, those three denials. The parallel would not have been missed by Peter. It has also often been noted that Jesus uses two different words for love in these questions. Twice he uses the word “agape”, meaning to love simply as a moral love, to seek your greatest good at whatever cost to myself. The third time He uses the word “phileo” which is the love of brotherly affection. Each time Peter answers Him, he says, “You know that I “phileo” you.” I love you with the affection of a brother. Some see great significance in these different terms, others don't see much. Certainly the significance of those different terms is less than the impact which the threefold repetition of essentially the same question would have had on Peter. This must have been grueling. I thought about this: to ask somebody a question once is to raise an issue: “[My dear wife], have you prepared supper for tonight?” To ask the question twice is to open up an area of concern: (sniffing as if looking into a pot or pan on the stove), “[My dear wife] have you, have you [really prepared] supper for tonight?” The third time around, now you are looking in the pot and you say, “Have you prepared supper!?” This is very amusing when this is just supper, but when it addresses the fundamental relationship between two people and whether or not there is the continuance of the bonds of loyalty and affection and service, now you have raised questions that penetrate to the heart and cause in the one being questioned, as Peter did, [an impulse and outburst of anxiety]. Peter's distress is indicated in his response, “*Lord, you know everything!*” Couldn't we edit this slightly? “Surely, surely I love you. Don't I love you? In spite of my denial, in spite of my fear, in spite of my running away, don't I love you?”

Peter's cry of distress is true: Jesus does know everything. The great work of propitiation is complete. Jesus has satisfied the righteousness and holiness of the Father. Jesus' conversation with Peter is not seeking knowledge; He is giving it. If Peter loves Jesus, he will care for the flock. He will feed them; he will tend them. Jesus knows, of course, that Peter cannot do this unless he is constrained by love for Jesus. “If you love Me, you will take care of My children. You will not take care of My children if you don't love Me. You will collapse. You will run. You will deny again. You will fade. You will not abide.” Peter's love for Jesus must be greater than his doubt and disappointment regarding himself. When you have stepped forward and accepted responsibility and placed yourself

under God’s guidance and care as a leader in the body of Christ, and then you have betrayed that position and dropped your responsibilities and have turned away, you now have a huge question mark written across your own soul: who am I; what can I do, how faithful can I be, will I last; in fact, do I meet the qualities and specification that are necessary for the one who will stand – how long did Jesus say you have to stand in order to be saved? [You must stand] to the end.

Jesus knows that Peter has got to understand that His love for Peter is greater than Peter’s self-doubt. That, beloved, is called grace. Because there is something else that Jesus knows. It is this: Jesus knows Satan will attack. When he does, the whispering, whispering [will come]: “Who do you think you are? You stink!” [You must respond,] “Yes, I do; but the blood of Jesus washes me clean.”

Did Satan attack? Satan did attack. Turn to Galatians 2:11-14. We learn that Peter under the pressure of a group of supposedly converted Jews hears that maybe to be really fully saved I have to keep the law. Remember that Peter was born and bred as a Jew and he can’t stand fast, and so he steps away from grace and please notice that he loses his nerve regarding the gospel. It is as though he forgotten what he had learned from the direct revelation from God about the fact that no longer do the laws [of separation] apply. Peter stepped back and he breaks fellowship with other Christians. What in the world! Peter that is exactly the sort of thing you did before! It was not a minor error. It is so important that Paul has to step forward and in public call Peter on the carpet and say, “What you have done is a betrayal of the gospel and therefore a betrayal of Jesus Christ.” Satan attacked; Peter fell. Did Jesus know that was going to happen? Of course He did. It is absolutely essential, beloved, that we realize that our failures past, present and future are not greater than God’s grace. You must know that. You must repeat that to yourself. You must cry out and say, “I am condemned by my sins.” Then you must cry out and say, “But I am saved by my Lord, and I will not let the evil one trap me and defeat me and keep me his prisoner. For I am set free by the blood of Christ.”

I will stop and skip forward to these questions, those which He asked of Peter. Jesus is asking them of us: Do you love the Lord? Will you serve Him by serving others? That is not an idle comment or idle question. You don’t dare say, “Yes, I will” and then take communion and then walk out the door and do nothing to serve anybody. In that case you are exactly where Peter was: in trouble. Will you release your private dreams? Who is in charge of my life? Who had to give up his fishing boat? Peter had to give up his fishing boat? Who of has to give up something? Beloved, the game is for real, we must understand it.

Please pray with me: our heavenly Father as we prepare to take the Supper together, help us to hear the questions that Jesus asked Peter and to know that we are asked the same ones, each appropriately to our own situation, and by Your grace may we hear the wonderful affirmation that Jesus loves us. We pray in His name. Amen.

Questions for Understanding and Application:

I. Have you sensed the Lord calling you to some sort of service?

2. What have you learned about the Lord and what have you learned about yourself as you served, and perhaps even as you faltered or failed in your service?
3. If you feel that you have been called and you were or are serving, does it seem to you that you enjoy the guidance and inner strength from the Spirit so as to endure to the end?
4. What steps do you take to ensure good health and adequate rest for hearing from God and serving others?
5. Have you known ministry leaders who have failed? What do you believe or understand to be the possibilities and conditions (procedure or steps) for forgiveness and renewed ministry?
6. Does it make sense to say that forgiveness for failure and restoration to leadership are distinct? What might be the challenges in maintaining this distinction, and what might be its advantages?
7. Has anyone ever questioned your love for them? Have you ever questioned your love for Jesus?
8. Have you ever experienced Satan’s attack as you sought to serve?
9. What experiences in your life have served to test and strengthen your love for the Lord?
10. Have you surrendered pleasures, preferences or “day dreams” in order to be faithful to and serve the Lord?