

# Welcome to: - Bible House of Grace.



*God, through His Son Jesus, provides eternal grace for our failures and human limitations.*

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## John 21.

(2013)

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The Bible not only reveals God's eternal plans purposes and promises

But also shows how you can know God for yourself.

***Teach it, don't demand it.***

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*Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man. As to such I neither claim special knowledge or perfect understanding.*

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## John 21.

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### Topics.

- Jesus reveals himself a second time to the disciples.
- The disciple Jesus loved.
- Jesus serves up a BBQ fish breakfast for the disciples.
- Peter puts on his outer garment and runs to the Lord.
- Eternal life is not a resurrected soul, but a human body.
- Jesus tells Peter three times to feed his sheep.
- Truly, truly, you, will go where you do not want to go.

### The Previous Chapter.

In the previous chapter Mary Magdalene, Peter and John went to the tomb Jesus appeared firstly to Mary Magdalene at the tomb, then to the disciples in a locked room and eight days later to Thomas in the same room and breathed the Holy Spirit onto the disciples.

**NOTE:** for information concerning people, places and the meaning of words see Map Locations and People of the Bible, and Bible Dictionary on Website Menu.

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### Jesus reveals himself a Second time to the Disciples.

John 21:1-3 ----- <sup>1</sup>After this Jesus revealed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias, and he revealed himself in this way. <sup>2</sup>Simon Peter, Thomas (called the Twin), Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee and two others of his disciples were together. <sup>3</sup>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.

One of the two disciples not named (v2) was John we know this because later in this story we are told that it was the disciple whom Jesus loved who realised a miracle had taken place when they caught an abundance of fish and who told Peter it was Jesus standing on the shore (v7).

### The Disciple Jesus Loved.

There is much discussion amongst Bible readers over whom the disciple was that Jesus loved, the following Scriptures enable us to uncover who that disciple was and why his name appears to be hidden. In John chapter twenty John says, "Mary Magdalene ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved" (John 20:2). Then in (John 21:20) John writes, "When Peter turned and saw the disciple whom Jesus loved," and a few verses later states, "He was the disciple who has written the things in this letter" (John 21:21-24).

These verses show that the disciple who wrote the book of John was the disciple Jesus loved, thus the disciple Jesus loved was John. It seems to be a principal of humble Bible writers to hide themselves in their letters to avoid using the word I. They will often say, "That disciple with them" or "That disciple with him" rather than say, "I was with him" or "I was with them" when they are referring to themselves it is a style of writing that avoids boasting.

The spirit of the world is pride and the desire to feel important. If those in the secular world have contact with a famous person they want to boast about it to their friends' biblical writers often avoid this by hiding themselves in their writings.

## **The First Time Jesus Revealed himself to the Disciples.**

The words, "After this" refer back to the previous chapter in which Jesus had revealed himself for the first time to the disciples on Sunday evening (the first day of the week) the day he rose from the dead. They were gathered together in a room with its door locked, but Thomas was not with them (John 20:19) and to the second time he revealed himself to them eight days later in the same room, but this time Thomas was present (John 20:26). Now in this chapter Jesus is appearing to the disciples for the third time at the Sea of Tiberias a city on the Sea of Galilee.

## **The Disciples go Fishing and Catch Nothing.**

Peter Thomas, Nathanael, James and John and two of Jesus other disciples go fishing all night and catch nothing. Perhaps God's hand can be seen in their failure to catch any fish especially when it is remembered that some of these men were professional fishermen, maybe the Lord is preparing them for the new life Jesus is about to call them into.

Even today there are numerous testimonies in which peoples businesses have failed, but it resulted in them forsaking the pursuit of money and success and totally turning their life over to serving Christ. Sometimes God has to strip people of their success in this temporal world before they are open enough to hear his call to service in his eternal Kingdom.

## **Jesus serves up a BBQ Fish Breakfast for the Disciples.**

John 21:4-13 -----<sup>4</sup>Just as day was breaking, Jesus stood on the shore; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. <sup>5</sup>Jesus said to them "Children, do you have any fish?" They answered him, "No." <sup>6</sup>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. <sup>7</sup>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, (for he was naked in KJV) and threw himself into the sea. <sup>8</sup>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. <sup>9</sup>When they got out on land, they saw a charcoal fire in place, with fish laid out on it, and bread. <sup>10</sup>Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish that you have just caught." <sup>11</sup>So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, 153 of them. And although there were so many, the net was not torn. <sup>12</sup>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. <sup>13</sup>Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and so with the fish.

After fishing all night and catching nothing, Peter, Thomas, Nathanael, James and John (the sons of Zebedee) and two other disciples sailed very early in the morning back to the shore of the Sea of Tiberias. When they are about one hundred yards out Jesus calls out asking if they have any fish and they tell him no. None of the men in the boat knew it was the Lord, most likely because it was still dark and they were quite some distance away and they would not have been expecting him to appear to them especially since it was so early in the morning.

They most likely thought he was a professional fisherman because they do what he says, and to their enormous surprise and joy their catch was so abundant that they struggled to haul it in, upon seeing this John (the disciple whom Jesus loved) immediately realised that a miracle had taken place and tells Peter that the man on the shore who spoke to them was Jesus (v7).

## **Peter puts on his Outer Garment and Runs to the LORD.**

The King James Bible says, "When Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his fisher's coat unto him, (for he was naked,)." (John 21:7). Throughout the Bible some prophets of God are spoken of as being naked, but this does not mean that they had no clothes on, but that they were bare from the waist up. During Bible generations if a man was in public with his body uncovered from the waist up he was spoken of as being naked, unless he was physically working.

Thus the reason modern Bibles more correctly translate the verse by saying, "When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment, for he was stripped for work" (ESV). A modern example of this principal today would be for a man to appear before the Queen or the leader of a nation with his upper body uncovered or to walk into a church with no shirt on, it would be considered totally inappropriate and to many offensive such was the attitude in Bible times regarding men who were in public uncovered from the waist up.

### **Peter runs to the LORD.**

They are about a hundred yards from the shore when John told Peter that the man on the shore was Jesus, upon hearing this Peter immediately jumps into the sea and goes to him, the boat arrives on shore and the disciples see that Jesus has a BBQ breakfast ready for them (v7-10). These verses do not actually say that Jesus ate the bread or fish with the disciple, but Luke tells us Jesus ate bread with the two men in Emmaus village (Luke 24:35) and ate fish with the disciples gathered together in the room with its door locked (Luke 24:41-42) so it is hardly unlikely that he would not have eaten and enjoyed the freshly caught and BBQ fish with his disciples.

### **Eternal life is not a resurrected Soul, but a Human Body.**

Though people in Jesus era believed in life after death it was considered more in the form of an eternal soul i.e., some spirit like being or spiritual eternal consciousness no-one (except a few prophets) thought the human body could be raised from the dead to eternal glory and everlasting life. This no-doubt is one of the reasons why Jesus ate bread with the two men in the Emmaus village when he appeared to them after his resurrection (Luke 24:35) and why he showed his disciples the marks of the nails in his hands and the scar in the side of his body that had been pierced by a Roman spear (John 20:18-27) and ate fish (Luke 24:41-42) when he appeared to them in a room with the door locked.

The nail marks, the scar and eating food assured the disciples and by extension all who are seeking God through Christ that eternal life will not be spent as a spirit aberration or some kind of eternal soul, or spiritual consciousness but as an immortal eternal human body that will be raised from the dead and will still be able to enjoy eating a tasty meal together in divine fellowship with eternal brothers and sisters in Christ.

The apostle Paul wrote: -

- We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet the dead will be raised imperishable and we shall be changed because this perishable body must put on the imperishable and this mortal body must put on immortality (1 Cor. 15:51-53).

### **Jesus tells Peter three Times to Feed his Sheep.**

John 21:14-17 ----- <sup>14</sup>This was now the third time that Jesus was revealed to the disciples after he was raised from the dead. <sup>15</sup>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." <sup>16</sup>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." <sup>17</sup>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.

Following are the three times Jesus revealed himself to the disciples: -

1. The first time Jesus revealed himself to the disciples was on Sunday evening (the first day of the week) the day he rose from the dead. They were gathered together in a room with its door locked, but Thomas was not with them (John 20:19).

2. The second time Jesus revealed himself to the disciples was eight days later in the same room, but this time Thomas was present (John 20:26).
3. The third time Jesus revealed himself to the disciples was at the Sea of Tiberias (a city on the Sea of Galilee) when the disciples fishing net overflowed with fish at his word and he prepared a BBQ breakfast for them (John 21:1-15).

Jesus and the disciples finishing their beautiful BBQ breakfast on the beach and Jesus says to Peter, "Do you love me more than these?" This question could refer to the abundance of fish Peter caught and his love for fishing or to the disciples with them, either way Peter tells the Lord he loves him more than those things then Jesus replies, "Feed my Lambs" which could refer to the Gentiles in contrast to the Jews or to the newly converted.

Jesus asks Peter a second time, "Do you love me?" Peter gives him the same answer and Jesus says, "Tend my sheep" which could refer to the Jews in contrast to the Gentiles or those who have walked with Christ for some period of time. Jesus persists and asks Peter a third time, "Do you love me?" Now Peter is grieved (meaning feeling hurt upset and saddened) most likely because this third question of Jesus brings to his mind the fact that he had denied him three times, Peter replies "Lord you know I love you" and Jesus again says, "Feed my sheep."

**NOTICE:** it is not laws, rules, regulations or traditions that motivate Peter to follow and serve Jesus but love it is from love for Christ and love for his sheep that Peters ministry flows out from, even unto death.

### **Shepherding the Lord's Sheep.**

A natural shepherd protects his sheep from wolves or anything that will harm them and a good shepherd will leave the comfort of their home and venture out into a blizzard to tend any sheep that may have been harmed or maimed and carries them to shelter and safety. This shines a spotlight on the truth that shepherding Christs sheep is not only about teaching them, but showing kindness, mercy and compassion it is about the shepherd caring for those who belong to Christ's family and forsaking their own comfort to do what they are able to protect Christ's beloved flock from harm.

### **Truly, truly, you, will go where you do not want to Go.**

John 21:18-19 ----- <sup>18</sup>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." <sup>19</sup>(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."

Jesus tells Peter that while he was young he did as he pleased, but now he will do an go where he does not want to go this is what means when he said to his disciples: -

- If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me (Matt 16:24).

This means if a disciple of Christ is put in a position of choosing to do what they know the Lord wants or choosing what they what the choice should be to choose the Lord's way, even though it is not what self would choose. This is what Jesus is saying to Peter once he could do exactly as he pleased and go where he chose, but now his life is all about following Christ and his will. Jesus is the perfect example of dying to self, in the Garden of Gethsemane he fell on his face and prayed, saying: -

- My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will (Matt. 26:39).

Christs will was to avoid the brutal torture and cruel death he was about to face, but rather than do what he preferred he surrendered his life and his will to his heavenly Father. This is the life Jesus is calling Peter to when he said to him, "Follow Me.

## **The Practical Application for Today.**

Young Christians should not despair if they feel they have let God down, Moses, David and Peter all let God down at some stage in their lives, but each one of them is known and loved by God as faithful servants of His. Jesus tried and tested Peter for three years and God tested Moses for forty years because God is looking for people whose supreme desire in the heart is to follow him and who are broken when they fail to do so.

Circumstances of life are God's way of testing to see if a person will be shown to be of proven worth through their endurance and faithfulness showing that they are fit for the Masters use because endurance and faithfulness are the pillars of the Christian faith.

It is certain Peter felt terrible after denying Jesus especially when Jesus turned and looked at him at the very moment Peter denied him the third time, but Jesus knew his heart and his weakness and rather than condemn him he abundantly blessed him with fish and prepared him a BBQ breakfast on the beach and Peter went on to be one of the greatest of disciples.

### **NOTE.**

Most in the Christian faith will not be called to be Peters and Pauls, but we are all called to live a life that is worthy of Christs name and do-good to others and treat people with respect this is the life all those who belong to the family of God are called to which is summed up in the words, faithfulness, endurance and doing what brings honour and respect to Christ's name. Peter said it beautifully in the following words: -

- Rejoice in your eternal salvation even though you are being grieved by various trials so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honour at the revelation of Jesus Christ (1 Peter 1:5-7).

### **You will stretch out your Hands.**

Jesus words to Peter, "You will stretch out your Hands," refer to his death. The only apostle whose death the Bible records is James (Acts 12:2), King Herod had James put to death with the sword, (a likely a reference to beheading). The circumstances of the deaths of the other apostles are related through church tradition, so we should not put too much weight on any of the other accounts.

The most commonly accepted church tradition in regard to the death of Peter was that he was crucified upside-down on an x-shaped cross in Rome said to be the fulfilment of Jesus' prophecy (v18-19).

Whatever style of death Peter died the words, "Another will carry you where you do not want to go" (v18), implies that it was a death that was force upon him, but because of his faith in Christ he surrendered to it.

**NOTE:** today we hear many testimonies of success to glorify the name of God, but Jesus tells Peter that it is his death that will glorify God (v19). It is when people remain faithful to God under difficult and troublesome times and suffering circumstances that God is glorified. This is because even the secular world celebrates and rejoices when they have success and life is good, it is how people respond in hardship that brings glory to God. In most cases those who do not know the goodness of God will curse Him when life brings a crisis across their path, whereas those who know God never thinking to curse or deny Him even unto death.

The author of Hebrews wrote: -

- Some were tortured, refusing to accept release so that they might rise again to a better life and others suffered mocking and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment they were stoned, they were sawn in two they were killed with the sword. They went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, mistreated of whom the world was not

worthy wandering about in deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth and all these though commended through their faith did not receive what was promised since God had provided something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect. (Heb. 11:35-40).

Through their enduring faithfulness they brought honour to God not only when life was good to them, but also when they were inflicted with trouble and suffering and like Peter even in their death.

#### **NOTE.**

this does not mean we are never going to protest before our heavenly Father, David who God said was a man after his own heart honestly expressed how he was feeling when he was suffering in heartbreaking and troublesome times with depression even to the point of suicide, but these prayers of despair were not from a heart that was against God, but one that was full of confusion and bewilderment.

The beauty of our heavenly Father is that He sees past our words and understands that they are flowing from a confused and hurt heart that is most likely seeking for some kind of understanding.

#### **The disciple Jesus Loved.**

John 21:20-25 ----- <sup>20</sup>Peter turned and saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following them, the one who had been reclining at the table close to him and had said, "Lord, who is it that is going to betray you?" <sup>21</sup>When Peter saw him, he said to Jesus, "Lord, what about this man?" <sup>22</sup>Jesus said to him "If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you? You follow me!" <sup>23</sup>So the saying spread abroad among the brothers that this disciple (the disciple Jesus loved) was not to die; yet Jesus did not say to him that he was not to die, but, "If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you?" <sup>24</sup>This is the disciple who is bearing witness about these things, and who has written these things and we know that his testimony is true. <sup>25</sup>Now there are also many other things that Jesus did. Were every one of them to be written, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.

These verses show that John is the disciple Jesus loved, we know this because the author writing this letter in verse twenty states that, "Peter was looking at the disciple whom Jesus loved, the one who had been reclining at the table close to Jesus (at the Last Supper) then in verses twenty four the one writing this letters says, "This (the one who Jesus loved) is the disciple who is bearing witness about these things, and who has written these things and we know that his testimony is true. John is the one who is bearing witness and writing this letter so he is clearly the disciple Jesus loved.

It seems to be a principal of humble Bible writers to hide themselves in their letters to avoid using the word I. They will often say, "That disciple with them" or "That disciple with him" rather than say, "I was with him" or "I was with them" when they are referring to themselves it is a style of writing that avoids boasting.

The spirit of the world is pride and the desire to feel important. If those in the secular world have contact with a famous person they want to boast about it to their friends' biblical writers often avoid this by hiding themselves in their writings.

**Peter asks Jesus how will John Die:** Jesus has just told Peter how he is going to die (v19) so Peter asks Jesus, "How will John die?" (v21) and Jesus replies, "If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you? You follow me!" (v22). The lesson Jesus is teaching Peter in his answer to his question is that he shouldn't concern himself with what Jesus is doing in the life of another brother or sister in Christ.

His focus should be on his own salvation and doing what is right so that he walks in a manner that is worthy of God and the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and not concern himself about what Jesus is doing in or with the life of others in his family. By extension Jesus words, "What is that to you? You follow me!" are not limited to Peter only but apply to all who are following Christ.

**The World could not contain the Books if all things Jesus did were Written.**

There are many other scrolls and writings that were written during the Old and New Testament period existing in the world today that mention various men and women of the Bible, but they are irrelevant since what is contained in the Bible is more than enough for any reader to find God and the path to eternal life since one beautiful message of a Father and a Son working as one in perfect love and perfect unity for the sole purpose of translating mankind from the kingdom of darkness into the glorious Kingdom of light perfectly flows through the Bible from Genesis to Revelation.

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End