

April 19, 2020

## Signs of His Love - Part 7

John 21:15-17, “When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?” “Yes, Lord,” he said, “You know that I love You.” Jesus said, “Feed My lambs.” Again Jesus said, “Simon son of John, do you love Me?” He answered, “Yes, Lord, You know that I love You.” Jesus said, “Take care of My sheep.” The third time He said to him, “Simon son of John, do you love Me?” Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, “Do you love Me?” He said, “Lord, you know all things; you know that I love You.” Jesus said, “Feed My sheep.”

After eating with His disciples, Jesus has a conversation with Simon Peter. He asks Peter a very important question. Do you love Me? Now, that seems like a very easy question to answer. I mean, he had left his profession, his family, everything behind to follow Jesus. Peter seemed to be the first of the disciples to speak up in most situations. But now he is answering a straightforward question instead of speaking as he had before when Jesus told him that he would deny Him three times. Peter had said that he would go to prison and even die with Jesus. Instead, when Jesus was arrested and people began to ask Peter if he was one of the followers of Jesus, and he denied that he was, three times.

Now, Jesus asks Peter, do you love Me? Not once, not twice, but three times. Each time Peter said he loved Jesus, but the third time he was asked, it stung. And yet each time Jesus asked the question and heard the reply “You know that I love You,” from Peter, it was a reminder that the kind of love that God has for us doesn’t change with circumstances. It doesn’t change when the going gets tough. God’s agape love is totally unconditional. And that’s the kind of love that He wants us to give to others. When Jesus answered Peter each time, it was with a command; “then feed my sheep.” Peter, I need you to love others the way that I love you. I love you if you follow or if you stray. I just love you, period. Jesus wasn’t holding a grudge against Peter for denying Him. Instead He was loving Him through the mistake.

We would do well to do the same thing. We so easily hold grudges, allow bitterness to take root, and withhold our love from those who have hurt us. That is not agape love. We must forgive and allow God to do any judging that needs to be done, so that we can continue to love with no boundaries. Beloved, let us love one another the way God loves us.

Dear Lord, help me to love the way you love. I know You have forgiven me and that all of my sin was paid for. You see me as clean and holy; sanctified. Help me to love from that perspective with unconditional love. Thank You for loving me like that. In Jesus Name, Amen