

“Do you love me?” John 21 :15-19

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What does Jesus ask and command Peter to do following his resurrection from the dead that also applies to us today?

On the night of Jesus’ betrayal how many times did Peter deny that he knew this Jesus? **Three Times.** In our gospel text today how many times does Jesus ask Peter, **“Do you love me?” Three times!**

After breakfast Jesus asks Peter a series of questions. John 21:15-17.

Vs. 15 Jesus asked, “... *do you love (agapan,) me more than these?*”

Peter replied, “*Yes, Lord; you know that I love (philein) you.*”

Vs. 16 Jesus asked, “... *do you love (agapan,) me?*”

Peter replied, “*Yes, Lord; you know that I love (philein) you.*”

Vs. 17 Jesus asked, “... *do you love (philein,) me?*”

Peter replied, “*Lord; You know all things; you know that I love (philein) you.*”

Peter objected and said that he would never fall away (Matthew 26:33). Jesus then told Peter that before that night was over he would deny him three times. Peter pridefully contradicted the Lord and said, **“I will not deny you”.** **That background is important because in this text,** after the resurrection, on the seashore at breakfast, the risen Jesus started off by asking Peter if his love was greater than the others. ***Do you love me more than these?***

The word philein describes the tender concern and care we have in our close personal ties. However the word agapan is the more common word for “love” in the New Testament.

It’s the word used in the Bible for COMMANDS to be loving. The focus is upon the outward behaviors that our love produces.

Jesus a second time asked Peter if he loved him, but this time he didn’t make the comparison. “more than these

AFTER EACH QUESTION & ANSWER, JESUS COMMANDED PETER TO SOMETHING.

After the first question in verse 15 Jesus said, “Feed my lambs”.

After the second question in verse 16 Jesus said, “shepherd my sheep”.

Finally, after the third question in verse 17 Jesus said, “Feed my sheep”.

This is the focus, the reason for Jesus questions: the obedience to which Peter was being called.

Loving Jesus in our hearts must be translated into doing Jesus will in the world!

Therefore Feeding the sheep (believers, the church) is the prime task of shepherding.

This is how Jesus’ sheep are fed. As believers we measure everything we say, think and do out of the context of the Word of God and what Jesus has told us as the truth.

TO KNOW JESUS!

Philein love says “Yes, I emotionally love Jesus.”

Agapan love says: “I love you so much I will now treat even my enemies as you do.”

TO GROW IN JESUS.

Philein love says “Yes, I will worship, give and study the word.

Agapan love says: “Yes, I will worship, give and study the word so that my actions and decision are Jesus actions and decisions.”

TO SHARE JESUS WITH OTHERS

Philein love says “I’m thankful we have people with the spiritual gift of evangelism because I don’t and won’t.”

Agapan love says: “I’m thankful we have people with the spiritual gift of evangelism and even though I don’t have the gifts I will still witness and do everything I can to make disciples.”

This is precisely why we will be offering Leadership Training for all believers on Saturday Nov. 4th 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

This call of love (agapan) by Jesus is the foundation of all godly obedience and service.

John 14:21, “He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him.”

John 15:12 “This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.”

John 15:14 “You are My friends if you do whatever I command you.”

1 John 5:2-3, “By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.”

So love isn’t just a feeling.

In each of these verses just quoted the word used is **AGAPAN**.

This is a love that evidences itself as legitimate because it **ACTS** in ways that honor Jesus.

It is the kind of love we **EXHIBIT** when no one is looking.

It **DOES** what we claim is in our hearts.

It **SHOWS** that it is really what we think it is.

Look at Vs. 18 It is a difficult verse regarding this kind of love. *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.)

On this side of eternity, faithful followers of Jesus often pay a real price for loving (agapan) in him! In Peter’s case it was crucifixion.

His love (agapan-total commitment to Jesus his mission) was so fervent he was willing to die rather than to compromise the truth.

In vs. 20 He asks Peter, you and me, ho claim him as Lord and Savior to **“FOLLOW ME.”**

That “follow me” demands two things:

A love for Jesus so strong we will obey him even when it hurts.

A love for others so strong that we are willing to die for Jesus by our commitment to the truth.

SO JESUS ASKS YOU AND ME TODAY:

Do you really love me beyond your emotion by obeying me?

Do you love me so much that you will love one another even when it hurts?

Your answer will tell you everything you need to know about your Christian faith.

