

# Resonate

BIBLE STUDY

**“SIMON SAYS: LOVE JESUS”**

Simon Peter knew Jesus was alive; he had seen Him. Despite his joy over the resurrection, Simon Peter still experienced pain over the way that he had denied Jesus three times. The issue had to be addressed. May the way Jesus dealt with Simon Peter be a reminder of the tender ways God deals with each one of us.

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### Today's Scripture:

John 21:2-4, Matthew 4:18-20, John 20:21-22

## The Word

Have you ever been around a person who always must be doing something? He or she can never sit still. People like that make me feel guilty. I feel lazy as I watch them in constant motion. My grandfather is like that. He will create work just to work. For example, one time he came to my house and noticed that my mailbox was beginning to rust. He went out immediately and bought another mailbox and then installed it. He had to do something. I, on the other hand, was not bothered by the mailbox nor had it even occurred to me to do something about it. Some people just need to keep moving!

I think Simon Peter was a fidgety type. He was not one for just sitting around. After witnessing the resurrected Christ, he just did not know what to do. He created work.

### **John 21:2-3**

*<sup>2</sup>Simon Peter, Thomas (called Didymus), Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two other disciples were together. <sup>3</sup>"I'm going out to fish," Simon Peter told them, and they said, "We'll go with you." So they went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.*

**Verse 1-3:** Simon Peter by trade was a fisherman. This is what he had been doing before Jesus called him to be a disciple.

### **Matthew 4:18-20**

*<sup>18</sup>As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. <sup>19</sup>"Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men." <sup>20</sup>At once they left their nets and followed him.*

**Verse 18-20:** It had been three years since Jesus had called Simon Peter to follow Him. Three years ago he had dropped his nets. Now, he picks them back up. He goes back to where he had been. He returns to his comfort zone. He takes a few other disciples with him.

I think this is a commentary on many of our lives. We know Jesus. We have spent time with Jesus. We love Jesus. But we are not sure what He wants us to do. Instead of waiting for Him to tell us, we come up with our own plans. Often, we revert back to what

was easy in the past. We go back to our old friends, old habits, old ways, or old jobs. We want to do something, anything, but wait for God.

Simon Peter did not understand that he had to wait for God. He was not equipped for what God wanted him to do. When he had seen Jesus before, the Lord said to him and the other disciples:

### ***John 20:21-22***

*<sup>21</sup>Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." <sup>22</sup>And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit.*

**Verse 21-22:** Simon Peter knew two things. One, Jesus was sending him out. Two, that he would receive the Spirit. He could not be sent out until he had the Spirit. He had to wait. He did not fully understand what it meant to receive the Spirit, and he did not fully know what it meant to be sent out by Christ. All he knew was that Jesus had said these things to him.

But Simon Peter got frustrated while waiting. He wanted to do something. And since he was unable to be sent out and unable to force the timing of the Spirit, he went to his own plan. "I may not be able to get the Spirit, but I can fish!" But the funny thing is, he couldn't do that either!

### ***John 21:3***

*<sup>3</sup>"I'm going out to fish," Simon Peter told them, and they said, "We'll go with you." So they went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.*

**Verse 3:** They caught nothing! This seasoned fisherman did not even catch a guppy! His efforts done in his own way and in his own strength were not going to be blessed by God. The Lord had called him away from fishing. The night of fishing failure was setting him up to get back on track toward spiritual victory. But that is only possible if Jesus shows up. And He did!

### ***John 21:4***

*<sup>4</sup>Early in the morning, Jesus stood on the shore, but the disciples did not realize that it was Jesus.*

**Verse 4:** Jesus met Simon Peter where he was. Even though he had reverted back to his past life, Jesus was willing to meet him there. Even though he had not waited on God, Jesus was patient with him.

Where are you? Are you waiting on God or have you gone into action without His counsel? Have you reverted back into some of your old ways? He is getting ready to call out to you. Will you listen?

# Application

Confess any tendency you have to not wait on God. Ask Him to help you to be patient and to trust His timing.

When have you faced a time in your life when you had to wait on God?

What is the difference between waiting on God and just doing nothing?

How do you revert back to “old ways”? How can you protect yourself from doing this?



## Today's Scripture:

John 21:4-8, Luke 5:1-11

## The Word

Simon Peter and his buddies had gone fishing. They had caught nothing. They are tired. They feel defeated. Dawn is breaking. The darkness is becoming light. They did not realize that the Light of the world was standing a few hundred feet away. But His Voice made them aware of His presence.

### **John 21:4-5**

*<sup>4</sup>Early in the morning, Jesus stood on the shore, but the disciples did not realize that it was Jesus.*

*<sup>5</sup>He called out to them, "Friends, haven't you any fish?"  
"No," they answered.*

**Verse 4-5:** I wonder how long Jesus watched them struggle. He was on shore yet they were unaware of Him. They were so busy attending to what they were doing that they did not realize that their Best Friend was nearby. He had let them go the whole night experiencing failure. He did not intervene. They had decided to go back to their old lifestyle and He had not stopped them. He could have met them before they got on the boat. Instead, He waited. He let them fail. Then, He made them acknowledge their failure. No, they had caught nothing. No, their plans did not work. No, their choices did

not produce the results that they had desired. Now, they were just worn out and had wasted an entire night for nothing.

Jesus did not berate their failure, instead, He met them in it.

## **John 21:6**

*<sup>6</sup>He said, "Throw your net on the right side of the boat and you will find some." When they did, they were unable to haul the net in because of the large number of fish.*

**Verse 6:** When only moments before there had been no fish, suddenly, there was a multitude! An entire night of futility is broken by a moment of abundance. In their strength they were unable to accomplish anything. With a few words from Jesus, they received a catch of a lifetime! The Man who wasn't even on the boat, gave them fishing success! He blessed them just because He could! I believe this blessing brought to Simon Peter's mind an event that had taken place three years earlier.

## **Luke 5:1-11**

*<sup>1</sup>One day as Jesus was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret, with the people crowding around him and listening to the word of God, <sup>2</sup>he saw at the water's edge two boats, left there by the fishermen, who were washing their nets. <sup>3</sup>He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little from shore. Then he sat down and taught the people from the boat.*

*<sup>4</sup>When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch."*

*<sup>5</sup>Simon answered, "Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets."*

*<sup>6</sup>When they had done so, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break. <sup>7</sup>So they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them, and they came and filled both boats so full that they began to sink.*

*<sup>8</sup>When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus' knees and said, "Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!" <sup>9</sup>For he and all his companions were astonished at the catch of fish they had taken, <sup>10</sup>and so were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, Simon's partners.*

*Then Jesus said to Simon, "Don't be afraid; from now on you will catch men." <sup>11</sup>So they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed him.*

**Verse 1-11:** A past miraculous catch had caused Simon Peter to follow the Lord. This next catch caused him to return to the Lord.

## **John 21:7-8**

*<sup>7</sup>Then the disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" As soon as Simon Peter heard him say, "It is the Lord," he wrapped his outer garment around him (for he had taken it off) and jumped into the*

water.<sup>8</sup>The other disciples followed in the boat, towing the net full of fish, for they were not far from shore, about a hundred yards.

**Verse 7-8:** Simon Peter jumps in the water. He just wanted to be near Jesus. Imagine a grown man diving in and swimming ashore. He comes out of the water like a shaggy, wet dog. Water is dripping from him. He looks pathetic. His fellow disciples are trying to row to shore with this huge catch with one less man to help. Simon Peter did not care. He was not concerned about anything but Jesus.

## Application

Praise the Lord for being so patient with us. He met us all in our failures. Thank Him for His mercy.

In what ways has Jesus met you in your times of failure?

Explain why the failure in not catching fish was important in God's plan in getting Simon Peter's attention.

What emotions do you believe drove Simon Peter to jump in the water and swim ashore?

How have you risked looking foolish in order to align your life back with Jesus?



**Today's Scripture:**  
John 21:9-14; 18:18, 25

## The Word

Simon Peter is dripping wet. He just swam to shore because he knew Jesus was there. The sight of his Friend is not the only thing he sees.

### ***John 21:9***

*<sup>9</sup>When they landed, they saw a fire of burning coals there with fish on it, and some bread.*

**Verse 9:** On the shore was a fire of burning coals. Do not miss this detail. This is the same type of fire that Simon Peter stood by when he denied the Lord.

## **John 18:18, 25**

*<sup>18</sup>It was cold, and the servants and officials stood around a fire they had made to keep warm. Peter also was standing with them, warming himself.*

*<sup>25</sup>As Simon Peter stood warming himself, he was asked, "You are not one of his disciples, are you?" He denied it, saying, "I am not."*

**Verse 9:** Simon Peter sees that fire on the shore. Jesus is nearby. His mind would have been triggered back to what he had done. He had denied knowing Jesus. The Lord knew. Jesus could have decided to cook the fish over an open flame. Instead, He chose a charcoal fire, the same kind that Simon Peter had warmed himself at while denying Jesus. It was as if Jesus was saying, "Simon Peter, you went to the enemy for a time. You warmed yourself at their fire while you were denying you knew Me. You failed me, but I will not fail you. You are dripping wet. Come. Warm yourself at the fire I made. Join me. Live for Me. Let others know about Me. You had your time away and it left you broken. I will restore you to wholeness. The fire that was your shame will now be your testimony of My grace."

## **John 21:9-10**

*<sup>9</sup>When they landed, they saw a fire of burning coals there with fish on it, and some bread.*

*<sup>10</sup>Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish you have just caught."*

**Verse 9-10:** Fish and bread are already on the fire. Jesus did not need their catch to make a meal. He already had food prepared. Let me tell you a truth that in our culture is hard to grasp: you are not important. You are not needed. God can do His will without you. He wanted fish on the fire; He just created fish on the fire. However, He chooses to allow you to join His work. He wants you to be a part of what He is doing. He invites you to Himself. Are you eager to join Him? Simon Peter was!

## **John 21:11**

*<sup>11</sup>Simon Peter climbed aboard and dragged the net ashore. It was full of large fish, 153, but even with so many the net was not torn.*

**Verse 11:** Simon Peter was excited to obey. He goes over to the boat and heads the effort to get that net ashore. He experiences another miracle. This seasoned fisherman knew that the net should be torn yet it holds together. Let's get abstract for a moment, shall we? That net can represent Simon Peter. That net had been unable to catch anything all night. It was a net and it was made to catch fish, yet it had not. However, with one word from the Master, the net went from empty to full. The net did not crumble under the pressure but miraculously it held together. Simon Peter had failed. He had denied Jesus. He should have done what was right but he did not. However, the Master was getting ready to speak words to Simon Peter (which we will study

tomorrow.) Those words will take empty Simon to full. He would be the preacher to have one of the biggest catches in history as he preaches a sermon that leads 3,000 to salvation (Acts 2:41). Why am I going this abstract route? Because next time you feel that God is calling you to do something greater than you think is possible, I want you to remember the net. Just as Jesus did not allow the net to unravel or break, so too He is able to strengthen you to face any situation! You do not have to fall apart! Instead, you can experience a miracle in and through your life. (For all of you left-brained people who hate dealing with abstracts, thank you for bearing with me.)

## **John 21:12**

*<sup>12</sup>Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast." None of the disciples dared ask him, "Who are you?" They knew it was the Lord.*

**Verse 12:** A night of failure leads to breakfast with Jesus! He truly meets us right where we are. He extended an invitation to spend time with Him. They all accepted. They sat down to eat while Jesus served them.

## **John 21:13**

*<sup>13</sup>Jesus came, took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish.*

**Verse 13:** I wonder if all of them thought back to the Last Supper when Jesus broke bread and told them it was His body. At that time, they did not understand. Now, on the other side of the cross, it was a visual reminder of what Jesus had been through. One thing I do know, their time with Him was precious.

## **John 21:14**

*<sup>14</sup>This was now the third time Jesus appeared to his disciples after he was raised from the dead.*

**Verse 14:** Moments with Jesus are wonderful. Do not take them for granted. These disciples cherished this time for the rest of their lives. May you and I do the same.

# **Application**

Spend time with Jesus. Talk to Him. Listen to Him. Enjoy your time together.

Why is it important to understand that we are not necessary for God to carry out His plan?

If God does not need us, then why does He ask us to do things for His kingdom?



How can the illustration of the net help you during difficult times?

In what ways are you joining the invitation of the Lord to spend time with Him?



**Today's Scripture:**  
John 21:15-19

## The Word

The moment had come. It was time to address Simon Peter. Jesus knew he had to deal with his past in order to prepare him for his future. In a tender way, Jesus redirected Simon Peter back to His heart.

### ***John 21:15-17***

*<sup>15</sup>When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me more than these?"*

*"Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you."*

*Jesus said, "Feed my lambs."*

*<sup>16</sup>Again Jesus said, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me?"*

*He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you."*

*Jesus said, "Take care of my sheep."*

*<sup>17</sup>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."*

**Verse 15-17:** The meal was over. Conversation may have been winding down. Jesus turns to Simon Peter and asks if he loves Him. This is not your typical breakfast conversation. I do not know if they were still in the group or if the two were walking by themselves. But I do know that this conversation forever impacted Simon Peter's life.

Three times Jesus asks about Simon Peter's love. Three times Simon Peter affirmed his love for Jesus. It was three times that Simon Peter had denied the Lord. I wonder if Simon believed that his ministry was over. Maybe he felt his calling had been revoked due to his sin. I lean toward believing this because Jesus assigned him ministry tasks three times. He tells him to feed the lambs, take care of the sheep, and feed the sheep. All of these are significant tasks for the church. It takes from the imagery that Jesus had used in the past.

## **John 10:14-15**

*<sup>14</sup>"I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me— <sup>15</sup>just as the Father knows me and I know the Father—and I lay down my life for the sheep.*

**Verse 14-15:** Jesus is the head Shepherd. Yet, He calls others to be shepherds under Him. These are the people He calls to feed and care for the sheep. Simon Peter tells us the responsibilities of these shepherds.

## **1 Peter 5:1-4**

*<sup>1</sup>To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder, a witness of Christ's sufferings and one who also will share in the glory to be revealed: <sup>2</sup>Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; <sup>3</sup>not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. <sup>4</sup>And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.*

**Verse 1-4:** Shepherds are to care for the flock and serve them. They are to understand that the people have been entrusted to them by God Himself. They are to oversee the growth and development of the people around them. Jesus was asking Simon Peter to be one of His shepherds. In fact, Simon Peter was the first man assigned this task for the church.

Please note the connection between love and service. Jesus assigned the task of shepherding to Simon Peter as he declared his love toward Christ. Simon Peter's past did not prevent his future service. Instead, his present love for Jesus enabled Simon to receive the call of God on his life. That calling would not be easy. In fact, it would have a tragic ending.

## **John 21:18-19**

*<sup>18</sup>Jesus said, "Feed my sheep. I tell you the truth, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go." <sup>19</sup>Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him, "Follow me!"*

**Verse 18-19:** Church tradition claims that Simon Peter was crucified by the command of the Roman emperor, Nero. Simon Peter did not feel worthy to die in the same manner of the Lord so he requested that he be crucified upside down. The man who had denied Jesus three times, would willingly die as a follower of Jesus Christ. Simon Peter loved His Lord to death.

I believe that everyday we have the opportunity to answer the same question, "Do you truly love me more than these?" The "these" may be different in our lives. Do we love Jesus more than our families, our friends, our jobs, our wealth, our material possessions, our time, our hobbies, our preferences, our ideas, our...(fill it in with what rivals your love for Jesus Christ). What is your answer? Do not take this lightly. The nice answer is "yes". But is that truly the answer reflected in our thoughts, attitudes, and actions? I'm not talking about your past. What is done is done. Simon Peter could not take back his denial, but he could make different choices in the future. At the end of

his life when he faced either denying the Lord or dying on the cross, Simon Peter chose the cross. Loving Jesus is not about sitting around a campfire and singing praise songs while eating marshmallows. This love costs. It costs our energy “feed My lambs”; it costs our time “take care of My sheep”; it costs our resources “feed My sheep.” It costs us everything!

## **Matthew 16:24-25**

*<sup>24</sup>Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. <sup>25</sup>For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it.*

**Verse 24-25:** To be a follower of Jesus is not easy. His love for us and our love for Him is necessary to make it through. Count the cost. Jesus gave everything for you. Now, He is asking, “Do you love Me?”

# Application

Ask God to increase your love for Him. Request that He help you to love Him in thought, word, and deed.

Write down the reasons that keep you from serving God.

How can you let the past go and move toward Jesus’ call in your life?

How would others know that you love Jesus?

What do you need to let go of in order to place Jesus as the first love in your life?

The connection between the love of Jesus and the service of Jesus is vital. If you have one without the other, what would be the result?



## The Word

### Today's Scripture:

John 14:23, 21:15, 15:13, 13:34-35

Yesterday we learned that Simon Peter was able to follow the call of God on his life because he loved Jesus. The love he had for the Lord led to his service of the Lord. However, I feel like we throw the word "love" around easily. We all say that we "love" God. But what does that love look like? How does love turn into the action? The answer is one word: obedience.

### **John 14:23-24**

*<sup>23</sup>Jesus replied, "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. <sup>24</sup>He who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me.*

**Verse 23-24:** Love is not just a feeling. It is an action. Love is obeying God whether I feel like it or not. We can say that we love someone but if our actions do not prove it then our words are void. It is what we do that proves our love. When Jesus spoke to Simon Peter in order to reinstate him to his calling, He tied the words of love to action.

### **John 21:15**

*<sup>15</sup>When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me more than these?"*

*"Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you."*

*Jesus said, "Feed my lambs."*

**Verse 15:** Do you think that Simon Peter always wanted to help others? Do you always want to help others? No, but we do it out of love. Our love for the person and our love for Jesus compel us to act out in love. That is why love is ultimately defined as sacrifice.

### **John 15:13**

*<sup>13</sup>Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.*

**Verse 13:** Jesus literally laid down His life for others. However, we need to lay down our lives everyday. It is time that we quit living for ourselves and give ourselves up for others. We need to put others in front of ourselves. I know that this sounds like a basic lesson, but I need it. That is why I am writing it. The fundamental part of Christianity is not living its way through me. I cannot honestly say that I am known by the hallmark of the church which is love. This is the one aspect we should be known for!

## John 13:34-35

<sup>34</sup>"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. <sup>35</sup>By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

**Verse 34-35:** We are to be known for our love. Are we? Are you? Am I? Would a description of us include the word "loving"? If not, we must change. Simon Peter loved Jesus to the point of death. Can I love Him to the point of giving vacation money to missions, spending time with a lonely neighbor, hugging the person who drives me crazy, babysitting for busy parents who need some time together or a countless others ways that show love? Each night, can I pinpoint a time that day when I had showcased love to others? If not, it is time to make some changes.

We are to be known for our love. This needs to go beyond our family and friends. The world on the outside looking in needs to be able to brand us with the reputation of "those people love everybody." Are you helping the church's reputation or hurting it? Are you involved with others in a way that they can see the love of Jesus through you? If not, will you join me in making some changes? I have been convicted. I hope you have, too.

## Application

Ask God to help you be a showcase of His love to others.
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How is love and obedience connected?

If the church should be known by the world for its love, how do you believe the churches of this nation are doing? How about your local congregation?

What are some sacrifices that you need to make in order to consciously move toward showing love toward others?

Write down some people that you will make an effort towards showing them the love of Christ and how you will accomplish this.