

The Gospel of John: The Heart of Christ

Jake Barker | John 21:1-25

Hey, Traders Point. I hope that you are doing well. Welcome to you if you are new or just getting to know us. We are so honored that you would spend your time with us here this weekend. Also want to give a special shout out to those of you tuning in online everywhere throughout the country and even the world. So cool that we can gather together even when we are scattered.

You have joined us for our very last sermon in our series in the Gospel of John. Last August we set out to cover the entire Gospel of John verse by verse. So, here we are at the very end of it. And, much like Aaron said last week, we're not always sure why God leads us to particular parts of the Bible to cover but, as we are here tonight landing the plane on the Gospel of John, it is becoming more and more clear. I love how Aaron said it last week. In order for us to be sent out, in order for us to go and be Jesus' representatives and ambassadors in the community, we first needed to spend some time getting to know Him. And that's what we have been doing over the last eight months.

Our author, John, has given us an eye-witness, front-row account—an eye-witness testimony to the life and the works, to the words and the miracles, to the death and the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Now that we have spent over eight months getting to know Jesus better, here's what we have found. The more that we lift up Jesus and get out of the way the more He transforms individuals and families. So, we want to keep on doing that on a regular basis. We're always going to lift up Jesus and let Him do His thing.

So, if you have your Bible or a Bible app, I would love for you to join me in the very last chapter of John, John chapter 21. All the way back—John chapter 21 is where we're going to be hanging out tonight. As you are on your way to John 21, let me ask you a question. Have you ever had a highly public, and extremely embarrassing failure? Like you just flopped, you fell on your face and everyone who was around saw it. There was just no covering it up.

Fellas, maybe you decided to propose to your girlfriend on the jumbotron at a sporting event and she said, "No." Just terribly embarrassing. Ladies maybe you were washing your hands after using the restroom in a public place only to look over to see a very confused and surprised man standing at the urinal and all you wanted to do was just crawl into a hole and die.

I've had one of these moments. When I was nine years old and I was in the fourth grade and I was in love. I was in love. Her name was Mallory and she was the one. Me and Mallory forever. One day I walked into the classroom and there was a poster board up by the blackboard—remember that thing? The chalkboard up there? And there was an invitation to Mallory's birthday party. And even though it was addressed to the entire class—I knew who that was really for. It was for me, alright? This was my moment. I was going to make my move. It was going to be romantic. We were going to ride off into the sunset in the back of my mom's minivan. This is what stories are made of.

The only problem was that Mallory had invited us to a roller skating party and I had never been roller skating before. So in order for me to maintain my saved-by-the-bell Zack Morris level of cool I couldn't

ask for help so I developed a plan. My plan was that I would get my skates on, skate as close to a wall as possible, push hard enough to just roll across the rink to the other wall and hopefully not crash and die. So it looked like, find the wall and just push and then I had to bounce like, “What’s up girl?” that whole thing.

Here’s the deal. It was a terrible, terrible plan. I would only push hard enough to make it to the middle of the floor and then I would lose my balance and fall down over, and over, and over again. And I heard Mallory and her friends snickering over in the corner. So I left that day with a very sore rear end and a bruised ego. It did not work out for me and Mallory. That’s the end of that story. Thank God. Trudy, love you, you’re hot—I didn’t tell her that I was telling that story. So me and Mallory did not work out.

Now, all of us kind of have that go to dinner party most embarrassing story, right? Something that is real light, something funny. But then, many of us if not all of us, have that next level failure story. The one that when we think about it, man it still hurts. It’s still pretty painful. And we haven’t told many people, if we’ve even told anybody.

Maybe there was a season of rebellion in your life where you like veered into a lane of incoming traffic and there were a bunch of pile-ups because of the way you were behaving. Or maybe you got mixed up in the wrong crowd and you ended up at the wrong place at the wrong time. Maybe you acted before you fully considered all of the consequences of your behavior and because of those mistakes, and because of those failures—some of them very public—because of that sin you own a healthy dose of shame.

And here’s the real problem with shame. Very few of us have the proper tools to deal with it. So when I have my shame, I don’t know really where to turn, I don’t really know how to get rid of it so I don’t. I suppress it. I hold it for years. And worst of all—and some of you in this room will identify with this—I let it define me. My darkest moment, my worst mistake is now my identity.

Today, in John, chapter 21 we’re going to see the way that Jesus interacts with shame. And we’re going to see how the resurrection of Jesus Christ changes what we see in failure and how it points us to the hope of the gospel. This story is amazing and I’m excited to dive into it with you tonight.

Now John 21, in the whole spectrum of the Gospel of John, kind of serves as an epilogue. If you’ve ever read a book with an epilogue at the back it’s like one of those chapters but it’s not really a chapter. It’s there to try and tie up some loose ends for the entire story. Or maybe you’re not a literary-minded person, maybe you like movies. So, it’s like one of those movies where in the end credits they tell you what happened to all of the characters after the story ended, right?

My favorite movie was one of those. It’s the movie *The Sandlot*. Maybe you’ve seen *The Sandlot* about some young boys who play on a baseball team and at the end we find out that Squints ends up marrying Wendy Peffercorn—very exciting stuff. If you haven’t seen *The Sandlot*—why? I don’t know what you are doing. Not right now, but later tonight, go watch *The Sandlot* it is awesome.

That’s what John 21 is. It’s just tying up loose ends. And as far as the story goes we’ve seen Jesus live and we’ve heard Him preach. We’ve seen Him die and we’ve seen Him rise. But there’s this one big loose end that John 21 serves to tie up. It’s this big question—what about Peter? What about Peter? And, specifically, what about Peter and Jesus?

In chapter 18 we read about Peter's epic failure; his very public, very historical failure that we've read about many times. You see, Peter was the default, vocal leader of the disciples. And I say default because Peter spoke pretty much before anybody else could and that makes you the vocal leader. That's how that works.

So Peter would often step out, and he was extremely confident, and he knew exactly what he thought about everything. And he was often one of those kinds of guys who spoke first and thought later. That was Peter's legacy. And in chapter 18 we see this leader have an opportunity to rise up to heroic proportions and fall flat on his face. See, at that moment Jesus was under trial. He was being falsely accused of being an insurrectionist—really a terrorist—and Peter was sitting in the courtyard and he was waiting to see how all of this would play out.

He snuggled up next to this fire, this charcoal fire, which was keeping him warm. Pay attention to that charcoal fire, that's going to come in later. So, Peter is standing by the fire and someone identifies him and says, "Hey, weren't you one of His disciples? Weren't you one of those guys who followed this Jesus around?" And Peter had the opportunity to stand up for Jesus. He had the opportunity to speak up yet again, but he didn't. He crumbled. He wasn't a leader. He denied even knowing Jesus. And he didn't do it once. He did it twice and then he did it a third time.

In Luke, chapter 22 we read that at the third denial he and Jesus locked eyes. Man, just imagine that. Just imagine that moment, the worst thing that you've ever done, that gut-sinking thing that still keeps you up at night, that thing that haunts you. Imagine looking Jesus in the eye that very moment. That was Peter's experience. And it says that Peter knew exactly what he had done. He ran out of the courtyard and wept bitterly.

Peter was a man who was haunted by his worst mistake. And if Jesus didn't step in it was going to define Peter. So, in John 21 we watch as Jesus and Peter interact publically for the first time since that moment. And what I found this week, and what I think you'll find, is that Jesus changes the way that we deal with our shame and I am so glad for it.

Will you join me? John, chapter 21, verses 1 through 3. It says, "After this Jesus revealed Himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberius, 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."

So here's what is going on. This kind of sets the scene for chapter 21. In Matthew, chapter 28 we know that Jesus instructed the disciples to leave Jerusalem where the crucifixion had happened and to go back to Galilee. So, that's what they were doing. They were sitting and waiting for Jesus to reappear. And in a typical way with a bunch of guys (it says that there were seven disciples there) seven guys sitting around. They are not very good about just sitting and not doing anything. They're just guys. That's what guys do.

So, Peter stood up and said, "I'm going fishing." And the six other guys said, "Hey, we're going to come too," because they would much rather stare at water in a boat than talk about their feelings, alright? They're just guys. That's what they want to do. But even though these guys were formerly professional fishermen—this was their job, this was how they brought home the bacon, this is what they did before they were disciples—they caught nothing all night long.

One commentator I read this week said that this is the first true fishing story ever told, right here. They spent all night not catching a thing. So, not only are they anxious to see Jesus reappear to them, they can't even do the one thing that they are good at. And I love what Jesus does here in verses 4 and 5.

Read them with me, "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.'" I love this interaction. Jesus shows up on the shore and the disciples don't know who He is. Either the sun hadn't fully come up so that they could see Him or maybe Jesus cloaked His identity. And He stands on the shore and He shouts out to them. And that word "children" there is more like our word "guys". So He said, "Hey, guys. Have you caught anything?" And they just say, "No," a flat, "No."

This reminds me of some moments that happen in our home. I have admitted up here before that I am not the handiest of guys. That's just not my gift. I have tools and I have stuff but I'm not sure how they go together all of the time, alright? So, the real problem is that my wife, over the last few years, has fallen in love with four letters I-K-E-A. And if you have ever assembled a piece of IKEA furniture then you know that there is a person in their packaging department who hates other people. That's the only explanation because the goal is to take a big piece of furniture and reduce it to the smallest pieces possible to ruin marriages. That's the goal.

So, I'm sitting in the living room trying to put this shelf together or my wife will see me put a knob on the back of a dresser and she'll just watch for while and then she'll ask me, "Do you just want me to do it?" I will give her the exact same answer that the disciples gave Jesus, "No." It's like, "No, it's probably time to walk away. This is not the moment."

That's what the disciples are feeling like, "We can't figure anything out. The Guy we used to follow, He died, and then He rose again, and then He told us to come here, and we're waiting for Him, and we're trying to catch fish and we can't catch anything. We are so frustrated, 'No.'" Then watch what Jesus says. This might sound familiar, this advice that Jesus gives to the disciples, and that's because it is.

Now let's read together. In John, chapter 21, verses 6 through 8, "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."

So, these fishermen, after a night of complete futility get advice from a random guy, they don't really know who he is, standing on the shore and he just says, "Oh, your problem is that you've been fishing on the wrong side of the boat all night long." So, they grab the net, they place it down and now they can't even haul up the net because there are so many fish.

Then John, the disciple who Jesus loved—that's John, that is our author—he's putting two and two together. He says, "Wait a minute. This is all too familiar. Someone has done this before. This is Jesus." And as soon as he tells Peter—remember Peter, the one who is ashamed of his denials—as soon as he tells Peter, Peter jumps into action.

Now, this is actually a theme of the Gospel of John. John and Peter are wired very differently. John is the thinker. He's the intellectual. He's the strategist. And you could even tell, by the way that he writes his

gospel, the style of it is incredibly different than the other three. He has his wheels turning all of the time. Peter is more one of those think, fire, aim kind of guys, “I’m just going to move and I’ll figure it out as I do it. I may sink as I’m walking on water but at least I’ll walk on water.” That’s Peter’s mo’.

One thing I want to note is that Jesus called both of them knowing how different they were. It was their partnership that made them great. Jesus’ disciples were called from all different kinds of temperaments, and backgrounds, and stories and He knit them together. A bunch of guys from different places, different families, different strengths and they were His team.

Now, you and I can probably identify with either a John or a Peter. Either you are the one who thinks everything through, all the “I”s are dotted and all the “T”s are crossed before you take step one or you’re a Peter who jumps out of the boat and then kind of freaks out when you’re walking on water. It’s one of the two.

What can happen sometimes is that the Johns in the room, we can look at Peter and just say, “Dude, can you just stop for like two seconds and think before you act?” I love the way that John writes it there, “Peter, we were like 100 yards away. All we had to do is just row the boat back. You kind of left us with all of this fish, alright dude? Just chill out for one minute.” And Peter just looks back at John and says, “John, will you stop thinking. One more focus group is not going to get us the answer. You have to go.”

Jesus called both of them and said, “You are both My disciples. You are both going to be leaders of the church. I want both of you to start this thing.” And the beauty of the body of Christ is that we are called from different backgrounds and different stories with different strengths. All of us have a different role and we make up the church. And it’s a beautiful thing when we appreciate each other’s differences.

So we have Peter here. And Peter has a very interesting reaction in John, chapter 21. This story may have sounded familiar and that’s because a very similar one already happened. In Luke, chapter 5 a very similar moment happened between Jesus and the disciples. This was earlier in Jesus’ ministry—He’s just getting rolling and this time He was in the boat with the disciples. And they were having equally bad luck fishing that night. And Jesus stands up and says, “Guys, just try the other side.”

You can imagine a bunch of professional fishermen taking advice from a professional carpenter. There was probably a considerable amount of eye-rolls and grumbling. But they drop it on the other side and this time the net can’t even handle it. They can’t even get all of the fish into the boat.

Now, this story is very similar to the one we just read but the biggest difference is Peter’s reaction. In Luke, chapter 5 when the exact thing happens here’s how Luke records it. It says, “But when Simon Peter saw it,” he saw the catch of fish, “he fell at Jesus’ knees saying, ‘Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.’” So when Peter puts two and two together and he realizes that only God could make anything like that happen, he kind of panics. And he falls to his knees and says, “Jesus, I can’t even be around you right now. I need some distance. I can’t handle Your holiness.”

And what Peter was doing was actually a pretty appropriate reaction to being in the presence of God. See, Peter was all too aware that he was in the presence of God and he realized how inadequate he was. He realized that God is perfect and He was not. He realized that Jesus was sinless and he was full of sin. And those two can’t co-exist. So he said, “Jesus, I can’t even be around You right now. I’m so terrified of the consequences of my sin because I know that the punishment for sin is death. So, I’m terrified to be around God right now.” That’s what happened on the first trip.

But did you notice what happened on the second fishing trip? In John, chapter 21 Peter has almost a completely opposite reaction. So, they haul up the fish. John puts two and two together. He tells Peter who it is and what did Peter do first? First of all he put some clothes on because when Jesus shows up and you're in a Speedo you put some clothes on. That's kind of what happened. Peter was down to his working clothes so he puts clothes on and then goes swimming, typical Peter. That's what he does. He just dives in and he starts swimming because he can't wait to be close to Jesus. It's the exact opposite reaction.

It doesn't really make a lot of sense because in John 21 Peter had more to be ashamed of in that moment than he did the first fishing trip. In the first one he was just getting to know Jesus but in this one he had just denied Jesus three times. They hadn't publically talked about it. There was still that big elephant in the room but, for some reason, Peter wouldn't let 100 yards of water stop him anymore. He was going to get close to Jesus. He bolted to be next to Him.

Now, why? Well there was one big event that happened between Luke 5 and John 21—between the two fishing trips. It was the resurrection. See the resurrection changes everything. In fact, the resurrection changes what we do with our shame. The resurrection of Jesus Christ changes what we do when we fail, when we sin, and what we do with our shame.

See, the first time around Jesus was still revealing Himself. It was still early in His ministry. His disciples didn't totally understand why He was there. But in John 21 the resurrection had happened, and hope was restored, and forgiveness was possible, and the future of heaven was real. So Peter, in his typical, over the top reaction put on clothes and swam to shore because he knew that because of the resurrection he could take his shame to Jesus. In fact, he knew that Jesus was the only One who could take his shame.

Now, you and I—there are going to be people in this room who are still treating their shame like Peter did the first time. And they are, pretty consistently, trying to put as much distance between them and God because of their past, because of their sin, because of their failures. Maybe the assumption is that Jesus doesn't do shame and God doesn't hang out with failures. They don't really go together. Every once in a while we'll invite someone to a place like this and maybe you've heard this line like, "If I walked in the roof would cave in. I can't bring my stuff there."

Maybe you had a bad church experience where you revealed your mistake, you revealed your sin, you revealed your shame and you were rejected, you were judged so harshly that it pushed you out the door. Maybe you interacted with a Christian and once you became real and once you became vulnerable he [or she] pushed you away because he couldn't handle that mess. So you've come to the conclusion that it changes you forever. You're going to hold onto it, you're going to stuff it; you're going to die with it.

But Peter would have a very different thing to tell you. Peter, who stood in the courtyard and denied Jesus is the same Peter who ran to the tomb. That empty tomb changed his perspective on everything and he realized once and for all that his shame belonged with Jesus. Jesus was the only One who could handle all of that mess. And Jesus promised to take it away from him. So Peter jumped out of the boat and swam to shore because Jesus can handle our shame. Jesus can handle the shame of Peter. He can handle yours as well.

So the first thing that Peter does is he puts on his robe and he swims to shore. He ends up there on the shore with Jesus. And the rest of the disciples row back with all of the fish. And there is Jesus and He's making breakfast, which is like the coolest, most confusing thing that Jesus could have been doing, right? It would have just totally blown their minds. They would be like, "You were dead. And now You're not. And here You are making us an omelet."

It was super funky. They didn't really know what was happening. And it says that the menu was fish and bread and they gathered around a charcoal fire. That's how Jesus was warming up the fish. The only other time in the Bible where a charcoal fire is referenced was in the courtyard of Peter's denial. Now, I'm under the impression that this is not an inconsequential detail. I believe that Jesus is setting the scene. He and Peter have some work to do. They still have to embrace the awkward. They have to talk about the tension. So watch what happens here after breakfast. Jesus starts working on Peter. Peter did the right thing, bringing his shame to Jesus but Jesus isn't done yet.

In verses 15 through 17 it says, "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.'"

So after they had finished their fish and bread, Jesus had some work to do with Peter. See, the elephant was sitting right there on the beach and Jesus had to talk about it. So Jesus first lobs up this seemingly innocent question of, "Hey, Peter do you love Me more than these?" And there is some debate as to what Jesus was talking about. He could have meant in comparison to the other disciples, "Peter do you love Me more than these. You've been forgiven more. We've been through more. Do you love Me more than them?" And Peter says with adamant conviction, "Yes. Yes."

I love the way that Peter does it. He says, "Jesus, You know that. You know the answer to Your own question." You see, it seems that Peter had learned from his previous mistakes. There were two moments where he was following Jesus and Peter told Jesus that He was wrong. He told Jesus, the Son of God, that He was wrong. Free advice—don't. Just don't do that. That is a terrible idea.

One of the moments where Peter said, "Hey, You are wrong," was when Jesus predicted that he would deny him. He said, "Jesus, I would never do that. I'll follow you to the death. I would never deny you." But the courtyard proved differently. So Peter, with his past experience, his mistakes still very fresh said, "Jesus, You know that I love You." And Jesus asked again. Then He asked for a third time. And Peter knew exactly what was happening. The charcoal fire, the three questions—Jesus was talking about the denials. He was bringing it up again. And Peter was grieved. He was cut to the core. He was convicted.

Now, why would Jesus ask that line of questions? Why would He ask it three times? It kind of seems like rubbing it in. Why would Jesus ask Peter like that? Here's the truth. Before we can be restored we must first own our failures. Before we can fully be restored, before we can get back to good, before we can stop talking about it we must first own our failure.

See, this is the painful part of sin and restoration. I know that if there was a plan that I could sign up for where I could skip right from conviction to forgiveness, I would be on that plan. Like, "Okay, Jesus. I

know that was wrong. My bad. My fault. I won't do it again. Thanks for the forgiveness. See you Monday." That would be a pretty nice plan. If we could just tap our chest and say, "That's on me. My fault. Won't do it again."

But healing does not happen unless there is a full and honest confession and that's where Jesus was driving Peter. Peter at first had to own his failure before he could be fully restored. Jesus and Peter could not just shake hands on the beach and say, "Hey, sorry. Let's never talk about it again," and move on. First Peter had to own it and confess it before healing could really begin.

See, you and I know that there is a difference between the cut of a thief and the cut of a surgeon. The cut of a thief is meant to harm you so that in your harmed state, while you are on the ground, he can steal from you and run away. It is just meant to hurt you. The cut of a surgeon is intentional and there's a purpose. There's a reason that a surgeon is slicing you open because there is a greater danger underneath.

That's what Jesus is doing. This is not a vindictive Deity trying to make Peter feel really bad for what he had done. Jesus is going to town. He's doing surgery on Peter. See, the person on the operating table is never mad at the surgeon because of the temporary, small pain of an incision because he understands that there is something under the surface that could kill him so he trusts his life to that surgeon.

You and I, as Christians, know that sin is not a surface level issue. Now, that's a very confusing thing for some of us. It takes a journey to get to that conclusion. Sin—the Bible is really, really clear—sin is not just a reaction to our circumstances. Sin is not the conclusion of some of our relationships that are out of our control. The Bible says that sin starts on the inside and then shows up on the outside.

So, those discouraging words that we said to a loved one—they started from within. Or the corrupted desires of my heart; that started from within. Or the wandering of my eyes to things I shouldn't be looking at, that started from within. So sin cannot be treated with a topical ointment; it requires heart surgery.

The problem is that many of us have been trying the ointment of modified behavior as if that's going to fix it. Like, "If I can just try hard enough to act a different way. If I can just try hard enough to be a good person, then maybe I will never have to talk about that thing that I did. If I can just, maybe, do the things of a Christian. If I can just fool everybody by being a Christian, I'll never have to own my previous sin." But the problem is, that tumor is still on the inside and we've never allowed the surgeon to slice us open to save us from the danger underneath the skin. And confession is necessary to save us from the danger underneath. Confession is the surgery that heals us. Modified behavior, or avoidance, is simply putting a Band Aid on Cancer. It doesn't work.

Pastor Tim Keller put it like this, "Repentance begins when blame shifting ends." Repentance begins when blame shifting ends. When I stop blaming my circumstances, when I stop blaming the people in my life for my decisions, for my sins, then true repentance can happen.

Now look. There is bound to be at least one person here today who is hurting and it's not going away, and it's not getting any better, and he [or she] has tried religion to where he can behave in a certain way to make God love him and it's not working. And he's tried to put on the act and it just doesn't really seem to fix the problem. It's because he's been trying topical ointments for the tumor underneath. And today is the day. Today is the day to confess to begin healing.

Now, any surgery is going to hurt. There's going to be shame. There's going to be embarrassment. But it is the only proper approach to sin. It requires Jesus getting in there and getting underneath because the skin stuff just isn't going to work. So Peter, here on the beach was laid bare. It says that the other disciples were eating breakfast—Jesus did it in front of the other guys. And Peter says, “Man, You know that I love You. I’m sorry that I let You down. I failed.” But in order for restoration to begin first he had to own his failure.

So, the first thing we see Peter do is jump out of a boat fully clothed because he knew that Jesus could handle his shame. Then over breakfast we watch as Jesus cuts him open and saves him from the tumor, the sin that was underneath, and heals him like the Good Physician that He is. Finally—Jesus is still not done with him yet. There's a third part to Jesus' restoration of Peter. We're going to find it here in verses 19 through 23.

Jesus says, “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.’

“Peter turned and saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following them, the one who also had leaned back against Him during the supper and had said, ‘Lord, who is it that is going to betray You?’ When Peter saw him, he said to Jesus, ‘Lord, what about this man?’ Jesus said to him, ‘If it is My will that he remain until I come, what is that to you? You follow Me!’”

So after Jesus and Peter have this very raw and honest conversation He restores Peter and then He calls him something else. Here's the truth, not only for Peter but for you and me. We were saved from something for something. We were saved from something for something. We were saved from our sin but that's not the end of the story. We are saved for something. Peter was not saved from his sin just to live a life of leisure, to just kind of chill, and kick back and wait for heaven to come. Peter was called to live on mission.

So, calling is simply what God has asked us to do. Now, when it comes to calling and when it comes to this kind of verbiage, there are a lot of us who would say, “Well, calling is for the disciples like Peter. Calling is for a vocational pastor, or a missionary, but like, I’m an accountant,” or, “I’m a teacher,” or, “I’m a stay-at-home mom,” or, “I’m in high school,” so, “I don’t really have a calling right now.” But really, genuinely the model here is that we are saved from something for something. God is asking us all to do something very unique.

Jesus walks with Peter on a beach and He gives him His calling and He says, “You will live a life with outstretched arms. Someone is going to lead you where you do not want to go with outstretched arms”. So, Jesus words here have a double meaning. First the life that Peter was going to live from here on out was like this—outstretched arms was now the posture.

This was the posture of service. This was the posture of generosity. This was the posture of Peter pouring out his life so that other people could hear about Jesus. And as we read farther in the Bible Peter was the first person to ever preach a sermon after the coming of the Holy Spirit. He was one of the first leaders of the church. He was even jailed and freed by an angel. Peter lived an incredible life with outstretched arms for the rest of his days. He was called to pour himself out.

The second meaning was that Peter was going to die by crucifixion much like Jesus had. Peter was martyred and we know that he was killed by crucifixion. Peter heard, “This is now my life. From here on

out I'm going to pour out, pour out—serve, serve, serve and then some day someone is going to kill me because of this." That's a pretty sober calling for the vocal leader of the disciples.

There were days when Jesus was out there preaching and there were all of these crowds that Peter thought that he was going to be one of the big-shots. He was going to be one of the officials. He was going to have all this power, all this prestige. And here Jesus calls him to a life of service and eventually a crucifixion. That was the call placed on Peter's life.

Now, I love Peter. Peter's my guy because Peter does what you and I would have done. As soon as he hears his calling, that he's going to die by crucifixion he looks behind him and John is walking behind them. And he goes, "What about that dude? Why do I have to do that? What about him?" which is exactly what you and I would ask because when it comes to calling—here's something unique, here's something just challenging about us. It's that—when it comes to our calling from God we are really into it being fair. When Jesus calls me, what Jesus asks me to do with my life—I'm a big fan of that being fair.

So, "Jesus if You're calling me to something really hard, like You're asking me to have a really hard conversation or You're asking me to go to some place where I don't really want to go, or You're asking me to give something up that I don't really want to give up—I kind of look at everybody else and say, 'Alright, Jesus. That's totally fine as long as every single other Christian has to do the exact same thing.'" That's my request. That's my only request. I just want it to be super fair. If I have to do hard stuff then everyone else should too.

The opposite is also true. If I see some people who have something that I want, like they have resources, they have a couple of extra zeros in their bank account, maybe they have a platform and a spotlight that I kind of want—"Jesus, if they have that then I want it. This is supposed to be fair."

And Jesus looks Peter dead in the eye as He looked at me this week and He said, "I'm calling him to that and I'm calling you to something else. You follow Me." Follow Me. "You don't follow the other Christians that you see, you don't follow the apostles in the Bible, you follow Me." And He has put a very particular calling on all of our lives.

Peter was called to preach the first sermon. John was called to write a gospel and then someday be exiled to an island. He was to write The Revelation of Jesus at the very end of the Bible. They had two very different callings. And you and I are the same. Again, it's this thing that sometimes we undersell calling. Calling is for super Christians, right? If you have an "S" on your chest, and a cape then you get a calling, "But I'm just like a normal dude so I don't have a calling." That's not true. See, we were saved from something for something.

When Jesus went to the cross and He saved us it was not to give us a life on Easy Street and a life that is a waiting game until He comes again. He called us to live on mission every single one of us. None of us are exempted. And there have been many of us who have thought, "My whole deal is that I get dunked, and then I get my admission ticket, and then I ride it out." And Jesus is saying, "No, no, no. There's a job to do now. Peter was called to this. John was called to that. You are called to something else."

Maybe this is the very first time you ever actually heard that you, you—in your life right now, here on this earth, are called to something. That Jesus wants to see you live a certain way, to have a certain impact and maybe He gave you resources, and skill sets, and opportunities for a very particular reason and you just thought, "Man, this is really super random." He's saying, "No, no, no. I orchestrated it all so that you can make a big difference for My kingdom."

See, that's the word that Aaron was talking about last weekend. That word "sent". That is active. That is intentional. That is with a purpose. Peter was sent. John was sent. You and I, people who have

responded to the gift of grace, our life is now a response to that gift. We are sent. Now, the big question for you is what calling has God placed on your life? What calling is He giving you? What opportunities is He setting you up for to make a big difference for His kingdom? What about you?

There are really three groups of people I'd love to talk to here as we wrap up chapter 21 and as we wrap up the Gospel of John. The first group is this. When we were talking about that person who has put much distance between them and Jesus, you said, "Yes. It has been years since I have even been a place like this. And it's been years since I even considered Jesus a friend or considered that Jesus and I could have a relationship." And maybe you've concluded that your past has eliminated you from any relationship with Jesus. Here's the deal, Peter didn't think it. The Gospel of John does not support that. And the many lives that have been transformed around here do not encourage that line of thinking.

Today is the day. So instead of putting distance between you and Jesus, you put on your robe and you start swimming—you bolt straight to the feet of Jesus because, not only is He the only one who can handle your shame, He already died for it. It's done. Over. He paid the price that you deserved to pay and gave you the reward that only He can give. That is Jesus. So, today is the day when you are no longer suppressing the shame, no longer are you living with the shame, no longer are you allowing that to define you but you are handing over your shame at the foot of the cross.

The second group of people is those who are just skipping the confession part. You got on the beach, it was just you and Jesus, and you said, "Hey, my bad Jesus. Thanks for the forgiveness. Really appreciate it," but somehow you are still not healing. That pain is still there and the disease is actually growing and you're not quite sure what to do about it. Maybe you've been a Christian for a really long time and you thought that you could just go through the motions and you wouldn't ever have to say anything. No one would really have to know.

I'm just telling you, healing doesn't come without confession. It's not an option. I wish I could give you another option, I wish I could tell you about a non-invasive process but it's just not there. But, here's the deal. Healing is better than living with sickness. A life of hope is far better than a life of sin. So, today is the day when you confess.

There are going to be some people down here who would love to pray with you after we wrap up this service and I promise you, I promise you, they will receive you with the same grace that Jesus received Peter with on the beach. We would love to pray with you and talk with you about the next steps in your healing process.

The final group of people is this. Maybe you've been saved. Maybe you've been saved from something but you've never answered that "for something" part. You know that sin is no longer on you, and you're going to heaven, and you would say that you're a Christian, and you're all in but you have just been chilling for a while. Here's the deal. There are no bench warmers in the Kingdom of God. There is no JV. There are no spectators. Jesus did not save you for the easy ride. Jesus saved you from something for something and He has put a call on your life.

Over the next four weeks, starting next week, Aaron is going to lay out this next season of ministry for Traders Point. And personally, I know the behind the scenes and all of the things we are working on and it is going to be amazing. I cannot wait for him to roll out all of these plans. I promise you—you do not want to miss a single week. It is going to be a game changer in the life of our church.

Maybe you used to be involved and you took a season off and you just never got back in. Maybe you're new to all of this and you didn't feel confident enough to jump up—but here's the deal. There are no bench warmers, there are no spectators, there is no JV. It's time to get in the game. So, over the next

four weeks Aaron is going to lay this out and what I'm asking you to pray this week, I'm asking you to pray this question, "God what do You have for me next?"

Maybe you've never been involved. Maybe you've never served. Maybe you've never contributed and this is your first step into it. Maybe you've been at this for years and you feel like you've done your part and Jesus is saying, "I'm not done with you yet. Take the next step."

There is not going to be a single one of us who can listen to this vision, listen to where God is taking us and say, "Yeah, they probably don't need me. They probably have that covered. They have all their "I"s dotted and their "T"s crossed." No, we are all a part of this to make a massive impact, My life now is a response to the unbelievable gift of grace that Jesus has given me.

Let me pray for us.

Father we are so grateful for this moment in the life of Peter. So grateful that you had John record it, so grateful that Your faithfulness has been handed down to us so that we could hear about Your heart. Jesus, this is Your heart. It is breakfast on the beach when we bring our shame and, through confession, You restore us. You restore us to a mission, You restore us to the life that You have called us to. You restore us to a life worth living. Father we are entrusting all of this to You now. We bring to You our shame. We bring to You our confession. We bring to You our lives so that You can make them more than we could have ever done on our own. Father, we worship Your great name. We commit ourselves to Your great name. May You be glorified. It's in Your name that I pray. Amen.

So the saying spread abroad among the brothers that this disciple 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?"

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.

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.