

Jesus' Great Love

"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.'"

John 21:17 (NIV)

During the meal in the Upper Room all of the disciples argued as to which of them should be counted greatest. So Peter sinned along with the rest as he put forward reasons why he was a better disciple than the others.

Peter had also demonstrated great self confidence the night of the betrayal when he told his Master he would go with Him to the death if necessary. Sadly Peter would do no such thing when in Gethsemane. Instead of going with Jesus at the arrest in Gethsemane he fled with the rest.

We admire Peter that night in spite of his bravado and cowardice because he shadowed his beloved Saviour to the trial before the Sanhedrin. But there he denies vehemently that he knew the man on trial. So Peter failed his Master

in three ways that very night.

This is the backdrop to Jesus questioning Peter three times. It has been well noted that our Lord matched the three denials with having Peter confess three times he loved the Saviour.

There are two things here that I wish to point out. The first is that regardless of the ways Peter had just failed his Master Jesus knew that Peter loved Him. When we as Christ followers fail our Redeemer it brings comfort to know that His love for us is not diminished, it does not quit. We read in John 13:1 that Jesus loved His followers "straight through to the end".

So my friend, however you sin against the Friend of sinners His love remains the same. This brings hope when we

come to our senses after sinning that we have not caused our Saviour to stop loving us. His love for us did not come because we lived holy lives and it does not go away because we act like Peter. Take comfort in this gracious truth.

Secondly we see Jesus reinstating Peter after his gross sins of pride and denial. When we sin and defile ourselves we may get back into the life of a faithful Christian as the Lord regroups us and sends us back into serving Him in the area where He has placed us. So return to your Master, hear His words of acceptance and love and then return to where you can effectively witness and live faithfully for Him. He waits to restore you as He did Peter. So come to Him and come quickly.