

PETER'S TWO CHARCOAL FIRES

Sunday, May 4, 2025 -- After the Resurrection -- Pastor Andrew Coleman

JOHN 21:9-17

English Standard Version (ESV)

9 When they got out on land, they saw a charcoal fire in place, with fish laid out on it, and bread. 10 Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish that you have just caught." 11 So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, 153 of them. And although there were so many, the net was not torn. 12 Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast." Now none of the disciples dared ask him, "Who are you?" They knew it was the Lord. 13 Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and so with the fish. 14 This was now the third time that Jesus was revealed to the disciples after he was raised from the dead.

15 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." 16 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." 17 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."

BACKGROUND: Jesus appears to His disciples after the resurrection (40 day period)

- Jesus made multiple appearances to His disciples between the resurrection and ascension.
- Jesus was doing some major things in the lives of the disciples through these interactions...
(He Confirms His resurrection, Reconciles His disciples, Prepares them, Commissions them.)
- Jesus appeared to His disciples corporately and individually.
- Last week, we saw Jesus appear to His disciples as they were fishing on the Sea of Galilee.
- After having caught no fish all night, Jesus told them to cast their nets on the other side of the boat... and a miracle occurs. John says, **'It's the Lord!'**. Peter jumps in and swims ashore.
- In it all we saw the POVERTY of the disciples and the POWER of their Savior.

PETER'S FIRST CHARCOAL FIRE:

- In **JOHN 13** during the Last Passover Supper Peter declares he will lay down his life for Jesus. Jesus declares to Peter, *'Before the rooster crows today, you will deny Me three times.'*
- In **JOHN 18** After Jesus's arrest and between the sham court proceedings people recognized Peter as having been with Jesus but he ardently denies even knowing Jesus.

JOHN 18:15-18, 25

*15 Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple. Since that disciple was known to the high priest, he entered with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest, 16 but Peter stood outside at the door. So the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out and spoke to the servant girl who kept watch at the door, and brought Peter in. 17 The servant girl at the door said to Peter, "You also are not one of this man's disciples, are you?" He said, **"I am not."** 18 Now the servants and officers had made a charcoal fire, because it was cold, and they were standing and warming themselves. Peter also was with them, standing and warming himself. [Jesus is then questioned by the former High Priest, Annas.]*

*25 Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. So they said to him, "You also are not one of his disciples, are you?" He denied it and said, **"I am not."***

MATTHEW 26:73-74

73 After a little while the bystanders came up and said to Peter, “Certainly you too are one of them, for your accent betrays you.” **74** Then Peter began to invoke a curse on himself and to swear, “***I do not know the man.***” And immediately the rooster crowed.

LUKE 22:59-62

59 And after an interval of about an hour still another insisted, saying, “Certainly this man also was with him, for he too is a Galilean.” **60** But Peter said, “***Man, I do not know what you are talking about.***” And immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed. **61** And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the saying of the Lord, how he had said to him, “Before the rooster crows today, you will deny me three times.” **62** And he went out and wept bitterly.

PETER’S SECOND CHARCOAL FIRE:

JOHN 21:9-17

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15 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.” **16** 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.” **17** 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.”

1) Notice Peter’s first charcoal fire of COMPLETE FAILURE.

JOHN 18:15-18 and 25-27

Peter denies Christ three times. (idea of completion -- i.e. ‘Holy, Holy, Holy’) Isaiah 6:3; Revelation 4:8;

2) Notice Peter’s second charcoal fire of COMPLETE FORGIVENESS.

LAMENTATIONS 3:22-23

The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases;

His mercies never come to an end;

They are new every morning;

great is Your faithfulness, O Lord.

3) SUBTLE -- Notice that Jesus INVOLVES US in His KINGDOM PLANS. vs 10

vs. 10 Jesus command them, ‘Bring some of the fish that you have just caught.’

From fixing breakfast to saving the world; God’s plan is to use His people.

Evangelism (salvation), Ministry (discipleship), Missions -- Feed my sheep.

15 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.” 16 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.” 17 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.”

4) Notice Jesus’s big question to Peter: **DO YOU LOVE ME?** Jesus asks 3 times.

The English word LOVE has four different possible words in Koine Greek. Two of them are used here.

Agapáō (ἀγαπάω) versus **Philéō** (φιλέω)

Agapáō love (Agape)

Carries the sense of unconditional, self-sacrificial love

The highest, unconditional commitment regardless of the beloved’s worthiness.

Philéō love

Conveys warm friendship, ‘brotherly affection’—

Less ‘royal’ or covenantal; more transactional and reciprocal.

vs 15	Question 1 -- Jesus asks with ἀγαπάω (“Simon, do you agapáō me?”)	} same
	Answer 1 -- Peter answers with φιλέω (“Lord, I philéō you.”)	
vs 16	Question 2 -- Jesus asks with ἀγαπάω (“Simon, do you agapáō me?”)	
	Answer 2 -- Peter answers with φιλέω (“Lord, I philéō you.”)	
vs 17	Question 3 -- Jesus asks with ἀγαπάω (“Simon, do you philéō me?”)	
	Answer 3 -- Peter answers with φιλέω (“Lord, I philéō you.”)	

REMEMBER, THIS IS A VERY REAL AND INTENSE CONVERSATION... Jesus is deeply dealing with Peter.

On the first two, it appears that Jesus is inviting Peter into the highest, self-giving love.

And it appears that Peter is still shamefully aware of his threefold denial and can’t bring himself to say that he loves the Lord like the Lord loves him.

On the third question, the Lord appears to ‘meet Peter where he is’.

Instead of rebuking Peter, Jesus gently condescends to him-- as if to say...

‘Yes, your friendship love is enough for now; go show it in action.’

Does Peter ever grow into Agape love for the Lord? Apparently, YES!

1. **Peter’s leadership** in Acts 2-12... preaching Christ at great risk in abandonment of self.

In Acts 5:29, he famously declares: “*We must obey God rather than men*”—a radical change from the man who once denied Jesus out of fear.

2. **Peter’s letters** (1 Peter and 2 Peter) reflect deep theological maturity and sacrificial love.

See 1 Peter 1:22 calls them to “*love one another deeply, from the heart*” agape’s verb form is used!

3. **Peter’s martyrdom** (Clement of Rome, Eusebius): Peter is crucified upside down by Nero.

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5) Notice that Jesus is not only inviting Peter to love Him, but also calls him into service with Him.

Jesus expresses tremendous restorative confidence in Peter by laying on him the massive responsibility of caring for His precious flock -- the church.

6) Notice that LOVE and OBEDIENCE are inseparably linked.

Jesus is giving Peter the opportunity to prove his love through service to Him. This is glorifying to God and this is good for Peter.

JOHN 14:15

If you love me, you will keep my commandments.

JOHN 14:21

Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him .

1 JOHN 2:3-5

By this we can be sure that we have come to know Him: if we keep His commandments. If anyone says, “I know Him,” but does not keep His commandments, he is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But if anyone keeps His word, the love of God has been truly perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him:

APPLICATION TO OUR LIVES:

1) Are you experiencing God’s GRACE over your GUILT?

Have you given your failures to Christ, repented of them and received His restoration?

2) Do you think or say that you love Christ? Do you obey Christ?

3) Does your relationship to Christ show progress, change and maturing?

Are you coming to love Him and serve Him more (like Peter)?

ROMANS 5:20-21

20 Now the law came in to increase the trespass, but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, 21 so that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.