

JOHN—

THE APOSTLE OF LOVE

GOD'S LOVE, EVIDENT IN CHRIST JESUS, SAVES, TRANSFORMS
AND UNITES ALL BELIEVERS.

INTRODUCTION

- 1. Jesus, after a night of prayer, chose 12 who were His main focus to be His witnesses (Jn. 20:21-23; Matt. 28:18-20).**

(Jn. 17:23) I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in One; and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them, as Thou hast loved Me.

- 2. Jesus knew their personalities, both strong and weak.**

(1 Corinthians 1:27-29) But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in His presence.

INTRODUCTION

3. Through the Holy Spirit, they were transformed and empowered.

(Ephesians 3:16) *That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man.*

(Acts 1:8) *But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*

THE MAN

1. With James, sons of Zebedee, “thunder” (Matt. 4:21) and partner with Peter (Luke 5:10).
2. Witnessed Jesus’ Transfiguration, where His divinity was revealed (Mark 9:2-18).
3. Sent to prepare the Last Supper and later reclined next to Jesus (Luke 22:8; Jn. 13:23).
4. Given the responsibility to take care of Jesus’ mother (Jn. 19:26,27).
5. Was at the tomb and expressed faith by seeing and believing (Jn. 20:2-8).
6. Witnessed the miracle of catch of fish after His resurrection (Jn. 21:2-17).

THE MAN

7. One of pillars of church, healed and preached (Gal. 2:9; Acts 3-4, 8).
8. Exiled to Patmos and wrote Gospel of Jn., Jn. 1,2,3 and Revelation.

(Rev. 1:9) I Jn., who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the Word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.

THE CHARACTER

1. Vengeful and fiery

(Luke 9:54) And when His disciples James and Jn. saw this, they said, Lord, wilt Thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did?

2. Judgmental

(Mark 9:38) And Jn. answered Him, saying, Master, we saw one casting out devils in Thy Name, and he followed not us: and we forbad him, because he followed not us.

THE CHARACTER

3. Selfish

(Mark 10:35-37) And James and Jn., the sons of Zebedee, come unto Him, saying, Master, we would that Thou should do for us whatsoever we shall desire.

And He said unto them, What would ye that I should do for you?

They said unto Him, Grant unto us that we may sit, one on Thy right hand, and the other on Thy left hand, in Thy glory.

THE CHARACTER

4. **Bold, compassionate after Pentecost.**

(Acts 4:13) Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and Jn., and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.

(1 Jn. 4:16) And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwells in love dwells in God, and God in him.

THE CHARACTER

1. Rebuke instead of compliment.

(Mark 9:38-41) And Jn. answered him, saying, Master, we saw one casting out devils in Thy name, and he follows not us: and we forbad him, because he follows not us.

But Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there is no man which shall do a miracle in My Name, that can lightly speak evil of Me.

For he that is not against us is on our part.

A. Self-serving and jealous behavior to be great.

B. Compensating – to work harder and to prove to self and Jesus.

(Luke 9:46) Then there arose a reasoning among them, which of them should be greatest.

THE PROCESS

1. Rebuke instead of compliment. (continued)

C. Teaching of discernment

(1 Jn. 4:1-3) Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God:

And every spirit that confesses not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.

THE PROCESS

2. Love demonstrated.

A. Lesson taught at the washing of feet.

(Jn. 13:12-15) So after He had washed their feet, and had taken His garments, and was set down again, He said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you?

Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am.

If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.

THE PROCESS

2. Love demonstrated.

B. The new commandment to love others.

(Jn. 13:34) *A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.*

(Jn. 13:35) *By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.*

THE PROCESS

3. Accepting second place

A. Jn.'s desire to be Number One.

B. Jesus' Plan was that he be Number two (Luke 22:7-13; Jn. 20:1,2; Acts 3:1; 8:14-17).

1) Peter and Jn. to prepare meal

2) Peter and Jn. at Garden Tomb

3) Peter and Jn., after Pentecost at Temple

4) Peter and Jn. established saints

THE PROCESS

4. Unconditional love and trust given.

A. Traumatic event for Jesus and Mary

B. Dramatic change point – personal and intimate responsibility.

(Jn. 19:25-27) When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple standing by, whom He loved, He said unto His mother, Woman, behold thy son!

Then said he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.

PRINCIPLES

1. Jesus loves us unconditionally no matter how self-serving and proud we are.

A. Religious (Jn. 3); immoral Samaritan (4), the blind (9:38); Skeptic (20:28).

B. We need to put our faith in Jesus as our Savior (Jn. 1:11-13; Jn. 3:16)

(Jeremiah 31:3) *The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.*

PRINCIPLES

2. Jesus desires to have a unique and reciprocal relationship with Him (1 Jn. 3:1).

A. Are we experiencing daily fellowship as Father-child relationship?

B. Are we allowing Him to minister to us?

(Isaiah 30:18) And therefore will the LORD wait, that He may be gracious unto you, and therefore will He be exalted, that He may have mercy upon you: for the LORD is a God of Judgment: blessed are all they that wait for Him.

PRINCIPLES

2. Jesus desires to have a unique and reciprocal relationship with Him (1 Jn. 3:1). *(continued)*

C. We need to yield as He disciplines us.

(Hebrews 12:6) *For whom the Lord loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives.*

(Hebrews 12:11) *Now no chastening for the present seems to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.*

PRINCIPLES

3. Jesus has a dynamic community of love to meet needs and to reach the world.

(1 Jn. 1:3) That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.

(Hebrews 10:25) Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

PRINCIPLES

3. Jesus has a dynamic community of love to meet needs and to reach the world. *(continued)*

What are we contributing to the love and unity of the family (Phil. 2:1-4)?

(1 Jn. 3:16) Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

(Gal. 6:10) As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

PETER—

THE TOUGH-MINDED

JESUS' PROPHECY

(Luke 22:31) *And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat:*

(:32) *But I have prayed for you, that your faith fail not: and when you are converted, strengthen your brethren.*

(:33) *And he said unto Him, Lord, I am ready to go with You, both into prison, and to death.*

(:34) *And He said, I tell you, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that you shall thrice deny that you know Me.*

BY THE STRANGE FIRE

(Luke 22:54-54) *Then took they Him, and led Him, and brought Him into the high priest's house. And Peter followed afar off.*

And when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the hall, and were set down together, Peter sat down among them.

But a certain maid beheld him as he sat by the fire, and earnestly looked upon him, and said, This man was also with Him.

And he denied Him, saying, Woman, I know Him not.

BY THE STRANGE FIRE

(Luke 22:58-62) *And after a little while another saw him, and said, Thou art also of them. And Peter said, Man, I am not.*

And about the space of one hour after another confidently affirmed, saying, of a truth this fellow also was with him: for he is a Galilaean.

And Peter said, Man, I know not what thou sayest. And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew.

And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the Word of the Lord, how He had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.

And Peter went out, and wept bitterly.

PETER'S PROCESS

Introduction:

1. Process of journey to sad failure told in detail – 52 verses
2. Especially striking in midst of the story of the greatest tragedy

LESSONS

3. Case not isolated, unusual one

Bible – story largely of failures – Adam & Eve, Noah, Abraham etc....

Solemn warning – “Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.

(1 Cor. 10:12,13). There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.”

CHARACTER

1. Impulsive yet cowardly

(Matthew 14:28) *And Peter answered Him and said, Lord, if it be Thou, bid me come unto Thee on the water.*

(Matthew 26:69,70) *Now Peter sat without in the palace: and a damsel came unto him, saying, You also were with Jesus of Galilee. But he denied before them all, saying, I know not what you are saying.*

CHARACTER

2. Hot-tempered yet tender-hearted.

(Jn. 18:10) Then Simon Peter having a sword drew it, and smote the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus.

(Matthew 26:75) And Peter remembered the word of Jesus, which said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And he went out, and wept bitterly.

CHARACTER

3. Insightful and yet half-witted

(Matthew 16:16) *And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God.*

(Matthew 16:21,22) *From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto His disciples, how that He must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. Then Peter took Him, and began to rebuke Him, saying, Be it far from Thee, Lord: this shall not be unto Thee.*

CHARACTER

4. Spokesman

(Matthew 16:16) *And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.*

(Matthew 18:21) *Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?*

(Matthew 19:27) *Then answered Peter and said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?*

CHARACTER

5. Courageous and solid after Pentecost

(Acts 5:27-29) And when they had brought them, they set them before the council: and the high priest asked them,

Saying, Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us.

Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.

SCANDAL

Note the serious, scandalous nature!

1. Need to guard

A. against the sins of the spirit

– Lies, anger, theft, corrupt words, bitterness, evil speaking and malice (Eph. 4:25-32).

B. sins of the flesh

– Adultery, sexual sins, uncleanness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, strife, rebellion, envying, murder, drunkenness and revelings (Gal. 5:19-26).

SCANDAL

2. Did not lose salvation

- A. Salvation is by the grace of God (Eph. 2:8,9; 2 Cor. 7:10).
- B. Loss of joy, fellowship and testimony (Psalm 51:12)

SCANDAL

1. Victim of the attack of Satan –

(Luke 22:31) *“And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat.”*

A. Solemn Warnings

(Ephesians 6:12) *For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.*

B. Trying to thwart God’s plan – Paul, thorn in the flesh, messenger; Potiphar’s wife to trap Joseph; Haman to destroy Israel in days of Esther, the Queen.

RESTORATION

2. Jesus' knowledge and permission

- A. Satan limited by God's care
- B. Permission with holy reasons – example of Joseph (Gen. 50:20) – character growing
- C. Need not sin – *“And He came unto the disciples, and found them asleep, and said unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with Me one hour? Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”* (Matt. 26:40,41).

RESTORATION

3. Carnal nature, friendly to sin

- A. Bad enough, enemy outside; worse, the enemy within, carnal nature
- B. Tempted – *“But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it brings forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, brings forth death”* (James 1:14,15).
- C. Starve the old man! Feed the new man!

RESTORATION

4. Overpowering circumstances: sorrow, discouragement

- A. Could not understand why Jesus had to die
- B. Heart-broken, sorrowful
- C. Took sword, using own courage and strength

5. Resources Unused

- A. Lack of prayer
- B. Put on the armour of God – girdle of truth, breastplate of righteousness, shoes of the Gospel, shield of faith, helmet of salvation, sword of Spirit, praying always. (Eph. 6:10-20)
- C. Peter's self-confidence (Matt. 26:33-35).

RESTORATION

6. Sat down with wrong company (Psalm 1).

- A. Wrong place (high priest's home, Jn. 18:18,25)
- B. Wrong fire and crowd – warmed himself – false fire.
- C. Examples: Samson and Delilah; Lot in Sodom

RESTORATION

1. Prayer of the Lord

(Luke 22:31,32) *“And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.”*

- A. The Lord’s Unfinished Work (Heb. 4:14-16; 7:25; cf. Rom. 8:34). Prayer!
- B. Pray for one another – prayer is love on its knees!
Protection! Provision!

RESTORATION

2. Peter had new growth.

- A. Wept bitterly (Luke 22:62) – did not want to sin, and was distressed after sinning. 2 Cor. 7:10 – godly sorrow
- B. Lot in Sodom (2 Peter 2:7,8); David in Psalm 51 (Could sin but no enjoyment).

RESTORATION

3. God's circumstances – rooster and fish

- A. God used animals in the past – Balaam and ass; Elijah and ravens
- B. Jesus personally sought out Peter (Jn. 21:15-19).
 - 1). Back to the first love – do you love ME? (Rev. 2:4)
 - 2). Back to God's heart – Feed My lambs! Feed My sheep!

OUR RESPONSE

1. Do you love me more than these?
Feed My lambs.
2. Do you love Me?
Feed My sheep.
3. Do you love Me?
Feed My sheep.

RESTORATION

Restored to leadership and preaching.

1. Preached boldly after Pentecost
2. Preached to the Gentiles (Acts 10)
3. Wrote 1 and 2 Peter (Warnings of Satan 1 Peter 5:8,9, of trials 1 Peter 1:6,7)

(1 Peter 5:8) Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walks about, seeking whom he may devour: (1 Peter 5:9) Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.

REFLECTIONS

1. No matter what my previous experiences, Jesus can use me to serve Him.

Am I yielding to Him as He transforms me and use me?

(Romans 12:2) And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

REFLECTIONS

2. It takes time and events to become what He desires for my maturity. What steps am I taking to forget the past and then to reach upward?

(Philippians 3:13,14) Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

REFLECTIONS

3. What changes have taken place in my life since I became a Christian?
4. What changes does Jesus still need to make? My goals? My priorities? My basic motivation? My attitude to God, self and others?

ASSIGNMENTS

1. WHAT THREE LESSONS HAVE I LEARNT FROM THE STUDIES?
Please be detailed and specific.
2. WHAT WILL BE THREE BLESSINGS TO SHARE IN MY LIFE AND MY MINISTRY?
To whom and how?



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