

EASTER SUNDAY

Easter

Pastor Miles McPherson Apr 1, 2018

Opening prayer: Have paper and pen ready or your electronic device capable of taking notes. Pray for God to speak to you. Listen for the voice of God to speak to you today about something in your life.

Ice Breaker: Pastor Miles began by proclaiming that "If Jesus was still dead, then we would be wasting our time (here in church)." Ask if there are appropriate or healthy time wasters. Share something you do that is a waste of your time.

Encouragement: The theme of this message is determining when Jesus was at His best. (Suggest form up into groups of 2 or 3) and share a moment when you were at your best.

SCRIPTURE: (suggest back together in a full group) Pastor Miles listed many times one could say that Jesus was at His best. The Bible records where Jesus has been active since Genesis 1:1. Some of the best moments include: Creation; making man and woman; creating the nation of Israel through Abraham; all the miracles in the desert; (Angel of the Lord in Old Testament is Jesus); Jesus' first 30 years of life when He never sinned; three years of ministry performing many miracles; destroying the works of the devil; dying on the cross; rising from the dead; providing hope of eternal life.

READ Luke 22:54-62 When have you 'followed Jesus at a distance', waiting to see first if it was safe? How have we cursed or uttered oaths toward Jesus with our attitude or actions?

Note v61. Have you ever been caught saying something that was not true about someone, and then realized that person heard you? How did you restore the relationship?

READ John 21:3-14 Can you think of why Peter jumped into the water with all his clothes on instead of sailing the short distance to the shore? (Hint: it does not say why, but would you rather apologize in private or in front of others?)

The writer John uses very specific, descriptive language in his Gospel. What kind of fire did Jesus make? There is only one other time in the Bible when this specific kind of fire was mentioned. When was it? (hint: see John 18:18). Try and imagine how Peter felt sitting around that same kind of fire at breakfast. Does God give us second chances? Do we take them? Why?

READ John 21:15-17 Pastor Miles said Jesus was at His best when He restored Peter and established him to a position of leadership. Why would Jesus restore Peter in front of the others?

The word "love" in this passage has different meanings. Look up these passages in a reference which contains translations into the original language such as Blue Letter Bible. In v15, 16 note Jesus uses *agapao* (agape) meaning unconditional or dearly love while Peter responds with *phileo* meaning like as in friendship or to be fond of.

Now, in v17 Jesus changes His word to meet Peter where Peter was coming from. Jesus uses *phileo*, and Peter uses that word for the third time. If we substitute these meanings, the conversation can be paraphrased like this:

Jesus: Peter, do you unconditionally love me? Peter: Lord, you know I am your friend.

Jesus: Peter, do you unconditionally love me? Peter: Lord, you know I am your friend.

Jesus: Peter, do you like me a lot? Peter: Lord, you know everything. I do like you a lot.

Even though Peter was aware of Jesus great love and power, Peter was not yet ready to pledge unconditional or unselfish love to the Lord.

When we encounter a stubborn brother or sister, how do we respond to them?

How has the Lord met you where you were at in terms of being in relationship with Him?

For this question, suggest breaking into groups of 2 and share with each other.

What area is the Lord asking you to respond to Him with your unconditional love?

What did Jesus mean by telling Peter "Feed My lambs."?

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Have you ever felt that God was not or cannot forgive you?

Jesus forgave Peter for denying Him and then put Peter in a place of leadership. Have you held a grudge toward someone who has wronged you?

Next Steps:

Pastor Miles has been doing a series on prayer all year. We don't pray unless we are asking for something we can't do ourselves. Pray for a revival in our church, city, county and beyond.

Notes:
