

Sermon based on the first third of the "Grace" booklet: realprayer.org/en/grace

Liturgist Scripture: [John 21:1-17](#) NIV (online links contain scripture)

We have heard numerous individual scriptures about Peter. This morning, we are going to attempt to tie them together and see if they relate to one another.

1. [Matthew 14:22-33](#) Peter loved and trusted Jesus with his life. None of the other disciples got out of the boat in rough seas to walk on the water.
2. [Matthew 16: 21-23](#) Jesus explained to his disciples that He must suffer, be killed, and that He would be raised on the third day. *Peter rejected this teaching* and rebuked Jesus Christ for having said it.
Peter's "humanistic thinking of the moment" refused to take into account that "God has an agenda" and that God has a plan for mankind.
3. [Matthew 17:1-8](#) is readily recognized for Peter asking Jesus if he should set up shelters for Christ, Moses, and Elijah. However, the important portion of this scripture included that **God the Father** spoke from a cloud telling Peter and others to listen to Jesus. *Did this message from the **God of the Universe** redirect Peter's thinking from the "here and now?" Or, was Peter undeterred from thinking that he would use any means necessary to protect Jesus Christ?*
4. [Matthew 26: 31-35](#) Peter stated, "Even if all fall away on account of you, I never will." Jesus response was to inform Peter that he would deny Christ three times that same night.
5. [Luke 22: 54-62](#) Upon the third denial, Christ looked straight at Peter. Peter left and wept bitterly.
6. Peter's grief singled out the latest incident. Peter still failed to recognize that the actual problem was not going to God or His Son for direction.
7. [In Matthew 16:23](#) Jesus even used as strong a language as, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns." Despite all of these ongoing warnings, Peter was determined to rely upon himself, for he intended to protect Jesus Christ.

8. [John 18: 8-11](#) Peter ended up using a sword to cut off the ear of the servant who was among those arresting Jesus.
9. Common sense may conclude that anyone who cut off the servant's ear by purposely swinging a sword in this manner had intentions to continue to thrash that sword into human flesh until he deterred the arrest of Jesus or Peter himself was slain. If others joined in, what might the end result be?
10. Had "doing what Peter thought was best" played out, History may only remembered it to be a day of violence which would have damage the spread of Christianity.
11. Thank-goodness in [Luke 22:51](#) upon that first swing of the sword, Jesus told Peter "no more of this" and healed that servant's ear.
12. Because of Christ's divine intervention, that day turned out to be known throughout history as the day Jesus Christ submitted himself before man as a sacrifice so that mankind would have a path to salvation.
13. Peter like many modestly mature Christians are willing to die for Jesus Christ, but have yet to learn there is value in "how to live" for Jesus Christ.
14. Despite Peter's monumental blunders; Jesus Christ did not give up on Peter, but continued to educate Peter toward seeking "God's path for direction." That brings us up to today's scripture from the Liturgist.
15. In [John 21:1-17](#) With all the blunders that Peter made, this caused insecurity. How tempting would it have been to just go back to a peaceful career in fishing? When Peter got into the boat that night, some other disciples with careers in fishing that also got into the boat, likely had the same temptation to return to fishing. Reality was that their leader, Jesus Christ, would soon be leaving them.
16. If Peter and others returned to their routine of fishing, what effect would it have on the GREAT COMMISSION in sharing Jesus Christ throughout the world?

17. If this was not a real risk, why else would Jesus ask Peter, “Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?” referring to that catch of 153 fish.
18. When Jesus asked Simon Peter that second and third time, “Do you LOVE me?” what pivotal moment of learning was Christ creating in Peter?
19. Let’s look to the Greatest Commandment in Mark 12:30, Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.
20. The Bible verses we went over showed us that Peter loved Jesus with all of his mind and heart. When Peter swung that sword, he was prepared to give all of his mental resolve and physical strength to that misguided effort. (pause)
21. So, when Jesus asked, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?” what kind of love was Peter lacking?
22. “To love God with all of one’s soul” creates a spiritual love to do things God’s way rather than assuming “we know what is best.” It is a love for God’s agenda for our lives. It is a love for His will, that of asking God in prayer that we seek His plan in our lives.
23. Once Peter learned this, he went on to live a life that Honored God. Peter did go on to feed Christ’s sheep as He became a part of the Great Commission. Peter’s death was one of humility which glorified God as portrayed in John 21:18-19 and the Petrine Cross. Peter’s writings in the bible are still influencing hearts to this day.
24. For some just learning to love God with all of their mind and heart may fill up their plate. However, it is important to know that spiritual learning does not end there. **Prayer** can take us to a love of God where our soul can create a burning love to fulfill God’s agenda within our lives. Such grace can create a life that honors our Heavenly Father.
25. Might we close in prayer. Dear Heavenly Father, might you teach us to include in our prayer, to love you divinely with all of our soul, that we may be more closely guided by your Spirit to be led by your will. As in the prayer that you taught us we pray... (The Lord’s prayer)