

Feed My Sheep.

John 21:15 - 17 *"So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. (16) He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. (17) He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep."*

Here in Chapter 21 Jesus had prepared a meal for several of His disciples. John 21:9 - 12 *"As soon then as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread. (10) Jesus saith unto them, Bring of the fish which ye have now caught. (11) Simon Peter went up, and drew the net to land full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty and three: and for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken. (12) Jesus saith unto them, Come and dine. And none of the disciples durst ask him, Who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord."*

The Lord Jesus Himself prepared a meal for these disciples. In the book of John, three "invitations" stand out in John's Gospel: "Come and see" (John 1:39); "Come and drink" (John 7:37); and "Come and dine" (John 21:12). As Pastors and Ministers and even teachers, we must remember our work, it is to feed God's sheep. **What an important work the Lord has entrusted into our hands. What a responsibility we have to the Shepherd of the sheep and the Head of our churches.** We must always remember, this is the Lord's work, I am just a chosen vessel **with a very large responsibility**. The local church is the seminary of divine learning, a place **God has chosen our table for our spiritual food to be served**. The Lord wrote in **Acts 17:11** *"These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that **they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.**"* That is, the people at Berea were more noble than the people in Thessalonica, therefore the church sent Paul and Silas to them. Why was Berea better. *"...they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so."* The churches were Jewish churches, so Paul and Silas were perfect for this task. As Ministers, Pastors, and teachers it is our Job to feed the Lord's sheep **with Truth**, and their job is to study to show themselves approved to God. Not being afraid of the belief of the world, not being demonized by people to support the error of the world. Paul wrote in **Romans 12:1 - 2** *"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. (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.**" This is not just to the membership or Christians in general, but also to Ministers, Teachers, and Pastors, **those in charge of the feeding.** We all must answer to Jesus Christ, He will be our Judge, we must not seek to please the world or man, but God. **Galatians 1:9 - 10** "As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. (10) For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, **I should not be the servant of Christ.**"

A. We must love the Lord and realize **what is means to love Him.**

1. Many talk a tall talk about loving the Lord, **but listen to the bible.**

- a. **John 14:20 – 21, 23** "At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you. (21) He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. (23) Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." **What a blessing!**
- b. God's word in Truth is our feeding trough, it is our textbook for our seminary of divine education. As Pastors we are in charge of making sure it is kept as Truth. Proper feed must be put into the trough. **That Feed is Truth!**

2. God commands that we love Jesus, **but just how much.**

- a. **Mark 12:30** "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment." If we follow this verse, then there is no love for any other. No room for falling.
- b. "with all thy heart" - In sincerity, never dividing our affections.
- c. "with all thy soul" – with every breath of your being.
- d. "with all thy mind" - That is with every stage of your thinking.
- e. "and with all thy strength" with every muscle in your body, **never give one inch.**

B. We are commanded to continually take care of God's sheep with the same love. **Acts 20:28**

"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, **to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.**"

1. Taking care of the flock is proper feed in their spiritual trough. God has placed us Pastors over His flock, always remember, **the church is the Lord's people**.
 2. Remember the Lord's love for the flock. **Ephesians 5:25 - 27** "*Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; (26) That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, (27) That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.*" The Lord loves His churches with the same love He commands us to love Him. He sanctifies His body by the truth of His word, which we feed them. **That thru our feeding He might purify and purge the church of all error and sin. What a Blessing to us.**
- C. The Lord said, "*Feed my sheep.*"
1. The word "feed" means - to tend as a shepherd. This is why we are called under-shepherds, we are shepherds under the Shepherd. We must tend to them as much as Jesus would.
 2. The feeding is not anything **more or less than a trough filled with biblical truth**. Just as the Lord's Supper is not about a meal, **but the true ingredients representing the Lord's body and blood**. False ingredients accomplish nothing, just as fake food in the trough accomplishes nothing.
 3. Jesus said, "My Sheep" John **10:26 - 28** "*But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. (27) My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: (28) And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.*"
 - a. The church is God's flock, give that some very needed thought.
 - b. **1 Peter 5:2 - 3** "***Feed the flock of God** which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; (3) Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.*"
 - c. A good balanced scriptural diet makes them mature and grow into elders spiritually.
 - d. A good feeding makes them able to feast on the meat of the word or strong doctrine, not just milk. Like the church at Corinth, 1 Cor. 3:1 – 7, **We will read Verse 2** "*I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.*" **How sad!!!**
 4. **Pastors need to understand**, as important as they are to the church, they are not the center of the church.

- a. **1 Timothy 6:5 - 6** "*Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself. (6) But godliness with contentment is great gain.*" - True contentment comes from godliness in the heart, not wealth in the hand.
- b. A person who depends on material things for peace and assurance will never be satisfied, for material things have a way of losing their appeal. We always want more.
- c. We need to remember what Paul wrote in **1 Timothy 6:7** "*For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.*"
- d. Beloved, our reward is given by Jesus in our judgment, not by earthly treasures.
- e. Let us never forget our work and what the Lord expects of us and demands of us.