

Episode #2-32 – John’s Postscript: What Now?

I. The purpose of the gospel of John is to produce believers in the fact that Jesus is the Christ, the One anointed by God to be the Savior of the world, and that Jesus is the Son of God, God represented in human form.

II. The book of John is completed in chapter 20:30-31. John states his premise, and its conclusion. If the book has achieved its purpose, its reader now believes that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and has life through His name. Why is there a chapter 21? To answer the new believer’s question: what now? And to answer it through the example of Peter.

III. John 21:15-23. The Lord restores Peter.

A. V.15. The Lord seems to walk apart with Peter (v.20.) Does Peter love Him more than the other disciples? The Lord uses the word *agapas* = a self-sacrificing love, the highest form of love. Before, Peter would have said “Yes!” Mark 14:29. Yet now he realizes he does not love the Lord more than others. He uses the word *philo* = friendship love. The Lord urges him then to feed his “lambs” = new believers needing guidance and teaching from Peter.

B. V.16. The Lord again asks him if he agape loves Him? But not more than others this time. He once claimed this! John 13:37. When the time came, he did not! So Peter just says he loves Him as a friend. This time “tend” = “shepherd,” sheep = adults. He wants Peter to be shepherding even mature believers. As we mature, we do this too!

C. V.17. Once more the Lord asks if Peter loves Him, but this time He uses *philo*. Peter has been saying this, but surely a friend would not deny he ever knew you! This is what has been tormenting Peter. Has no evidence from his actions of even of being a friend to the Lord. All he can do is appeal to the Lord’s knowledge. Lord commands him again. Peter must look at himself realistically from now on. As must we!

D. V.18. Now the Lord gives him reassurance. He speaks of him being led away for execution, specifically crucifixion. Peter will give his life for the Lord!

E. V.19. This was great encouragement for Peter. The Lord accepts him back, reveals he will give his life for Him. This is encouragement for us: dying a martyr’s death is a great privilege for a believer, and we should be honored to do so, if called upon.

F. V.20. This refers to John the author again, speaking of himself as if of someone else.

G. V.21. Peter is feeling good, but he now wonders about John. Will he be martyred too?

H. V.22. The Lord turns his focus back to his own service for the Lord. This is what is important. Lesson of the chapter: don’t focus on believers around us. Our main concern is to follow Him, whether others do or not (usually not!)

I. V.23. A misconception about John: that he would not die. John clears it up: this is not what the Lord said. Yet some ignore this verse, and still get it wrong!!!

IV. John 21:24-25. John’s closing statements.

A. V.24. John reveals his authorship, but still acts like he is talking about someone else! John is an eyewitness, and inspired by the Holy Spirit. That the Lord is the true Author of this book and so all it says is reliable is a crucial fact to know so we can follow John 20:31. We who believe know his testimony is true!

B. V.25. John was the first gospel written. These words leave plenty of room for Matthew, Mark, and Luke. This does not mean they would cover the earth in books. God’s works are infinite: there is no room in the minds and hearts of men of this

world to receive them! Someday, perhaps we will be ready, but for now, this is all we get, and so John closes out the book.

V. Conclusion: The Lord taught Peter to put all confidence in Him when he had lost all confidence in himself. We too like Peter must look at ourselves realistically. We too, as we mature in the Lord, must be willing to feed the Lord's sheep. It is a privilege to die for Him, not something to dread at all costs. We should not focus on others, but on our own walk with the Lord, whether others are walking correctly or not. Let those of us who now believe learn all these lessons, and do so!