

# GOD LOVES TO TURN FAILURE INTO FAITHFULNESS

JOHN 21:12-17

Sermon Outline & Devotional Guide

March 22, 2026

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† John 21:12-17, “Jesus said to them, “Come and have breakfast.” None of the disciples ventured to question Him, “Who are You?” knowing that it was the Lord. <sup>13</sup>Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and the fish likewise. <sup>14</sup>This is now the third time that Jesus was manifested to the disciples, after He was raised from the dead. <sup>15</sup>So when they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, ‘Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these?’ He said to Him, ‘Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.’ He said to him, ‘Tend My lambs.’ <sup>16</sup>He said to him again a second time, ‘Simon, son of John, do you love Me?’ He said to Him, ‘Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.’ He said to him, ‘Shepherd My sheep.’ <sup>17</sup>He said to him the third time, ‘Simon, son of John, do you love Me?’ Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, ‘Do you love Me?’ And he said to Him, ‘Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You.’ Jesus said to him, “Tend My sheep” (NASB).

## In John 21:15, Who Are “These”?

1. “Do you love me more than these?” could refer to the family \_\_\_\_\_ of fishing with nets and boats.

- The word Jesus used here for love was [ἀγαπάω; agapaō]. This is the highest love of the will that loves with a total sacrificial \_\_\_\_\_ no matter what.
- Peter painfully aware of his failure in denying Jesus and getting impatient in waiting on the Lord responded with a different Greek word to express love — [φιλέω; fileō]. This word refers to the affectionate love of \_\_\_\_\_, new courtships. It is the word used to express the love for friends you see as \_\_\_\_\_.

2. “Do you love me more than these?” could refer to the other \_\_\_\_\_.

3. “Do you love me more than these?” could refer to do you love Me more than these \_\_\_\_\_ love Me?”

† Matthew 26:31-35, “Then Jesus said to them, ‘You will all fall away because of Me this night, for it is written, ‘I will strike down the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered.’ <sup>32</sup>But after I have been raised, I will go ahead of you to Galilee.’ <sup>33</sup>But Peter said to Him, “Even though all may fall away because of You, I will never fall away.’ <sup>34</sup>Jesus said to him, ‘Truly I say to you that this very night, before a rooster crows, you will deny Me three times.’ <sup>35</sup>Peter said to Him, ‘Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You.’ All the disciples said the same thing too” (NASB).

## When You Fail The Lord, You Get To Faithfulness This Way

1. Remember to tend to the sheep because they belong to \_\_\_\_\_, not the \_\_\_\_\_. (John 21:15c).

- The word tend in the Greek New Testament is [βόσκω; boskō] and it means to feed. The word for lambs is [ἀρνίον; arnion]. The word feed is what is in the Greek we call a present tense expressing continuing action — continuous feeding. Why? “Lamb” here refers to the newborn, young, immature and vulnerable. Stop feeling yourself self-pity and start feeding Christ’s sheep. The emphasis here by Jesus is on making and maturing \_\_\_\_\_.

2. Remember it is possible to be in the church and never make a \_\_\_\_\_. In verse 15 — tend, vs. 16, shepherd, and verse 17, tend/feed (John 21:16-17).

- The word “shepherd” Jesus used in John 21:17 is the Greek New Testament word [ποιμαίνω; poimainō]. This word refers to nurturing, growing, protecting, shielding and helping to get to greater spiritual \_\_\_\_\_.

† John 1:40-42, “One of the two who heard John speak and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother. <sup>41</sup>He found first his own brother Simon and said to him, ‘We have found the Messiah’ (which

translated means Christ). <sup>42</sup>He brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, 'You are Simon the son of John; you shall be called Cephas' (which is translated Peter)" (NASB).

- In John 1:42, it says that Jesus "looked" at Peter. This is the Greek New Testament word [ἐμβλέπω; emblepō]. This means more than "to see or saw." It was used to describes a concentrated, intent gaze - you could render it, "Jesus not only looked at him, but he looked \_\_\_\_\_ him."
- Jesus told Peter to "tend" His sheep in John 21:17. This time Jesus is reminding Peter and us that as we make disciples we are to feed them biblical truth and make sure we do not cause them to \_\_\_\_\_ in their faith by our own failures.

+ Matthew 22:37, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind" (NASB).

### **What Are The Characteristics Of Brokenness?**

**1. Being broken means having the \_\_\_\_\_ that Jesus Christ knows the whole sum about you and He still loves you unconditionally.**

+ Psalms 139:1-4, "O Lord, you have examined my heart and know everything about me. <sup>2</sup>You know when I sit down or stand up. You know my thoughts even when I'm far away. <sup>3</sup>You see me when I travel and when I rest at home. You know everything I do! <sup>4</sup>You know what I am going to say even before I say it, Lord" (NLT).

**2. Being broken means understanding that unless there is \_\_\_\_\_ change, you will never resemble the character of Christ.**

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

**3. Being broken means being \_\_\_\_\_ by your failure and at the same time His faithfulness; being \_\_\_\_\_ by your total lack, and at the same time, His total love.**

+ 1 Peter 5:5b, "Clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, for God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble" (NASB).

+ 1 Peter 3:18, "But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; to Him be the glory, both now and forever. Amen" (NASB).

+ Psalms 51:17, "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; A broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise" (NASB).

### **Next Steps Devotional Guide**

1. Failure and sin are experienced by everyone. God intentionally chose to include the failures of His people in the Bible. In what ways is this an encouragement to you?
2. If you say you love the Lord, would you leave everything material to follow Him if He asked you? Would you say you have more of an affectionate friendship love for Jesus or a total sacrificial commitment love for Jesus?
3. If the Lord were to ask you, "Do you love Me more than these?" What would "these" be for you?
4. To move from failure to faithfulness, you have to be willing to change for Christ. Are you willing? It is important for us to take personal responsibility for our failures and sins so that we do not cause someone new in the faith to stumble. Who has caused you to stumble spiritually and how did it affect you?
5. A. W. Tozer said, "It is doubtful whether God can bless a man greatly until He has broken him deeply." Do you agree with this? Why or why not?
6. We looked at 3 characteristics of brokenness. Which of these should be a priority in your life now? God loves to use spiritually broken people. Why do you think this is so? Would you allow God to use yours? Why or why not?
7. Read 1 Cor. 11:30 and 2 Cor. 12. The Apostle Paul allowed God to use his weaknesses and brokenness for the glory of God and to make disciples. How could God use yours?