

Study Guide — *Battered But Not Broken*

John 21:15–19

Big Idea: Jesus restores battered believers by drawing their hearts back to Him, revealing their affections, and reminding them of their purpose.

1. Partake the Word (Receive & Feed)

Primary Passage

John 21:15–19 (CSB)

Key Supporting Passages

- Luke 22:54–62 — Peter’s denial
- Luke 9:23 — Taking up the cross daily
- 1 Peter 5:1–4 — Shepherding God’s flock
- Psalm 51:10–12 — Restoration after failure
- Revelation 2:1–5 — Returning to first love

Key Greek Words

ἀγαπάω (*agapaō*) — “Love”

A sacrificial, devoted, self-giving love. Jesus uses this word when asking Peter about wholehearted devotion to Him.

φιλέω (*phileō*) — “Love/Friendship”

A word carrying affection, warmth, and deep friendship. Peter answers humbly rather than boastfully.

ποιμαίνω (*poimainō*) — “Shepherd”

To guide, protect, nourish, guard, and care for the flock. Shepherding is both protective and nurturing.

ἀκολουθέω (*akoloutheō*) — “Follow”

To accompany, attach oneself to walk behind as a disciple, and surrender one’s life to another’s leadership.

2. Probe the Word (Study & Examine)

I. Jesus Desires Our Affection Before Our Activity

Jesus begins with Peter's heart before addressing Peter's ministry.

Reflection:

- Have I become more focused on doing things for Jesus than being with Jesus?

- What currently reveals where my deepest affection truly rests?

II. Love for Jesus Produces Responsibility Toward People

The evidence of genuine love for Christ is seen in how we handle people.

Reflection:

- Am I nourishing people with truth or merely opinions?

- Do I treat people as projects to manage or souls to shepherd?

III. Jesus Lovingly Exposes What Competes for Our Heart

The third question grieved Peter because grace was reaching beneath the surface.

Reflection:

- What competing affection has slowly distracted my heart from Jesus?

- Has failure revealed pride or self-reliance in me?

IV. “Follow Me” Is the Call of Every Disciple

Jesus did not call Peter to self-improvement but to surrender.

Reflection:

- What area of my life is hardest to surrender fully to Christ?

- Am I following Jesus personally or merely admiring Him from a distance?

3. Practice the Word (Live It Out)

This week:

- Spend intentional time with Jesus before rushing into activity.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to expose any competing affection in your heart.
- Encourage or spiritually nourish someone with Scripture this week.
- Identify one area where Jesus is asking for deeper surrender and obedience.
- Revisit the fires of failure in your life and invite Jesus into them again with grace instead of shame.

4. Pray & Praise Him (Depend & Declare)

Prayer

Lord Jesus,

Thank You for pursuing battered believers with grace. Thank You that failure is not the end of my story when You are present. Restore my affection for You. Remove competing loves from my heart. Teach me to shepherd people with tenderness and truth. And give me grace to follow You daily, carrying my cross with humility and joy. In Your Name, Jesus, I pray, amen. May it be.

Praise

Praise Jesus that:

- Grace has the final word.
- Failure does not disqualify surrendered believers.
- The Good Shepherd still restores wandering hearts.
- Christ calls us not merely to serve Him, but to follow Him.
- Battered does not mean abandoned.