

STEP 7 – LETTING GOD TRANSFORM ME

JOHN 21 – SUMMARY*

It was early morning on the Sea of Galilee. The night had been long and unproductive. Peter and the others had gone back to what they knew—back to fishing. They pushed out onto the water in the dark, cast their nets again and again, and caught nothing.

As the sun began to rise, a figure stood on the shore, just a silhouette in the morning light. He called out to them across the water, “Friends, have you caught any fish?”

“No,” they answered.

“Throw your net on the right side of the boat,” the man said, “and you’ll find some.”

They did, and suddenly the net was so full they couldn’t haul it in. In that moment, John recognized what was happening. “It is the Lord,” he said.

When Peter heard that, he didn’t wait. He threw on his outer garment and jumped into the water, swimming hard toward the shore while the others followed in the boat, dragging the heavy net behind them.

When they arrived, they saw a charcoal fire burning. Fish were already cooking over the coals, and bread was nearby. Jesus said, “Bring some of the fish you’ve just caught.” Peter climbed back into the boat and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish—153 of them. Even with so many, the net was not torn.

“Come and have breakfast,” Jesus said.

None of them asked who He was. They knew.

Jesus took the bread and gave it to them. Then He gave them the fish. It was the third time He had appeared to them since rising from the dead. When they had finished eating, Jesus turned to Peter.

“Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?” He asked.

“Yes, Lord,” Peter said. “You know that I love you.”

“Feed my lambs,” Jesus told him.

Again, Jesus asked, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?”

“Yes, Lord,” Peter said. “You know that I love you.”

“Take care of my sheep,” Jesus said.

A third time He asked him, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?”

Peter was hurt that Jesus asked him the question a third time. “Lord, you know all things,” he said. “You know that I love you.”

“Feed my sheep,” Jesus said.

Then Jesus spoke of the days ahead, of a life that would stretch Peter and lead him further than he could yet imagine. And with that, He gave him a simple invitation, the same kind of invitation He had given years before, along another shoreline:

“Follow me.”

*Please read John 21 for the full story.

THINKING IT THROUGH

John 21 is a recommissioning of Peter—a “re-call” to follow Jesus.

Peter had followed before. He had promised to follow no matter what. But then came that dramatic, public failure. Around a charcoal fire, under pressure and fear, he denied even knowing Jesus. Three times. A crowing rooster marked the moment. See Matthew 26:69–75, Mark 14:66–72, Luke 22:54–62, and John 18:15–27.

Then came crucifixion. Silence. Long hours to think. Peter had plenty to relive. Moments of courage and moments of collapse. Walking on water... but sinking. “You are the Messiah”... followed by, “I don’t know the man.”

And then Sunday morning. When the news came that the tomb was empty, one small detail stands out. The message was, “Go tell His disciples *and Peter*.” Peter. Jesus made sure his name was included. Even in the aftermath of failure, grace was already reaching for him.

Still, Peter didn’t quite know where he stood. So he did what many of us do when we’re confused, ashamed, or unsure. He went back to what was familiar.

“I’m going fishing.”

Back to the old life. Back to what he knew. Back to what felt safe. And Jesus met him there. On that shoreline, over breakfast by a charcoal fire—the same kind of fire Peter once stood beside when he denied Him—Jesus began to restore him. Not with condemnation. Not with a lecture. With gentle, probing questions.

“Do you love Me?”

Three times. One for every denial. Not to shame him, but to heal him. And then Jesus did something remarkable. He didn’t just forgive Peter. He gave him purpose that comes from his identity. He’s no longer a fisherman but a shepherd. He’s no longer a failure but a follower.

This is the heart of **Step 7** in **RE:GENERATION**: *We humbly ask God’s Spirit to change our hearts and minds in order to follow Christ fully.*

Peter’s “re-call” started with Jesus waiting for him on the shore. A quiet moment around a fire. Honest questions that reached into the ugliest parts of Peter’s story—not to reopen the wound, but to heal it. Jesus reminded Peter who he was becoming. Then, after hinting at a difficult road ahead, He said the same words He had spoken years earlier:

“Follow Me.”

And Peter did. He wasn’t perfect. But he was transformed. Tradition tells us he followed Jesus all the way to the end, even to death by crucifixion. The man who once denied Jesus became a man who would not turn away again. That is Step 7.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

What failure or regret still echoes in your mind and quietly shapes how you see yourself today?

What shortcoming, attitude, or habit do you most need God’s Spirit to change in you right now?

What might it look like, in this season of your life, to truly respond to His invitation: “Follow Me”?

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord Jesus, thank You for meeting us with grace, even in our failures. You know our hearts and the places where we still need to grow. We humbly ask You to change us — soften what is hard, heal what is wounded, and shape us into people who follow You more fully. Remind us that we are not defined by our past, but by Your love. Help us to hear Your voice and respond with trust. Amen.