



Sermon Discussion Questions

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Series: Restored

Week 5: Restored from Shame

1. ICE BREAKER: Think about your favorite place in the world, the one that makes everything seem better. Share where that place is, and why.
2. Read our Scripture for this week, John 21:1-19:

¹Afterward Jesus appeared again to his disciples, by the Sea of Galilee.[a] It happened this way: ²Simon Peter, Thomas (also known as Didymus[b]), Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two other disciples were together. ³"I'm going out to fish," Simon Peter told them, and they said, "We'll go with you." So they went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.

⁴Early in the morning, Jesus stood on the shore, but the disciples did not realize that it was Jesus. ⁵He called out to them, "Friends, haven't you any fish?" "No," they answered.

⁶He said, "Throw your net on the right side of the boat and you will find some." When they did, they were unable to haul the net in because of the large number of fish.

⁷Then the disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" As soon as Simon Peter heard him say, "It is the Lord," he wrapped his outer garment around him (for he had taken it off) and jumped into the water. ⁸The other disciples followed in the boat, towing the net full of fish, for they were not far from shore, about a hundred yards. ⁹When they landed, they saw a fire of burning coals there with fish on it, and some bread.

¹⁰Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish you have just caught." ¹¹So Simon Peter climbed back into the boat and dragged the net ashore. It was full of large fish, 153, but even with so many the net was not torn. ¹²Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast." None of the disciples dared ask him, "Who are you?" They knew it was the Lord. ¹³Jesus came, took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. ¹⁴This was now the third time Jesus appeared to his disciples after he was raised from the dead.

¹⁵When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?" "Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my lambs."

¹⁶Again Jesus said, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Take care of my sheep." ¹⁷The third time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love me?" He said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my sheep."

¹⁸Very truly I tell you, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go." ¹⁹Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him, "Follow me!"

What stands out to you as you read this passage? Why do you think the other disciples traveled back to Capernaum with Simon Peter? What were they doing here? What questions do you have?

3. This week's message focuses on Jesus' disciple, Peter. Dr. Ellsworth Kalas described Peter by saying, "Peter was heroic one minute and cowardly the next. So well-meaning, so consumed by good intentions, but so terribly, terribly human."

Drawing upon what you know about Peter from the Scriptures, why do you think he was described in this way? Does this make Peter more or less relatable? Why?

4. Many people use the words guilt and shame interchangeably, but they are actually very different in how they affect our view of ourselves.

Define guilt and shame in your own words. How are the two different? How can guilt sometimes be helpful in our lives? Why is shame considered to always be the voice of the enemy?

5. Peter is hiding far away from Jerusalem, fishing on the Sea of Galilee, because he is overcome by shame. Shame is not a new experience for Peter. Read how Peter reacted to Jesus' initial call on his life in Luke 5:8, "When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus' knees and said, 'Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!'"

How do you see shame present in Peter's life in these words? Why would shame cause him to want to get as far away from Jerusalem as possible? What are some lies that Peter may be believing about himself?

6. In order to restore Peter from his shame, Jesus reminds Peter of who he is. Jesus does this first at the empty tomb (Mark 16:7), and then again on the Sea of Galilee, where he recreated the circumstances of his first call to Peter (Luke 5:4-6).

Discuss how these two events served to remind Peter of who he is. How would these moments have been significant to Peter? How does shame attack our identity? Share about a time when you feel Jesus has had to remind you of who you are.

7. Next, Jesus faces Peter's shame with him. Again, Jesus recreates moments in his conversation with Peter which mirror the worst moments of Peter's life - his denial of Jesus.

What were some of the elements that were mirrored in both stories? Why do you think Jesus did this? How do you think Peter was feeling? Is it easy or hard for you to face moments in your life that you are ashamed of, or wish hadn't happened? Why?

8. Finally, Jesus called Peter to follow him - again. In John 21:19b, Jesus says, "Follow me!"

What is the significance of this simple call to Peter? Why do you think Jesus asked Peter to follow Him again? Can you relate to the idea of needing to recommit to following Jesus? Have you ever experienced this personally? Describe what this feeling was like for you.

9. In Peter's "After" picture, we see that he is a pillar of the Jerusalem church. In Acts 2, on Pentecost, he stands up to preach to the crowd, and 3000 people are baptized. He is eventually martyred for his faith, proving that he does have the courage to give his life for his Lord.

Do you think Peter ever imagined that he could be restored so completely? Share something God has done in your own life that you never believed would be true of you.

10. PRACTICE: Gather something to write on and something to write with. Take a few moments individually to ask God to bring something to mind that you experience shame around. It could be a simple memory, or a season of your life. You don't need to share it with anyone. Write down a word or two that represents that memory to you.

Say a simple closing prayer together as a group, "Lord, I invite you into my shame. I invite you to redeem my shame. I invite you to restore me."

Take your paper home with you, and pray over it this week. Ask God to look at your shame with you, and to tell you the truth about it.