

## Do You Love Me?

### Scripture Reading — John 21:15-17

*“Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?”*

*John 21:15 —*

Considering the central place of love in our lives, it is not surprising that Jesus would press Peter with this question. Peter had denied Jesus three times when he found himself under questioning in the courtyard of the high priest during Jesus’ trial (John 18:15-27). Peter felt terrible after he had done that. Then Jesus died on the cross for our sins. That probably made Peter feel even worse.

Now Jesus was alive, raised from the dead by the power of God. And it was time for Peter to be restored as a disciple. So Jesus asked Peter three questions, paralleling his three denials. Each question centered on the same thing—the central thing in life, the central thing in the symbol of the cross.

“Simon son of John, do you love me ... ?” By asking this question three times, Jesus was urging Peter to look deep into his heart, to see whether his love for Christ was real. Before Peter could be restored to his place in the company of the disciples, before he would be fit to follow Christ and lead the church, he had to be changed in his heart. He had to love most the one he had denied.

So it is with us. On this Sunday, as we gather with other believers to be renewed in our discipleship, Jesus wants one thing more than anything else. He wants our love. Do we love him more than anything and anyone else?

### Prayer

*Holy Spirit, penetrate the layers of self-defense in our hearts so that we can learn the truth about how much we love Jesus. Then fill us with love for him. Amen.*

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