

# JOHN

## Chapter 21

### *Jesus Appears to Seven Disciples*

After this Jesus revealed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias, and he revealed himself in this way. 2 Simon Peter, Thomas (called the Twin), Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples were together. 3 Simon Peter said to them, “I am going fishing.” They said to him, “We will go with you.” They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing. 4 Just as day was breaking, Jesus stood on the shore; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. 5 Jesus said to them, **“Children, do you have any fish?”** They answered him, “No.” 6 He said to them, **“Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some.”** So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in, because of the quantity of fish. 7 That disciple whom Jesus loved therefore said to Peter, “It is the Lord!” When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment, for he was stripped for work, and threw himself into the sea. 8 The other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, but about a hundred yards off. 9 When they got out on land, they saw a charcoal fire in place, with fish laid out on it, and bread. 10 Jesus said to them, **“Bring some of the fish that you have just caught.”** 11 So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, 153 of them. And although there were so many, the net was not torn. 12 Jesus said to them, **“Come and have breakfast.”** Now none of the disciples dared ask him, “Who are you?” They knew it was the Lord. 13 Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and so with the fish. 14 This was now the third time that Jesus was revealed to the disciples after he was raised from the dead.

**21:1-2, 15-19** Chapter 21 of John’s Gospel is often seen as an epilogue, following as it does a rather satisfactory conclusion in 20:30–31. Near the beginning of the book, Jesus had called his first disciples—among them, Simon Peter (1:40–42). At the end of the Gospel, the risen Jesus appears to seven disciples and, in particular, to Simon Peter (vv 2–3). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 20, Part 2)

Much has happened between Jesus’ first call to Peter early in the Gospel and the renewal of this call in the last chapter (21:15–19). Above all, by highlighting Peter’s threefold response to Jesus (“Yes, Lord; you know that I love you,” vv 15–17), the Gospel writer draws attention implicitly to the disciple’s earlier infamous threefold denial of his Lord (18:15–18, 25–27). More important, the author wants to show how the risen Jesus ultimately restores Simon Peter in the call to be his disciple in the world so that he might again follow his Lord by bearing the cross (vv 18–19) in the work of feeding and tending his sheep (vv 15–17). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 20, Part 2)

**21:1-4** In the typical style of John this story is told in great detail. Most of the disciples present are mentioned by name. The key players in the dialog are Peter and John. John is only referred to as one of the sons of Zebedee – later called “the disciple whom Jesus loved” (v 7). The emphasis in this text is the presence of the resurrected Christ and all that He means for life. The miraculous catch of fish is not the primary focus. Although the resurrection has taken place, the fishermen still fish. Life goes on. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 11, Part 2)

**21:1** *Jesus revealed himself* – A key verb, *phaneroō*, “to reveal,” is used in v 1. “It is associated with the revelatory dimension of Jesus’ miracles at 2:11 and 9:3 and it is used to summarize the purpose of Jesus ministry at 1:31 and 17:6” (*The New Interpreter’s Bible*, vol 9 [Nashville: Abingdon, 1995] 856). The emphasis in this text is the presence of the resurrected Christ and all that he means for life. The miraculous catch of fish is not the primary focus. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 11, Part 2)

The disc[iples returned to Galilee after the appearance of Jesus to Thomas (Mt. 28:7). Jesus unveiled His glory and His triumph over death. John again uses the verb that described Jesus self-revelation at the wedding of Cana (John 2:11). (TLSB)

The word “appeared” is a verb that occurs nine times in this Gospel and seventeen times in John’s writings. They always denote the self-disclosure of Jesus to man. (Exegetical Notes – Buls)

*Sea of Tiberias*. See note on 6:1. (CSB)

**21:2** *Nathanael* – Since his call into ministry (1:45–50), this is the first time that Nathanael is mentioned by name. At his call Jesus said that he would “see greater things.” This certainly points in that direction. The account sounds somewhat like Lk 5:5, but they are not the same experience. Although the resurrection has taken place, the fishermen still fish. Life goes on. However, after a night of fishing, these experienced fishermen have caught nothing. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 11, Part 2)

*sons of Zebedee*. Not named in this Gospel (see Mt 4:21). (CSB)

*two others* – Never identified. (TLSB)

**21:3-14** Unlike in the Synoptic Gospels (Mt 4:18–22; Mk 1:16–20; Lk 5:1–11), John’s account of Jesus’ call to Peter and other disciples to follow him had not described them specifically as “fishers of men.” However, Luke’s account of Jesus’ call to Peter by the Lake of Gennesaret (Lk 5:1; cf. Jn 21:1, the Sea of Tiberias) after a lousy night of catching no fish, the great catch that followed after heeding Jesus’ words, and the commissioning of the disciple as one who “will be catching men” (Lk 5:10) has basically all the elements of John’s resurrection narrative here (esp. vv 3–8). The only exception is that in the Johannine account, Jesus is renewing his call to Peter (instead of calling him for the first time) and only describes this call implicitly as catching all kinds of fish (vv 5–6, 8, 10–11). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 20, Part 2)

The beloved disciple’s expression “It is the Lord!” (v 7) functions as a recognition of the risen Jesus’ presence in their midst through his words and works. Through his words, the Lord renews his call to the disciples and especially restores Peter to the community of the apostles. The Lord is also the one who blesses the catch, so that apart from Jesus, the ministry of the Church in the world bears no fruit. The implication is that the risen Lord will accompany his disciples as they go out into the world. The meal scene by the sea (vv 9–14) is a sign of table fellowship between Jesus and his disciples. Indeed, “come” is a typical call to discipleship used by Jesus (v 12, cf. 1:39). Discipleship is renewed and sustained by Jesus himself, who enters into fellowship with us and reveals himself to us as our Lord. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 20, Part 2)

As mentioned above, in John’s epilogue, Peter’s call is described more explicitly as a work of shepherding (vv 15–17). In the broader context of the resurrection appearances, the risen Jesus’ call to his disciples can be further described as a sending with authority into the world to remit

and retain sins (20:19–23). Such authority to absolve sins is certainly essential to being a disciple called to catch all kinds of fish (men) and feed the sheep (lambs). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 20, Part 2)

**21:3-4** Once more, this time in Galilee amid the everyday occupations of a fisherman, the disciples behold Jesus in the glory of His gracious lordship. (TLSB)

**21:3** *I am going fishing* – Life goes on. In fact when Jesus says “therefore go and make disciples” (Matthew 28:19) it means as you are going through daily life.

There is nothing in the context or Scripture to warrant accusing the disciples of weakness of faith or abandoning their Apostolic calling. In fact, the context indicates that they were where, and were doing precisely as, Jesus wanted them to be and do. (Exegetical Notes – Buls)

*that night.* Nighttime was favored by fishermen in ancient times (as Aristotle, e.g., informs us). (CSB)

**21:4-6** These verses detail the miracle catch of fish, which leads the disciples to the recognition of Jesus on the shore. Jesus calls the disciples *paidia*, “friends” or “children,” a word expressing familial intimacy. This is significant in light of Good Friday, the denial of Jesus by Peter, and the desertion of the disciples. This is a grace word, which speaks hope to all of us who have denied him. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 11, Part 2)

**21:4** *stood* – The same verb is used of Jesus in 20:19 and 26. He had gone before them to Galilee. He was already there. Now He makes Himself visible. (Exegetical Notes – Buls)

*did not know that it was Jesus.* Cf. Mary Magdalene. (CSB)

The fishermen did not recognize that the person on the shore was Jesus. The boat was 100 yards from shore (v. 8), and the light of day was still dim. (TLSB)

This might have been because of the misty dawning light and the distance between Him and the disciples. (PBC)

Lenski asks: “Did the morning haze on the water render sight indistinct? Did Jesus will not to be recognized at once? Or was his appearance quite different from the previous appearances?” The simple answer lies in the verb *phaneqoo* (manifested), twice is 1 and once in 14. They did not recognize Him until He will it. There is nothing in Scripture to warrant the idea that Jesus was becoming increasingly “heavenly” and therefore more difficult to recognize. Estin (was) in Greek indirect discourse always maintains the tense of the original direct discourse. (Exegetical Notes – Buls)

**21:5** *children* – This is the Greek word for a loving title for children in a close family relationship. This was extraordinary considering how the apostles had acted during Holy Week. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 11, Part 2)

Not a common form of address, but perhaps equivalent to present-day “boys” or “guys.” (TLSB)

Whether we translate “children” (KJV, RSV, NASB), “friends” (NEB, NIV), or “boys” (Beck), the point is that Jesus is very familiar with the disciples. (Exegetical Notes – Buls)

*do you have any fish* – Whether the question means “Haven’t you any fish?” or “haven’t you caught any fish?” The point is that He wants them to confess their need. (Exegetical Notes – Buls)

**21:6** *cast your net* – Jesus acts as a “spotter” from the shore, a strategy for identifying the movement of a shoal of fish. (TLSB)

Note the beautiful command and promise. They were instrumental in performing this miracle. They obeyed immediately and the miracle followed immediately. Many times in life the commands of the Lord seem foolish. But faithful obedience leads to carrying out His will and then we are astounded at what He accomplishes through us. It is remarkable that they obeyed before they recognized Him. That was true faith. Cf. Gal 2:20. (Exegetical Notes – Buls)

*unable to haul it in* – The Greek verb (drag) is used of dragging dead weight. They just could not do it. It shows the enormity of the catch. (Exegetical Notes – Buls)

**21:7-8** The great unexpected catch of fish enables John to recognize Jesus. Impulsive Peter is so excited he quickly puts on his outer garment, which had been removed for work, and jumps into the water. Typical Peter—everyone else comes to shore by boat—Peter by water. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 11, Part 2)

**21:7** *it is the Lord* – Reaction is prompted when Jesus’ Word produced the miraculous catch of fish. (TLSB)

Kretzmann quotes an old commentator: “John had the keener insight, Peter the greater and ardor.” But both show how wonderful the resurrected Lord was to them. To one He gave the ability of recognition, to the other the desire to come to Jesus. (Exegetical Notes – Buls)

*his outer garment*. It is curious that he put on this garment (the word appears only here in the NT) preparatory to jumping into the water. But Jews regarded a greeting as a religious act that could be done only when one was clothed. Peter may have been preparing himself to greet the Lord. (CSB)

The translations are interesting: RSV and NASB: “For he was stripped for work,” NIV: “For he had taken it (the coat) off,” Beck: “He put on the coat he had taken off.” (Exegetical Notes – Buls)

It was used as a coat to ward off the morning chill. (TLSB)

**21:8** *dragging the net* – They had been unable to drag the net into the boat and so they approach land dragging the net in the water. (Exegetical Notes – Buls)

**21:9** *fish...bread* – Same menu as at the feeding of 5000 (6:1-14) (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 11, Part 2)

Here is the second miracle. He has provided fire, fish and bread. (Exegetical Notes – Buls)

charcoal fire. Lit. “charcoal,” as in 18:18. (CSB).

This was a small, hot fire kindled expressly to make breakfast. Jesus was serving them again by providing fish and bread. (TLSB)

Jesus has prepared breakfast for his friends. The menu is the same as the feeding of the 5,000 (6:1–14). The catch of fish and the meal testify to the physical presence of Jesus. His resurrection was not just in the minds of his followers, nor was it the creation of a faithful few. Jesus is alive, physically alive! (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 11, Part 2)

**21:10** *bring some* – It surely does not mean that Jesus needed additional fish to prepare breakfast. Lenski’s explanation is that Peter is to throw back the little fish and bring only the larger ones. (Exegetical Notes – Buls)

**21:11** *Peter ... hauled the net ashore.* Appears to mean that Peter headed up the effort, for the whole group had not been able previously to haul the net into the boat (v. 6). (CSB)

Peter alone dragged the net on land, something which all of them had been unable to do while still out in the water, i.e., to drag the net into the boat. Kretzmann: “His love for the Master and the excitement of the occasion gave him almost superhuman strength.” (Exegetical Notes – Buls)

153 – Lutheran commentators list both ancient and modern idea of symbolism in the number 153 and then reject them. The number shows how bountiful God’s gifts are and the precision with which the Lord has recorded His Word. (Exegetical Notes – Buls)

*the net was not torn.* In contrast to the nets mentioned in Lk 5:6. (CSB)

The miracle continues to grow. First catching fish at the wrong time, then catching so many and finally this fact. It shows us that we should not be surprised at what God can do through us.

An astonishing catch – so impressive that the disciples actually counted them. Additional details enhance the extraordinary nature of the catch. Cf Luke 5:1-11. (TLSB)

**21:12** *have breakfast* – This is the Greek word used elsewhere for a main meal (Lk 11:37). (TLSB)

Again the Lord commands and gives. What He commands He Himself bestows. (Exegetical Notes – Buls)

*knew it was the Lord* – Like other post-resurrection appearances, this one awed the disciples. (TLSB)

He Himself had thoroughly convinced them that it was He, the Lord. (Exegetical Notes – Buls)

**21:13** He comes in the sense of being the Host and taking the initiative. To call this allusion to the Eucharist is ridiculous. Those who deny the true nature and efficacy of baptism and the Lord’s Supper seemingly have a bad conscience. They are constantly finding “allusions” where there are none. (Exegetical Notes – Buls)

**21:14** *the third time.* The third appearance to a group of disciples (20:19–23, 24–29), though there had been other appearances to individuals. (CSB)

This means to the disciples as a body. Stoeckhardt: “With this two-fold miracle the Risen Lord has assured the disciples of all ages that He can and will bless His own, who do His will and work on earth, with earthly blessings and daily bread.” (Exegetical Notes – Buls)

**21:1–14** During Jesus’ third appearance after the resurrection, He performs another miracle and serves as host at a meal for the disciples. Jesus shows once again His servant heart, teaching us to follow in His way. We bless and serve one another because our gracious Savior continues to bless and serve us, especially in His Holy Supper. • As I come regularly to Your Holy Supper, dear Lord, prepare me to receive You and Your gifts worthily. Amen. (TLSB)

### *Jesus and Peter*

**15** 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, **“Feed my lambs.”** **16** He said to him 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, **“Tend my sheep.”** **17** 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 everything; you know that I love you.”** Jesus said to him, **“Feed my sheep.** **18** Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were young, you used to dress yourself and walk wherever you wanted, but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will dress you and carry you where you do not want to go.” **19** (This he said to show by what kind of death he was to glorify God.) And after saying this he said to him, **“Follow me.”**

**21:15-17** - The *Gospel* focuses on Christ’s grace to St. Peter but holds in focus the office and work of the pastor. The broader context of the miraculous catch of fish and the remote context of Peter’s denial of Christ place all the efficacy of the office of pastor in the Word of God. In Luke 5 they had caught nothing. The huge catch revealed God’s blessing and promise as they now began the work of catching human beings. Peter recognizes the Lord, dives into the water, and eagerly swims to meet Jesus, betraying his characteristic impetuosity. Yet boasting or reliance on self disappear in the presence of the Lord. Peter would now become shepherd par excellence, not by his strength, but by the Lord’s. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 9, Part 1)

Jesus eating with the disciples establishes two things: (1) Incarnation and resurrection belong together. Unlike Gnosticism—ancient or modern—Christians do not fly away from the concrete into some bodiless spiritual realm. The concrete delivery of forgiveness in the means of grace entails a concrete deliverer today (thus AC V after AC IV!). (2) Jesus reestablishes table fellowship with his disciples, especially Peter, who has so miserably failed him. Personal failings are overcome by Gospel forgiveness! Comfort! (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 9, Part 1)

**21:15–17** *love*.† The Greek word for “love” in Jesus’ first two questions is different from that in his third question and in all Peter’s answers. It is uncertain whether a distinction in meaning is intended since John often made slight word variations, apparently for stylistic reasons. Note also other variations in this passage: “sheep” and “lambs”; “feed” and “take care of.” Also, no distinction is made between these two words elsewhere in this Gospel. In this passage, however, they occur together, and the variations seem too deliberate to be explained on stylistic grounds. “Truly love” refers to a love in which the entire personality is involved. “Love” refers to spontaneous natural affection or fondness in which emotion plays a more prominent role than

will. Whatever interpretation is adopted, the important thing is that in so serious a matter as the reinstatement of Peter, the great question was whether he loved Jesus.

**21:15** *when they had finished breakfast* – When they had finished eating” provides the incarnational hook to the previous resurrection appearances—concrete resurrection, concrete means of grace, concrete man to deliver the means—all of it for surety. Jesus calls him “Simon son of Jonah,” signaling that Peter had not by his own strength and according to his own boast lived up to the name Jesus had given him, “Peter, Rock. Do you love (*agapas*) me more than these?” “These” could be the other disciples or the fishing equipment. Or the question could ask, “Do you love me more than these others love me?” The latter is most likely, since Peter boasted of such devotion (Mt 26:33). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 9, Part 1)

*Simon son of John* – This title signals that Peter had not by his own strength and according to his own boast lived up to the name Jesus had given him. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 9, Part 1)

*more than these.* † May mean “more than you love these men” or “more than these men love me” or “more than you love these things” (i.e., the fishing gear). Perhaps the second is best, for Peter had claimed a devotion above that of the others (cf. 13:37; Mt 26:33; Mk 14:29). But see notes on 1:5; 3:3; 6:35, 66; 16:9. Peter did not take up the comparison, and Jesus did not explain it. (CSB)

Peter tended to boast of his commitment before the other disciples (e.g., 13:37). Hus: “As for the third virtues, love, it is plain that Peter had this certain respect above others, as appears from the fervor of his acts which fittingly proceed from greater love” (The Church p. 86). (TLSB)

Here at the lakeside Jesus takes Peter in hand in order to eradicate from his heart the last trace of false self-confidence. (Lenski)

*yes* – Emphatic. (TLSB)

*you know that I love you* – Philo which expresses the love of mere personal affection or liking, including even the passion where the context requires “brotherly love” (Philadelphia). He is humble now. (Lenski)

“You know that I love (*philō*) you.” Peter uses a word that expresses emotional longing, but not the altruistic word *agapē* (a matter of the intellect and will), which Jesus uses. He is humbled, yet speaks with faith, “You know, Lord.” (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 9, Part 1)

*Feed my lambs.* Probably means much the same as “Take care of my sheep” (v. 16) and “Feed my sheep” (v. 17). (CSB)

The Lord was calling Peter away from his former profession to be a shepherd of His flock, a comparison for what would become the “pastoral” ministry. (TLSB)

In the Greek the word “feed” can be translated “continue to feed.” (PBC)

“Feed (*boske*) my lambs (*arnia*).” Three imperatives, this the first, coincide with Peter’s previous three denials. The imperative *boske* is to tend, feed or pasture. The undershepherd is to give the sheep the good care of Holy Baptism; absolution; the Lord’s Supper; and the preached Word of

forgiveness (1 and 2 Peter). “Lambs” indicates the special concern of Christ that the undershepherd tend the little ones as well as the sheep. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 9, Part 1)

Christ’s attitude toward children.

- a. Gentile – Is. 40:11
- b. Promises a reward for kindness to – Mt. 10:42
- c. Used child as example – Mt 18:2
- d. Said childlike spirit essential – Mt. 18:3-4
- e. Warned against despising – Mt. 18:10
- f. Commands reception of – Mk 9:37
- g. Said “suffer the little children to come... Mk. 10:14
- h. Observed children at play – Mt. 11:16
- i. Commanded they be fed spiritual food – Jn 21:15

Jesus here places His most loved possessions in Peter’s care. The spiritual feeding and nourishing of children is here made the first part of the great apostolic office. (Lenski)

Many readers assume “lambs” here means “children.” It’s a fair assumption, since Jesus chooses His words deliberately and follows next, as if by contrast, with the tending of the “sheep.” “Lambs” might also be a way of speaking of all Christians, and in particular of those who are new in the faith. John, for example, in his first letter refers to his readers repeatedly as his “dear children.” (PBC)

**21:16** *Jesus – agape / Peter – philo*

*take care of my sheep* – “My sheep” are here the entire flock and thus include any lambs, though without mentioning them in particular. (Lenski)

“Take care of (*poimaine*) my sheep (*probata*).” “Take care of” (NIV) is a weak translation. Peter’s office and work will flow from Christ’s office and work as Good Shepherd (Jn 10:14; Heb 13:20). So also the pastoral office (1 Pet 5:2–4) is grounded in Christ’s own office as Chief Shepherd. The shepherd has a crook to poke the nose of the wolf who tries to sneak in among the sheep; to grab hold of the wayward sheep to direct it back to the fold (1 Pet 2:25). The office and work of “shepherding” God’s flock entails more than “taking care.” (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 9, Part 1)

Luther: “God could rule the church through the Holy Spirit without the ministry, but He does not want to do this directly. Therefore He says to Peter: ‘Feed my Sheep. Go, preach, baptize, absolve’... Therefore Paul calls the apostles ‘fellow workmen with God’ (1 Cor 3:9). To be sure He alone works. But He does so through us” (AE 8:94-95). (TLSB)

Not only was Peter to feed the flock, but he was to watch over the flock, to be a shepherd to it. Besides feeding, that implied guiding, protecting, and comforting. (PBC)

**21:17** *third time* – Peter denied the Lord three time, and now the Lord invited him to declare his love for Him three times. (TLSB)

*do you love me* – (philo) When Jesus twice asked about the higher love, once as to its degree compared with others, and then about its very presence, Peter with all due humility



ventured to assert only the lower form of love. But now in this third question Jesus probed even for this lower love, of which Peter felt so sure that for its presence in his heart he could appeal to the omniscience of Jesus. This grieved him deeply. But he could not be spared the pain. In his denial even all common affection and regard for Jesus had been thrown to the winds. He claimed that he had not known the man etc. (Lenski)

*you know all things.* Peter's replies stress Christ's knowledge, not his own grasp of the situation. (CSB)

Peter cannot tell Jesus anything that He does not already know. (TLSB)

*feed my sheep* – Keep on feeding my sheep including the lambs. (PBC)

The Lord's threefold calling restored Peter for future service to Him and to His Church. (TLSB)

**21:18-19** According to tradition, Peter was crucified in Rome under Nero in AD 68. Jesus, in an enigmatic way, was referring to Peter's martyrdom. Peter would follow Jesus in suffering and death, glorifying the Father (cf. 12:23-28). (TLSB)

Enigmatic Sayings - Whereas Matthew and Luke tend to record Jesus' parables, John records many difficult sayings of Jesus that appear throughout the Gospel and unify its composition (e.g., 2:4, 19; 3:3, 8; 4:10, 32; 5:17; 6:35, 51, 53, 70; 7:6, 34, 37-38; 8:21, 58; 9:39; 13:33; 14:4; 15:17; 18:36-37; 21:18, 22). John often notes the trouble the disciples and the crowds have deciphering Jesus' intent by recording their questions. In some cases the disciples only understand Jesus' words much later (cf. 2:22; 21:19). Jesus refers to His sayings as "figures of speech" (Greek *paroimia*, 16:25), an expression that commonly describes proverbs. They are often prophetic or have the character of riddles, demanding deep reflection. Jesus' many "I am" statements should be included among these enigmatic sayings. (TLSB)

**21:18** *stretch out your hands.* The early church understood this as a prophecy of crucifixion. (CSB)

Jesus had accomplished His purpose with Peter and restored him to his position as shepherd of Jesus' flock. Now Peter was ready to hear what would happen to him while doing Jesus' bidding. (PBC)

**21:19** *the kind of death.* Peter would be a martyr. Tradition indicates that he was crucified upside down. (CSB)

Although it sounds gruesome and depressing to imagine, it would be Peter's final act of glorifying God. In faith, Peter had eternal life. In faith, Peter would carry God's Word to the people and, as God's shepherd, care for them. In faith, Peter would give the grandest of all testimonies to God's glory by dying as a martyr and entering the Father's house of glory. (PBC)

*follow me* – Jesus had used those words with Peter at the beginning of His ministry (Matthew 4:19). That time Peter literally walked with Jesus and learned from Him day after day. It meant to stay true to the Word of Jesus and continue to teach it, to remain faithful even to the martyr's death in glory to God. It meant the sure hope of reuniting with Jesus again in heaven. (PBC)

**21:15–19** In His threefold exchange with Peter—who in pride and weakness failed His Lord—Jesus restores this disciple for service to Him and His flock. Our own past sins and failures make us feel unworthy to serve God. But Jesus continues to comfort shepherds and the souls they serve with the forgiveness of sins and with compassion. • Great Shepherd of the sheep, bless all pastors who bring Your consolation and peace to Your people. Amen. (TLSB)

*Jesus and the Beloved Apostle*

**20 Peter turned and saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following them, the one who also had leaned back against him during the supper and had said, “Lord, who is it that is going to betray you?” 21 When Peter saw him, he said to Jesus, “Lord, what about this man?” 22 Jesus said to him, “If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you? You follow me!” 23 So the saying spread abroad among the brothers that this disciple was not to die; yet Jesus did not say to him that he was not to die, but, “If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you?” 24 This is the disciple who is bearing witness about these things, and who has written these things, and we know that his testimony is true. 25 Now there are also many other things that Jesus did. Were every one of them to be written, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.**

**21:21** Peter was concerned about John’s welfare and future. (TLSB)

**21:22** *until I come.* A clear declaration of the second coming. (CSB)

What would it matter if he were not to die. Peter did not need to know certain things. (TLSB)

**21:23** *brothers* - Late-first-century Church. (TLSB)

**21:24** *disciple who bearing witness.* Testimony is important throughout this Gospel (see note on 1:7). We now learn that it was the beloved disciple who was the witness behind the account. (CSB)

*these things.* Must refer to the whole book. (CSB)

*written these these things.* The beloved disciple was not only the witness but also the actual author. (CSB)

*We know.*† Either written by contemporaries in a position to know the truth, or John’s use of the editorial “we,” as Paul does occasionally. (CSB)

More than one witness or contributor may have been involved in the production of the Gospel account and support of its distribution. (TLSB)

**21:25** *many other things.* As in 20:30 we are assured that the author has been selective. (CSB)

The Gospel is not a complete biography in the modern sense, but rather a theological treatment of Jesus’ life and teachings. (TLSB)

*the whole world could not contain.* Our historical knowledge of Jesus is at best partial, but we have been given all we need to know. (CSB)

**21:20–25** In the closing exchange between Jesus and Peter, Jesus kindly reminds this beloved apostle that God is in control of matters related to his future. All Christians must humbly

recognize that God has not chosen to reveal certain things to us. But the Scriptures do reveal what is necessary for us to know: Jesus and the salvation He brings. • Blessed Lord, by patience and comfort of Your Holy Word, may we embrace and ever hold fast the glorious hope of everlasting life. Amen. (TLSB)