

Transforming Daily
“... do you love Me...”
John 21:15

There is no more fitting passage of Scripture for the 21st century Christian to meditate on regarding their relationship and fellowship with Christ than John 21:15-17. The 21st century Christian has a lot in common with Peter. Peter was impetuous and quick with extreme words of personal devotion and praise for the Lord Jesus Christ until the day of His arrest and subsequent crucifixion. On that day, Peter, as foretold by Christ, denied the Lord three times, and then ran off grieving, and bitterly heartbroken, not for the torture and torment Christ, but because of his own personal failure to live out his proud and boisterous claim, “I will lay down my life for Your sake.” (John 13:37) Peter’s faith was tested, not by trial and tribulation, but mere inquiry of his association with Jesus, and he didn’t stand up to the test (by the way, neither did any of the other disciples either).

The reason the 21st century Christian needs to examine and investigate this passage is precisely for the very same purpose. It’s easy to stand in the midst of many who believe the same way you do, but what happens when you have to stand alone in your beliefs? Inside an air conditioned building with pretty, sweet-smelling people all around, anyone can sing God’s praises and pray profound prayers. Anyone can sit for twenty minutes of entertainment and five minutes of devotional thought flashed on the high-tech, powerpoint, screen presentation so colorfully and graphically displayed. What happens when you’re home? What happens when you’re at work? What happens when you’re at school? What happens when you’re at the recreation field, grocery store, gas station, etc. How do you live out your association with Christ then?

Peter, for the most part, was being reinstated to his former status among the leadership of the disciples. Jesus asked Peter the same question (with a different use of the word “love”) once for every time Peter publicly denied Him. As some scholars suggest, Jesus was emphasizing the *nature* of Peter’s love not the extent (however, the extent might have been in question as well when Jesus asks, “more than these”). “Why do you love me Peter? Is it because you’ve seen Me do wonderful and miraculous things? Do you love Me because you want something (more) from Me? Perhaps you love Me because you want a healing or the power to heal others from me, or maybe you want wealth or a formula that will make you famous and powerful, something to take you to the next level?” Jesus might have said (in 21st century terms).

Everyday the believer has to ponder the same question Peter had to answer three times. Jesus asked Peter, “Do you love Me?” How would you answer the question, and what motive would you give for doing so, if Jesus asked you, “Do you love Me?”