



July 27, 2019

[Jesus asks, 'Do you love Me?' Part 1](#)

“So when they had dined, **Jesus saith to Simon Peter, ‘Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?’** He saith unto him, ‘Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee.’ **He saith unto him, ‘Feed my lambs.’** He saith to him again the second time, ‘**Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?**’ He saith unto him, ‘Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee.’ **He saith unto him, ‘Feed my sheep.’** He saith unto him the third time, ‘**Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?**’ Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, ‘Lovest thou me?’ And he said unto him, ‘Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee.’ **Jesus saith unto him, ‘Feed my sheep.’”** John 21:15-17 KJV. Jesus asked Peter these questions after His resurrection before He went back to Heaven. **Peter had denied His Lord Jesus three times after Jesus had been brought before the courtyard of the high priest.** Mark 14:53-72. At the Last Supper before Peter denied His Lord, Jesus had warned him that he would deny Him: He said, “‘Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has demanded permission to sift you like wheat; but I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.’ And he [Peter] said to Him, ‘Lord, with You I am ready to go both to prison and to death!’ **And He said, ‘I say to you, Peter, the cock will not crow today until you have denied three times that you know Me.’”** Luke 22:31-34 NASB. “Simon Peter said to Him, ‘**Lord, where are You going?**’ Jesus answered, ‘Where I go, you cannot follow Me now; but you will follow later.’ Peter said to Him, “**Lord, why can I not follow You right now? I will lay down my life for You.**’ Jesus answered, “**Will you lay down your life for Me? Truly, truly, I say to you, a rooster will not crow until you deny Me three times.**” John 13:36-38 NASB. **Now after Jesus was taken to Caiaphas the High priest, in the courtyard of the priest, Peter was there and denied that he knew Jesus three times.** His faith had given way; he was embarrassed to profess that he knew Jesus when the servant girl and some others recognized that he had been with Jesus. “Then he began to curse and swear, ‘I do not know the man!’ And immediately a cock crowed. And Peter remembered the word which Jesus had said, ‘Before a cock crows, you will deny Me three times.’ **And he went out and wept bitterly.**” Matthew 26:74-75 NASB.

After the resurrection Jesus had three questions for Peter: ‘do you love Me?’

This was the key to Peter’s recovery – he must confess three times that he loved Jesus in front of his brethren, to redeem himself for the three times he had denied his Lord.

Do you Love Jesus?

Do not suppose that Jesus is only addressing this to Peter here, since he denied his Lord. This is written for our benefit too. If you have learned about the love of God, and your great need of Jesus and for forgiveness, confessed, repented, were baptized and decided to follow Jesus, then He has asked you this question too! **Did you know that what Jesus asked Peter is just as important in our day as it was to Peter?** This question is just as relevant to us in our day - to all followers of Christ - to all Christians as it was to Peter in his day. **What did Jesus' ask Peter? 'Do you love me?' To all of Jesus' followers He asks, 'Do you love me more than these others?' 'Then feed My sheep.'** This includes you too, dear reader if you are a Christian and follow Jesus. **Do you love Jesus? Then feed His sheep.** *What is your answer to Him? Again Jesus asks you, 'Do you love Me?' What will you answer? If you love Him feed His sheep. And again He asks you, 'Do you love Me?' Decide if you love Him or not... **If you do then feed His sheep.** At the end of time, after Jesus comes back there will only be two groups of people, the sheep and the goats. Matthew 25:31-46. **Only one question then will be asked: Did they love Jesus? If they did they fed the hungry, clothed the naked, helped the sick, visited those in prison, lodged the strangers, preached the gospel or helped someone. *Those that didn't will have to depart from Jesus, because they denied their Lord.****

The answer to Jesus three questions determines whether you love Him or not. If you love Him, feed His sheep. If you are not there yet, but feel that you should feed Jesus' sheep, you can ask God for the change needed in order to be able to want to feed His sheep and care for them properly. This is something God will be happy to do for you if you want it! God promised: **"A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them."** Ezekiel 36:26-27 KJV. Notice that God promises to help you to walk in His statutes and keep His judgements, which includes Jesus' command to love your neighbor as yourself and to love one another. He does this by putting His Spirit in you, if you allow Him to. *So in order to walk in or obey Jesus' commandments and statutes, you must allow God to put His Spirit within you, and take away your stony heart and give you a new heart.* If love from Jesus fills your heart no one will have to tell you to feed His sheep - you won't have to think about it very long...but just do it. **Taking care of Jesus' sheep will be natural for you once you learn to love Him.** If you love Jesus, you will follow after Him and go in the path that He travelled. You may not have the same gifts and responsibilities that Jesus' disciples had when He walked the earth, or in the book of Acts, or in the other New Testament books, but you can do something to help feed Jesus' sheep, or to help those who are feeding His sheep, monetarily or otherwise. **But on the other hand if you give yourself completely to God and ask Him for the Holy Spirit** (Luke 11:13) **and get the Holy Spirit, God may give you gifts you never had before!** Who knows, maybe you would be given a special spiritual gift like what He gave to His disciples? Who knows, maybe you would be given a gift to tend to Jesus' sheep? How to feed Jesus sheep? Seek to emulate His example in the description of The Good Shepherd below.

The Good Shepherd

Jesus declared, **“I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep. He who is a hireling, and not a shepherd, who is not the owner of the sheep, beholds the wolf coming, and leaves the sheep, and flees, and the wolf snatches them, and scatters *them*. He flees because he is a hireling, and is not concerned about the sheep. **I am the good shepherd; and I know My own, and My own know Me**, even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. **And I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must bring them also**, and they shall hear My voice; and they shall become one flock with one shepherd. **For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life** that I may take it again.” John 10:11-17 NASB.**

Points about the Good Shepherd:

1. The Good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.
2. The Good Shepherd takes care of the sheep even when troubles, trials, or problems come; He never leaves His sheep.
3. The Good Shepherd is the owner of the sheep. (Jesus).
4. The Good Shepherd is concerned about His sheep.
5. The Good Shepherd knows His sheep and His sheep know Him.
6. The Good Shepherd has sheep in other folds or Churches or groups, seeks them out and brings them into His fold, that there be one fold and one Shepherd.
7. The Father loves Jesus, the true Shepherd, because He lays down His life for His sheep.

Points about the hireling (those who don't know or love Jesus):

1. The hireling (those who don't love Jesus) don't lay their life down for His sheep.
2. The hireling (those who don't love Jesus) when troubles, trials or problems come leave His sheep.
3. The hireling doesn't love or know the owner of the sheep, Jesus.
4. The hireling is not concerned about His sheep.
5. The hireling doesn't love Jesus' sheep, and doesn't love or know Jesus.
6. The hireling doesn't go to other folds or Churches or groups to seek out Jesus' sheep and bring them into His fold.
7. The Father is not pleased with the hirelings, because they don't lay their life down for His sheep.

Points about those who love and know Jesus:

1. Those who love and know Jesus lay their life down for His sheep.
2. Those who love and know Jesus, who have been given charge over Jesus' sheep, when troubles, trials or problems come do not leave His sheep.
3. Those who love and know Jesus, know the owner of the sheep.
4. Those who love and know Jesus are concerned about His sheep.
5. Those who love Jesus' sheep, show that they love and know Jesus.
6. Those who love and know Jesus go to other folds or Churches or groups to seek out Jesus' sheep and bring them into His fold that there may be one fold and one shepherd.
7. The Father is pleased with and loves those who love and know Jesus, because they lay their life down for His sheep.

Are you a hireling or among those who love and know Jesus?

Or maybe you haven't tried to do anything to help others yet? **If you find that you have been a hireling Christian, there is still time to repent.** If you haven't done anything to help others yet because you still need help yourself – hang in there, and believe that God loves you and will help you. Jesus loves you and died to save you! If you have been a hireling Christian and not cared enough about Jesus' sheep, if you will just confess your sin to God, throw yourself on His mercy, and pray for that change where you would learn to love Him all the way and really know Him - then He will fill you with His love and give you the power to love Jesus' sheep. **If you find that Jesus' sheep irritate you with their problems, sins, and wanderings from God, you may need a conversion, or at the very least to confess this to God and ask for His help to be patient and kind and loving to them.** When you are converted you will start to care for Jesus' sheep, and not get mad at them for wandering from God or for their sins. When you really love and know the owner of the sheep, a wonderful change will come over you, and you will finally have love, patience and mercy for Jesus' sheep, including those in other folds. (If you love Jesus' how can you do otherwise?) **Jesus said to Peter before the cross:** "but I have prayed for you [Peter], that your faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers." Luke 22:32 NASB. **Jesus is praying for you too!** *If you will believe this promise, He will help you to turn again and strengthen your brethren, and you will start to live like the true shepherd, getting His character and caring for His sheep, and may want to help bring in His sheep from other folds (other denominations), so that there may be one fold and one shepherd. It is only after you have 'turned again' from denying your Lord, and receive new life from Him that you will be able to strengthen your brethren and feed Jesus' sheep.* It is only then that you can truly strengthen your brethren and be a blessing to others. This is one of the reasons for the problems in the church, because many have not completely 'turned again' or are denying their Lord.

Listen to the song: [Someone is praying for you!](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pRNWW4UAXxY)

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Faithfully feeding your Lord's sheep:

Jesus said, "Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh. Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods." Matthew 24:44-47 KJV. **Do you want to be that faithful and wise servant, who at His lord's return, was found faithful in giving His lord's household their meat in due season, whom Jesus was speaking about? Blessed is that servant!** Now read our theme text again from the NIV: "So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him. Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom the master has put in charge of the servants in his household to give them their food at the proper time? It will be good for that servant whose master finds him doing so when he returns. I tell you the truth, he will put him in charge of all his possessions." Matthew 24:44-47 NIV.

If you are Jesus' sheep, you will hear His voice and follow Him. John 10:27. If you continue in His word, then truly you are His disciple. John 8:31. *If you don't love Jesus you will not hear Him or keep His word.* John 14:24. Those who don't love Him do not hear His voice; they don't hear Him tell them to feed His sheep. **You are His disciple if you keep His word, this means that you love Him, and He and His Father have come to you and made their abode in you, by the Holy Spirit.** John 14:24. You are His friend if you do whatsoever He commands you (John 15:14) – this makes you His disciple. **This means that you love one another as He commanded you** (John 13:34-35) **and are going preaching and teaching and making disciples of all men, or helping others to do so, as He commanded all of His disciples to do.** Matthew 28:18-20. Jesus said, 'He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves me' John 14:21 NASB95. **What commandments?** All of them, especially His command to love one another and help the gospel go to the whole world, helping in some way to make disciples of all men, as we just stated. Any place Jesus talks about His commandments or His Father's commandments, you can also include loving one another and making disciples of all men too, since these are His commandments. **Do you have Jesus' commandments in your heart, keep them in your thoughts and ask for help to keep them?** *If you do then you love Jesus and are His disciple or you will be soon!* You are Jesus' disciple if you bear much fruit for God – this is how you glorify God! John 15:8.

If these things are true about you, then you are doing your best to set before others the best spiritual food that they might be saved and grow spiritually. **How can you give others their spiritual food at the proper time?** In what way has Jesus inspired you to do this? **Have you received any benefit since you gave your heart to the Lord and were baptized?** *Are you happy he took all your sins and burdens away?* Do you wish to share this good news of what He did for you to others? Do you know anything or have anything that can help someone else? Do you have a testimony to give about how you were lost but now are found, was blind but now you see? Do you have any skills or resources to help others with? The world is filled with those in need: the sick, the hungry, the naked, etc., and those who are dying spiritually who need help. **Do you hear Jesus' voice?** If you love Him you will hear His question: 'do you love Me?', and will hear and heed His command to go and feed His sheep. *Don't deny your Lord, but confess the wonderful things He has done for you, when He rolled your burden of guilt away and forgave you.* **How will you know when you really love Him?** When no one and nothing can hold you back from spreading the news of His love to everyone you can, regardless of the trials and troubles that come upon you – **because you won't be able to help yourself, once you learn to love Him.**

Do you love Jesus?

Dear Reader, Jesus asks, 'Do you love Me?'

Yes Lord you know I love you.

Jesus says, 'Then feed My sheep.'

Dear Reader, Jesus asks, 'Do you love Me?'

Yes Lord you know I really love you!

Jesus says, 'Then feed My sheep.'

Dear reader, Jesus asks, 'Are you sure you really love Me?'

Yes Lord, you know that I really love you!
Jesus says, 'Then feed my sheep!'

May the grace of God be with you as you decide if you want to feed Jesus' sheep. Rich blessings of love and joy await you if you decide to do so! Then you won't be denying your Lord, and Jesus will confess that He knows you to the angels of God at the end of the age. Luke 12:8-9. And He will take you to His home in Heaven where you will know the endless peace, the endless joy, the endless love, and the endless delight of the eternally saved! **Amen.**

Song for Today:

Listen to the song: [Feed My Sheep Song](#)

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