



HG262: Sharing Our Faith Like Jesus **BBQ On The Beach**

John 21:1-19

Home Group Study Notes

23 July 2023 - Pauline Randall



PLEASE COMPLETE AS MUCH AS YOU CAN
ON THIS WORKSHEET IN PREPARATION
BEFORE THE MEETING!

*Don't forget to take your Bible to Home Group
with you, along with any previous notes and other
resources which might be helpful for your discussions.*



Welcome (10 mins) *Ice Breaker*

Share your experiences of BBQ's. Enjoyable or not for you. Are they opportunities to chat - Share your faith?



Looking Upwards (10 mins) *Worship*

In your time of worship, you may want to sing Songs of Praise; listen to a Worship CD, as well as using Meditations; Bible Readings; Prayers ...



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John 21:1-19

Home Group Sermon Notes

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Introduction

We have come to the last Study in the Homegroup series where we have been looking at 'SHARING OUR FAITH LIKE JESUS' -. digging a little deeper, as well as the application of sharing our faith with others. I do hope it has been helpful and encouraging. This morning in John's Gospel the title of this Study is: 'BBQ on the Beach'. I am going to begin by asking you about YOUR experience of BBQ's. If that is something you do, or NOT? I know of some people that just don't do BBQ's. In my home we BBQ RAIN OR SHINE. We have always had BBQs at home and have been to others over the years. I know of some people who only think of BBQ's as being given a burnt sausage. If you enjoy a BBQ, you will know that they have become much more adventurous now. We have the traditional charcoal fire. We did have a gas BBQ a few years ago, but it wasn't liked as much. Once the charcoal fire gets going the lingering smell of the charcoal fire can be quite enticing.

1. Setting The Scene

I read in one of my commentaries that most scholars consider this chapter of John's Gospel to be a later edition, perhaps written in a slightly different style. Also, it is difficult to fit the story into the sequence of chapter 20 and the early church in Jerusalem. On the other hand, the story recalls many key themes from the gospel and no manuscript is without it. It deals with some 'loose ends' from the gospel, especially about Peter and the beloved disciple and their relationship. The one person not sorted out is Simon. He is impetuous, the one who is quick to state his faith. Then at the last supper, moves from not letting Jesus wash his feet to wanting to be washed all over (13:6-10). The chapter is full of echoes back to Jesus' ministry and a forward to the life of the church after his ascension. In the early stories of the calling of the disciples, they recognise something dynamic. They expect the drama and glory, without too much responsibility – Jesus will tell them what to do.

Once, Peter thought that being a fisher of men was going to put him in the spotlight, to be admired and loved, but now he has seen Jesus crucified and risen, and he knows that the calling to follow Jesus is grim and costly. John pulls no punches here, clearly linking Peter's call to feed the sheep, with the death that Peter is to suffer. If Peter initially left his nets to follow Jesus in the throes of a kind of hero worship, he now takes up the charge Jesus gives him without any illusions. He knows that he has betrayed Jesus; he knows what kind of mission Jesus' is – at last; he knows that he will not be able to rely on Jesus to rescue him from tricky or terrible situations. He is prepared for the awesome responsibility of caring for people as Jesus did. It is a characteristic of John's theology that Peter's mission is based on LOVE.

It is the time between the resurrection of Jesus and his ascension. The apostles had returned north, where Simon Peter decides to go fishing on the Sea of Tiberias, which is Galilee. Simon and some of the others decide to go with him. Only John tells how Jesus came to the seven of them as they were fishing, just as in the old days.

2. Memories: New Found Faith

It is like the bad old days when they fish all night and catch nothing. Luke tells of the same thing happening on the day that Jesus first called Simon to be his disciple. (Luke 5:4-5) In the hazy light of dawn, a figure calls to them from the shore and tells them to throw out their net on the other side of the boat. They haven't yet recognised Jesus, but his instruction brings the memories flooding back for Peter. He remembers how many fish they caught, and their surprise and relief at finding the net intact.

Jesus had promised his disciples that they will catch 'men and women'. (Luke 5:10). Peter jumped up into the sea to greet Jesus and was leaping to get more fish. Jesus took the initiative, warming him by the fire. After their long night's work, Jesus invites his friends for breakfast. He has prepared food for them, with fresh bread awaiting and fish already cooking on a charcoal fire. They can smell the charcoal of the BBQ fire. He is a Lord who provides. Again, the fire

3.
may trigger Simon Peter's memory. It was beside such a fire, in the high priest's courtyard that he denied three times that he ever knew Jesus. (John 18:18). John mentions that none of the disciples asks Jesus if it is really him. There is clearly something 'the same but different' about his resurrection body. The two of them go for a stroll after breakfast, as we see when the other disciple turns up later (21:2 Along the water's edge Jesus starts his gentle, but firm questioning. Notice that he addresses him formally, "Simon, son of John" – as he did when they first met (1:42) Then he nick-named him 'Peter', but recently he has been more 'rocky' than 'solid-rock' Now is his chance to put it right. Since Peter has so vigorously denied Jesus, they must now re-lay the foundations of their relationship. Peter had gone back to his old ways, to his old business – but does he LOVE Jesus MORE than that? Jesus asks Simon, "Do you truly LOVE me more than these?"

He is asking for the kind of committed love that Peter has sworn to him in the past. Peter is more realistic now. He knows he has failed. He replies, "Yes Lord, you know I love you". Jesus asks Peter THREE times, once for each denial. This questioning causes Peter to be 'hurt', literally 'grieved'. (21:17). It hurts Peter to admit the poor level of his love. But at least he is now honest with himself.

He has not yet dealt with his feelings about his loss of nerve in the courtyard when he denied knowing Jesus three times. The loss of Jesus on the cross and losing his position among the disciples - and now Jesus asks three times. Yet it is the healer's knife, cutting out the old wound, which led Peter to affirm his love three times. He can only fling himself on Jesus' knowledge: 'you know everything'. When our pain and shame is near the surface, we have to rely on the Lord's full understanding which looks deeper at our love **beneath. Under Peter's denial was a love which followed Jesus almost to the end.**

3. Forgiveness And Restoration

Now He restored Peter to his old place as leader and gave him the task of caring for his people. Not for his own sake, to make him feel better, but for his task of caring for the church. Like Peter, WE all want to be restored when we let Jesus down – don't we? Do we come to Jesus asking for his forgiveness. Do we keep short accounts of our own sins. We are ALL called to care for others, whatever our vocation. Are we prepared to follow all the way?

Having dealt with the painful stuff about the past, Jesus then helps Peter move to his present ministry and his future destiny, when the 'good shepherd' was betrayed by Judas 'the thief'. Peter may have run away, but now he is to be a shepherd too. His threefold profession of love receives three commissions: 'feed my lambs', 'tend my sheep', 'feed my sheep' (21:15-17)

Jesus rebuilds Peter's confidence. He encourages him by accepting his revised commitment and giving him responsibility. Peter is to look after people, the flock of God, as an assistant to the Good Shepherd. Shepherding is Jesus' own picture of leadership and care of the church (John 10:11).

The Good Shepherd gives US the task of caring for the sheep, but they remain his, 'MY sheep'. He sends US, as Father sent him (20:21). Jesus reinstates Peter not for his own sake, to make him feel better, but for his task of caring for the church. So often we talk about 'my ministry', 'my job', 'my decision for Christ' -- but it is *NEVER* mine at all. It is always *HIS* calling for *THEIR* sake. It is Jesus who calls us and others who are to benefit.

4. The Cost

Finally, Jesus warns Peter of the COST of this love (21:18). 'The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep' (10:11-12'). Later he would write that pastoral care does not mean lording it about over those in your charge. (1 Peter 5:1-6); it involves humility, sacrificing yourself and letting others make demands. Eventually they will crucify him. When he is older, 'you will stretch out your hands and someone else' will help him dress; but the deeper meaning is that he will stretch out his hands as someone ties him to a cross beam. Jesus used similar hints 'to indicate the kind of death' he would die (12:33; 18:32); now he suggests the same fate for Peter, whose death will also 'glorify God' (21:19). Jesus repeats his first call to Peter, which is forever new: "FOLLOW ME!" Then seeing John following them, Peter asks what is to become of him. Jesus says that John may or may not stay alive until his return. Either way, it is no concern of Peter. He is to follow Jesus, regardless of the pressure, rumours or opinions of others.

We know that John lived to a great age in Ephesus and can guess that people linked his long life with the hope of Jesus' return. As John comes to the end of his gospel, he says that the 'disciple whom Jesus loved' is the one who followed Jesus and Peter as they walked along the beach that morning. It is he who has been an eyewitness of Jesus' ministry and resurrection, and he or his followers have now written this book. He asserts that what he says is true.

V.25 There is so much more that could be said about Jesus, but if it was all written down, the world would be too small to contain it. Jesus, after all, the Word and wisdom of God, his agent of creation and only Son. How can one small planet ever contain the whole story of his endless glory and eternity.

It is Jesus' LAST WORD; yet also his FIRST.

After Andrew brought his brother Simon to Jesus at the start and he renamed him Peter; Jesus' first words were "follow me" (1:42-43). At the last supper, Peter asked Jesus. "Where are you going?"

When Jesus said that Peter could not follow then, Peter declared that he was ready to follow to death (13:36-37). So now Jesus reminds him of all that with the same two simple words, "follow me".

It is the call at the very start of OUR Christian journey, but the call is also to lifelong discipleship, repeated EVERY day until we die. That is why we need to come before Jesus daily, asking for his forgiveness and actively listening to him.

Once Peter thought that being a fisher of men was going to put him in the spotlight to be admired and loved, but now he has no illusions. He has seen Jesus crucified and risen; and he KNOWS that the calling to follow Jesus is GRIM and COSTLY.

He knows that he has betrayed Jesus. He KNOWS what kind of mission Jesus' is – AT LAST! He KNOWS that he will not be able to rely on Jesus to rescue him from tricky or terrible situations. He is prepared for the awesome responsibility of caring for people as Jesus did. It is a characteristic of John's theology that Peter's mission is based on LOVE. So when Jesus gives Peter his hard and dangerous task of bringing the Christian community, the CHURCH, into existence, he does not say to Peter, "I love you and trust you".....Instead he asks, "Do YOU love ME?"

It is only when Peter acknowledges that loving God is about GIVING, not just about GETTING, that he can play the part that God has for him.

Conclusion

Peter and Paul, the founders of the Church, both accept their responsibilities for God's people because they KNOW their OWN need. Could this be some kind of a parable for The Church? Could it be that WE are not actually called always to be RIGHT, but simply to demonstrate by our own gratitude and love that God can and will forgive?

If God can go on loving and forgiving the Church, which has been such a sorry mess for so much of its history and NOW! - then his POWER to LOVE and FORGIVE must be enormous indeed. What we have to do is be GRATEFUL and PASS IT ON.

TODAY, WE are the ones who need to be warned about such things as drifting, unbelief, laziness and negligence. The writer to the Hebrews reminds us of the basic failure of the Israelites during the time of their wandering in the wilderness in Hebrews 3:7-15, "The hearts of the Israelites were always going astray". They were content to get things second hand through religious knowledge, laws and ceremony, yet MISSED that one thing that could have saved them from disaster and carried them through to God's rest.

THEY FAILED TO HEAR GOD'S VOICE!!!

The risen Christ comes in the new light and restores us and wants us to care for others. Isaiah 30:21 says, "Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, "This is the way; walk in it".

Prayer:

Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.
Grant that I may feed your sheep and follow you to the end.
Hear Jesus calling "Follow me". *Amen.*

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*The LORD bless you and keep you: the LORD make his face shine on you
and be gracious to you: the LORD turn his face toward you
and give you peace. Numbers 6:24-26*

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Looking Upwards (40 mins)

Bible Study

Read the text for this study, and any references given, then answer the following questions. You may find it helpful to listen to the sermon and/or read through the sermon notes as you do so. Discuss some, or all, your answers with your Home Group and, remember, these questions are only a guide to start your discussions.

1: Can you remember how excited you were when you first became a Christian? Did you want to share your new found faith in Jesus with everyone? Did you get disappointed? Maybe you couldn't find the right words to say that would give enthusiasm and encouragement to others.

2: Have there been times when you have found it hard or impossible to forgive? Share with the group if you can and receive prayer.

3: Do you truly love Jesus above yourself, your family, the things you love to be doing?

4: Are you willing to share your faith in Jesus, your testimony with others. Especially those you think are seeking? What might prevent you?

5: Do you put Jesus before anything or anyone else?

What do you think might help you to ‘Share your Faith Like Jesus’. Share together with the homegroup members.

6: We hope this series has been informative and helpful. What, out of all that we have studied, really sticks in your mind?

What has strengthened your faith the most?

What has challenged your faith the most?

What has inspired you the most?



Is there anything you most want to put into practice as a result of this study?



Looking Inwards (15 mins) *Caring For Each Other*

Reflecting on your life at the moment, is there anything you would like to share with other members of your home group which you feel is appropriate (this is an opportunity to share, not something you have to do, however, 'It's the sharing that enables the caring!') for:

Thanksgiving?

Prayer?

Encouragement?

Support in any way?



Looking Outwards (15 mins) *Concern For Others*

Is there anything concerning someone in your: family; circle of friends; neighbours or church, which you would like to share (please be sure not pass on anything that is confidential or which you think the person concerned would not wish to be shared) for:

Thanksgiving?

Prayer?

Encouragement?

Support in any way?

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