Note Taker

"Do you truly love Me more than these?" John 21:15 *There are three possible references in "these." Jesus might mean, do you love Me more than these other men do? He might mean, do you love Me more than you love these men? Or He might mean, do you love Me more than these things—his boats, nets, and the rugged life of a fisherman. We don't know which was really intended. Actually, we don't need to know. All we really need to know is that we love Jesus as much as we can, without comparing ourselves with others. That we love Him more than the dearest of human companions. And that we love Him more than the occupation which we so completely enjoy. Do we love Jesus "more than these"? Yes. Jesus means more to us than anything else in life.* [The 365 Day Devotional Commentary]

We must remember that even when man is at his worse – God looks on him as His friend. We are the friends of God, not because we chose Him, but because He chose us! It's really incredible if you think about it.

Jesus and Simon Peter

By Rev Lonny R. Bower
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Friendship is godly, that is, it is God's design. God created us with an inordinate desire to have emotional connections with others. Of course, I believe that this is a result of our need for the Spirit of God in our lives. Let me explain: when God created Adam they had complete unity, the scripture says that God would take walks with Adam. Unfortunately sin interrupted this friendship and ever since then Adam's descendants have been longing to fill the void that was left when Sin Separated Adam from God. Let us fast-forward now to the time of Christ. God came in the flesh and again walked with man. He gave us what we longed for, what we missed, what we needed – His presence. Even introverts have friends, the one without friends is as far from God as one could ever get while living in this flesh. As we continue our study of the friends of God we happen upon the character of Simon Peter. Peter was an impulsive man driven by deep seeded emotional passion. History has treated him pretty well overall, the Catholics consider him head of the church – the first Pope. Many cheer him for his willingness to step out of the boat, but deride him for denying Christ. However, it is Peter, that professes by the Spirit that Christ is the Son of God. What we see most in Peter is an incredible desire to be close to Jesus.

I. Friendship and Response – Matthew 14:24-33 God's Word Ed. 1 (GWT)

[23]After sending the people away, he went up a mountain to pray by himself. When evening came, he was there alone. [24]The boat, now hundreds of yards from shore, was being thrown around by the waves because it was going against the wind. [25]Between three and six o'clock in the morning, he came to them. He was walking on the sea. [26]When the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified. They said, "It's a ghost!" and began to scream because they were afraid. [27]Immediately, Jesus said, "Calm down! It's me. Don't be afraid!" [28]Peter answered, "Lord, if it is you, order me to come to you on the water." [29]Jesus said, "Come!" So Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water toward Jesus. [30]But when he noticed how strong the wind was, he became afraid and started to sink. He shouted, "Lord, save me!" [31]Immediately, Jesus reached out, caught hold of him, and said, "You have so little faith! Why did you doubt?" [32]When they got into the boat, the wind stopped blowing. [33]The men in the boat bowed down in front of Jesus and said, "You are truly the Son of God."

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II. Friendship and Recognition – Matthew 16:13-19 (GWT)

[13]When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?" [14]They answered, "Some say you are John the Baptizer, others Elijah, still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." [15]He asked them, "But who do you say I am?" [16]Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God!" [17]Jesus replied, "Simon, son of Jonah, you are blessed! No human revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven revealed it to you. [18]You are Peter, and I can guarantee that on this rock I will build my church. And the gates of hell will not overpower it. [19]I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Whatever you imprison, God will imprison. And whatever you set free, God will set free."

III. Friendship and Reconciliation – John 21:4-19(GWT)

[4]As the sun was rising, Jesus stood on the shore. The disciples didn't realize that it was Jesus. [5]Jesus asked them, "Friends, haven't you caught any fish?" They answered him, "No, we haven't." [6]He told them, "Throw the net out on the right side of the boat, and you'll catch some." So they threw the net out and were unable to pull it in because so many fish were in it. [7]The disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It's the Lord." When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put back on the clothes that he had taken off and jumped into the sea. [8]The other disciples came with the boat and dragged the net full of fish. They weren't far from the shore, only about 100 yards. [9]When they went ashore, they saw a fire with a fish lying on the coals, and they saw a loaf of bread. [10]Jesus told them, "Bring some of the fish you've just caught." [11]Simon Peter got into the boat and pulled the net ashore. Though the net was filled with 153 large fish, it was not torn. [12]Jesus told them, "Come, have breakfast." None of the disciples dared to ask him who he was. They knew he was the Lord. [13]Jesus took the bread, gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. [14]This was the third time that Jesus showed himself to the disciples after he had come back to life. [15]After they had eaten breakfast, Jesus asked Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love me more than the other disciples do?" Peter answered him, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." Jesus told him, "Feed my lambs." [16]Jesus asked him again, a second time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" Peter answered him, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." Jesus told him, "Take care of my sheep." [17]Jesus asked him a third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" Peter felt sad because Jesus had asked him a third time, "Do you love me?" So Peter said to him, "Lord, you know everything. You know that I love you." Jesus told him, "Feed my sheep. [18]I can guarantee this truth: When you were young, you would get ready to go where you wanted. But when you're old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will get you ready to take you where you don't want to go." [19]Jesus said this to show by what kind of death Peter would bring glory to God. After saying this, Jesus told Peter, "Follow me!"