

ENCOUNTERS

Peter's Restoration

Growth Group Opener:

Has there ever been a question someone has asked you that you have never forgotten...perhaps one that changed how you saw yourself?

Read John 21:1-19

Why do you think Peter went back to fishing in v.3? Is he returning to his old life? Killing time? Doing something familiar when he doesn't know what else to do?

After three years together, why do you think the disciples initially did not recognize Jesus, even after he spoke?

Why do you think Jesus went back to Peter's old name in v.15 to begin his restoration?

There are only two times in the Bible that the word "anthrakia" is used: once to describe the charcoal fire in John 18:15-18 (which Peter was still standing by in 18:25-27), and then to describe the fire in John 21:9. Read those passages now.

What do you think the significance is of noting the exact same kind of fire, with the same smells and sensations, in the passages containing Peter's denials, and then again at his restoration?

What might Jesus have been intending when he set the scene in this way?

By v.17, we see that Peter is led to a place of grief. What is the difference between the grief of restoration and the grief of shame?

What does Peter's story teach us about how Jesus restores?
What did it cost Peter to accept this restoration?

Is there somewhere in your life that you need Jesus to go back to the beginning with you, before your titles, positions, and actions, to go back to the version of you before things went wrong?

In restoring Peter, Jesus handed him sheep to feed. Where might Jesus be inviting you to feed his sheep out of a wound or failure that he has healed, or is currently healing?

Prayer:

Father, thank you for your grace and your kindness. Thank you for giving us the example of Peter's restoration. We pray that you would heal the wounded and grieving places in each of us, drawing us into a more intimate relationship with you and inviting us into a place of service in your mission. May we follow you, be changed by you, and pour out our lives for the sake of your mission. In the name of Jesus, amen.