

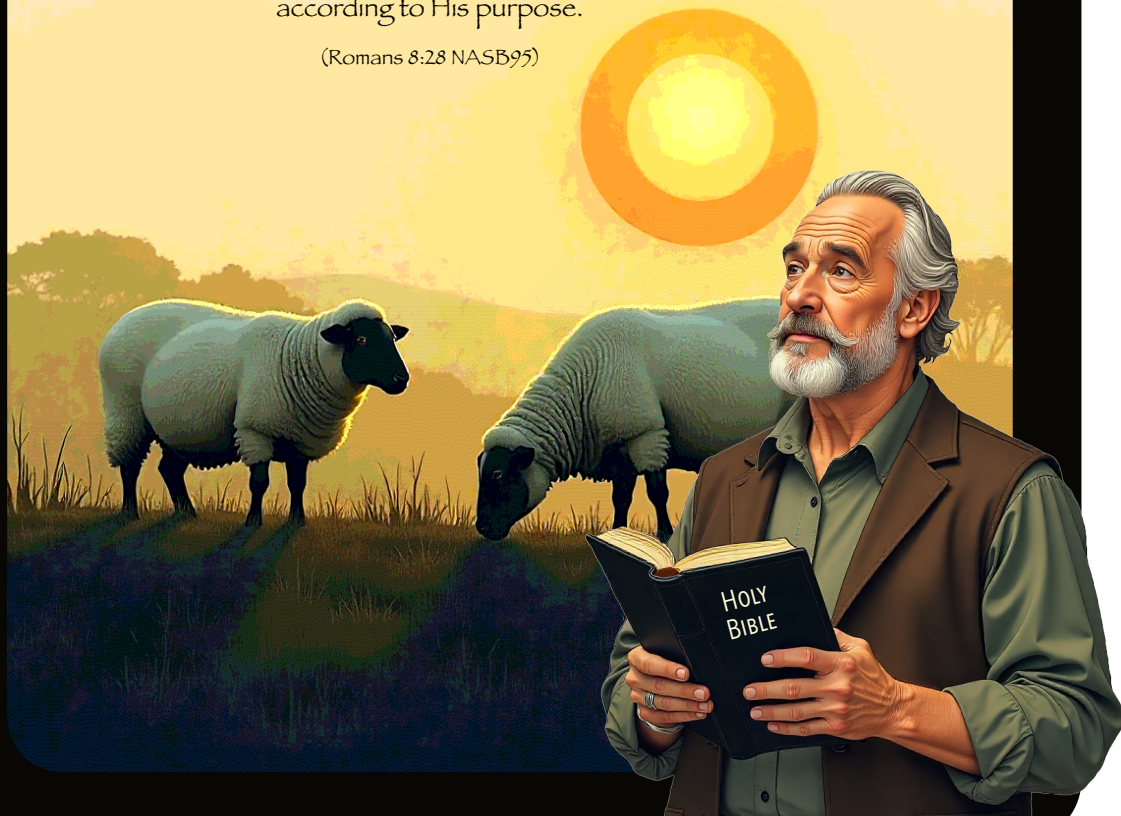
# **JESUS SHEPHERDS HIS SHEPHERDS**

**THE PROVIDENTIAL CARE OF JESUS FOR HIS SHEEP BY HIS  
PROVIDENTIAL SHEPHERDING OF HIS SHEPHERDS.**

PROVIDENCE ...

And we know that God causes all things to work together for  
good to those who love God, to those who are called  
according to His purpose.

(Romans 8:28 NASB95)



- Providential ... effected by the providence of God; referable to divine providence; proceeding from divine direction or superintendence; marked by or involving divine foresight; occurring by an intervention of God; occurring at a favorable time or the right time; peculiarly appropriate as if resulting by divine intervention.

## 1. Jesus finds his disciples in retreat and makes himself known to them, 21:1-14.

### A. Jesus' sheep had been scattered.

- (Matthew 26:31–33 ESV) Then Jesus said to them, **"You will all fall away because of me this night. For it is written, 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.'** 32 But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee." 33 Peter answered him, **"Though they all fall away because of you, I will never fall away."**

### B. Jesus had forty days to gather and prepare them before his return to the Father.

### C. To accomplish this Jesus revealed himself to them in such a way that they would be able to face all the challenges of taking his gospel to the world, 21:1-3.

- (John 21:1–3 ESV) **After this Jesus revealed himself again to the disciples** by the Sea of Tiberias, **and he revealed himself in this way.** 2 Simon Peter, Thomas (called the Twin), Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples were together. 3 **Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing."** **They said to him, "We will go with you."** They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.

Reveal... φανερώ [phaneroo] – to make manifest; to show one's self; to be plainly recognized, thoroughly understood who and what one is.

### D. Jesus would gather and prepare them through his love relationship with them.

- (John 14:21–23 ESV) **"Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me.** And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and **I will love him and manifest myself to him."** 22 Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, **"Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us,** and not to the world?" 23 Jesus answered him, **"If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him."**

### E. Jesus found them at their earthly place of solace.

Solace... comfort or consolation in a time of grief, distress, sadness or misfortune.

### F. Jesus revealed himself to them by performing a miracle, 21:4-8.

- (John 21:4–8 ESV) Just as day was

breaking, Jesus stood on the shore; **yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus.** 5 Jesus said to them, "Children, do you have any fish?" They answered him, "No." 6 He said to them, "Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some." So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in, because of the quantity of fish. 7 **That disciple whom Jesus loved therefore said to Peter, "It is the Lord!"** When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment, for he was stripped for work, and **threw himself into the sea.** 8 The other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, but about a hundred yards off.

- i. Jesus shows his tender care for them as he asks ... "Children, do you have any fish?" and meets their need for fish by performing a miracle.
- ii. When Peter heard that the person on the shore was Jesus he threw himself into the sea.

The revealing of Jesus through this miracle supplied their literal and immediate emotional need for food but more importantly supplied their spiritual need for perspective and reassurance.

### G. He made them breakfast, 21:9-14.

- (John 21:9–14 ESV) When they got out on land, **they saw a charcoal fire in place,** with fish laid out on it, and bread. 10 Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish that you have just caught." 11 So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, 153 of them. And although there were so many, the net was not torn. 12 **Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast."** **Now none of the disciples dared ask him, "Who are you?"** They knew it was the Lord. 13 Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and so with the fish. 14 **This was now the third time** that Jesus was revealed to the disciples after he was raised from the dead.

## 2. Jesus resets Peter's coordinates by asking the question—Do you love me, 21:15-17.

This is what was necessary to prepare, restore and commission Peter—and indirectly the others—to lead the early church. He asked the same basic question three times—Do you love me?

A. With his prodding of Peter Jesus established that love for him must be preeminent—*surpassing, having paramount rank*—in our relationship with him.

i. If we love him, we will keep his commandments.

- (John 14:15 ESV) **If you love me, you will keep my commandments.**
  - (John 15:9–11 ESV) As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. 10 **If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love,** just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. 11 These things I have spoken to you, **that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.**
- ii. The great commandment is that we love him.
- (Mark 12:28–30 ESV) And one of the scribes came up and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, asked him, **"Which commandment is the most important of all?"** 29 Jesus answered, **"The most important is, 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. 30 And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.'"**

**B. The instruction is specific—that the shepherd is to feed Jesus' sheep.**

- i. If the shepherd loves the Great Shepherd, then he will obey him and feed **his** sheep.
- (Ephesians 4:11 ESV) And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, **the shepherds and teachers.**
- ii. The pastor/shepherd is called specifically to feed Jesus' sheep, not merely the person in the pew.
- iii. The pastor/shepherd's love for and obedience to Jesus must be foremost if he is to make decisions that honor God in feeding and tending his sheep.

**C. FIRST TIME JESUS ASKS ... Do you love me?**

- (John 21:15 ESV) When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, **"Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?"** He said to him, **"Yes, Lord; you know that I love you."** He said to him, **"Feed my lambs."**

**THIS QUESTION COULD BE INTERPRETED IN THREE WAYS:**

*Do you love me more* than you love these things—aka this earthly life? *Do you love me more* than you love your fellow disciples? *Do you love me more* than these others love me?

**D. Grace:** Three times Peter denied Jesus and now as Jesus purges him of his pride he gives him the opportunity to profess his love for him three times.

**SIDEBAR: A SAMPLING OF PETER'S PRIDE ...**

He boasted that he would never fall away even if everyone else did ...

- (Matthew 26:33, 35 ESV) Peter answered him, **"Though they all fall away because of you, I will never fall away."** ... Peter said to him, **"Even if I must die with you, I will not deny you!"** And all the disciples said the same.

He thought that he was ready when he obviously was not ...

- (Luke 22:31–33 ESV) "Simon, Simon, behold, **Satan demanded to have you,** that he might sift you like wheat, 32 but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail. **And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.**" 33 Peter said to him, **"Lord, I am ready to go with you both to prison and to death."**

He said he was ready to follow Jesus and die ...

- (John 13:37–38 ESV) Peter said to him, **"Lord, why can I not follow you now? I will lay down my life for you."** 38 Jesus answered, "Will you lay down your life for me? Truly, truly, I say to you, the rooster will not crow till you have denied me three times."

**E. Jesus knew that Peter's pride must be thoroughly defeated for him to be ready for what was ahead.**

- i. Ready for leading, pasturing and feeding Jesus' sheep.
- (Psalm 23:1–3 ESV) The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. 2 **He makes me** lie down in green pastures. **He leads me** beside still waters. 3 **He restores my soul. He leads me** in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.
- ii. Ready and courageous when facing the wolf.
- (John 10:11–13 ESV) I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. 12 **He who is a hired hand** and not a

shepherd, who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. 13 He flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep.

- (Acts 20:29–30 ESV) I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; 30 and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them.

#### F. SECOND TIME JESUS ASKS ... Do you love me?

- (John 21:16 ESV) He said to him a second time, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” He said to him, “Tend my sheep.”

Now the question is simplified to what is most basic. The emphasis should not be on the Greek words used but on Jesus’ purging, sanctifying method in repeating the question.

#### G. THIRD TIME JESUS ASKS ... Do you love me?

- (John 21:17 ESV) He said to him the third time, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?” Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, “Do you love me?” and he said to him, “Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Feed my sheep.

- i. Jesus’ method of course works as Peter is humiliated and brought to face the failure and grief of his pride and self-sufficiency.

21:17 grieved ... λυπέω [lupeo] – to make sorrowful; to affect with sadness, cause grief, to throw into sorrow; to make one uneasy.

- ii. In his pride Peter had previously taken Jesus aside and rebuked him for predicting his death.
  - (Matthew 16:22–23 ESV) And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, “Far be it from you, Lord! This shall never happen to you.” 23 But he turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man.”

- iii. At some point after the resurrection Peter had his “Job moment” and he saw Jesus as ... the omnipotent, omniscient, all-wise, Sovereign Lord of all creation *who knows everything*.

#### 3. Jesus twice reminds Peter of his life direction—“follow me”, 21:18-23.

Jesus rebuked Peter for questioning his will for John and exhorted him to single-minded devotion to follow him and not be concerned about John’s fate.

- (John 21:18–23 ESV) Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were young, you used to dress yourself and walk wherever you wanted, but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will dress you and carry you where you do not want to go.” 19 (This he said to show by what kind of death he was to glorify God.) And after saying this he said to him, “Follow me.” 20 Peter turned and saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following them, the one who also had leaned back against him during the supper and had said, “Lord, who is it that is going to betray you?” 21 When Peter saw him, he said to Jesus, “Lord, what about this man?” 22 Jesus said to him, “If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you? You follow me!” 23 So the saying spread abroad among the brothers that this disciple was not to die; yet Jesus did not say to him that he was not to die, but, “If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you?”

#### 4. THE EVENTS OF THIS GOSPEL: Witnessed, written down and authenticated—the testimony is true, 21:24-25.

- (John 21:24-25 ESV) This is the disciple who is bearing witness about these things, and who has written these things, and we know that his testimony is true. Now there are also many other things that Jesus did. Were every one of them to be written, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.

**CONCLUSION:** Our *passion* in life – love Jesus - our *direction* in life – always follow Jesus ...