

# The Commission

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[ 0 : 00 ] Lord, we thank you for your word. Lord, we thank you for the stories of Jesus and the character of Jesus, for how deeply you love us. Lord, I pray that as we hear from your word today, that you would speak to us and that you would be at work.

In Jesus' name, amen. So I know at least a few of us here are Marvel movie fans. And for those of you who don't know, the kick of superhero movies for the last 10 years or so are mostly put out under the brand of Marvel, right?

And so these stories are often compelling, but they've also got, have like achieved their own frameworks at this point where we kind of know what's gonna happen in the movie and there are certain key things that they always bring up. And one of those things that there's often an after credits scene now.

So literally fans will sit in the theater. And I shouldn't say fans, I should say me too, because I do this. And so you'll wait for five minutes for all the credits to scroll by so that you can see a little 30 second clip that kind of concludes some side story or it ties into something that's happening in the future.

One of the most popular ones is at the end of like the, one of the movies and all of the superheroes are sitting in like this local restaurant and they're chowing down on food and they're in like their full outfits and everything.

[ 1 : 11 ] And it's just like this really weird, corny scene that just fulfills some offhanded comment that a character made earlier in the movie, you know, after they win the battle, they're like, hey, you wanna go get food? Basically. And so John 21 is a bit like an after credits scene.

Everything is kind of wrapped up nicely in John 20 for Jesus's story. He's resurrected. He reappears to the disciples. He commissions them to go out as he was sent out. But John 21 in this chapter, John wraps up a few loose ends, right?

What happens to Peter after he denies Jesus? And what happens to John, the author of the book? And as John answers these questions, he communicates his last message to Jesus's followers, that Jesus loves generously, restores fully and calls uniquely.

And so we see his generous love in the first story where they go out and fish and Jesus provides a lot of fish for them. And so this section is bookended in verses one and 14, that this is of Jesus revealing himself.

So I really see the purpose of this section is it's another testimony to Jesus's revelation of himself after he was resurrected. It's another piece of John's claim that Jesus truly died and rose again. But each of these times that Jesus appears, he does it with a little bit of a different purpose.

[ 2 : 27 ] And so the first time he appears to Mary, right? Just outside of the tomb. And he sends her to go and tell everybody else that he's resurrected. And then the second time he appears as proof of his resurrected body for most of his disciples in a room.

And then the third time, second time to his disciples directly, he appears for the benefit of Thomas to really care for him, someone who has doubted that Jesus is really rose. And so this last time here, Jesus seems to reveal himself to demonstrate his ongoing love for the disciples and his generous provision for them.

And so Peter, who is a fisherman by trade, goes out to fish and the other disciples go along with him. And this is likely either to feed themselves, maybe they're hungry, or they could be catching extra fish to go out the market and try to make some money.

Now, fishing is probably a little bit different than most of our careers here for those who are working. Fishing is literally like hand-to-mouth work. And so for a lot of us working, you know, academics or tech or business, if we have a down day where we're not as productive, we don't get a tenth of our

paycheck cut out or something in that two-week period or however your payment system works. But with fishing, you know, if you go out and spend an all-nighter fishing on the lake and you don't catch anything, then you have made no money at that point. It would be like if I showed up to work one day and didn't get a lot of work done and my manager came up and was like, yeah, sorry, we're not paying you today.

[ 3 : 50 ] You didn't get everything done. Like, what? Are you serious? So this is a devastating evening for the disciples to spend all night out on the lake and to catch nothing. And so this kind of frames Jesus' appearance and question as he comes up to them.

And so it's kind of in the morning dusk, so they probably, when it says the disciples didn't recognize Jesus, it's probably legitimately, like, they're a few hundred yards off from shore. They probably can't quite see him in the morning haze. And so there's this guy standing on the edge of the beach after all night out fishing.

He's like, hey, have you caught any fish? And the disciples are probably like, oh my gosh, no. And Jesus says, oh, well, why don't you just throw the net on the other side of the boat? And if you don't know this is Jesus, this sounds like, are you serious?

Like, I don't know if there's an exact phrase for it, but there's kind of fisherman's folklore where people have these ideas that they're good fishermen, but the reasons that they are are probably not connected to reality at all.

It's just kind of, oh, I know where the exact best fishing spot is. Sometimes that's true and sometimes it's just, I caught a lot of fish there one time. I know an older gentleman who goes fishing regularly and he takes another fellow with him and the other fellow at one point had a very poor fishing experience.

[ 5 : 01 ] I think he caught like one fish the whole time they were out there and my friend caught like two dozen. And ever since then he said, oh, this guy, you know, I think about the fish, he couldn't catch a cold. You know, it's just like, that stigma is stuck to him at this point.

And so this feels like that kind of fisherman's advice. Like, oh, just, you know, I always throw the net on my right side of the boat. It's going to work for you guys. And so the disciples, whether they're exasperated or whether they just, you know, all right, sure, whatever, they throw the net on the other side.

And the results are quite different than the typical fisherman's advice, right? The net fills up instantly with fish. And so John, for John, it instantly clicks. He says, this is the Lord.

And for Peter, as it usually doesn't, it doesn't instantly click. But as soon as John says it, Peter is out of the boat and swimming to shore, leaving the others to drag the net a few hundred yards into shore.

And so thankfully, Peter's not completely rude. And he actually, when they get the boat in, he comes back and helps drag the net up to shore. And so they sit and they eat with Jesus and it's just this overwhelming thing.

[ 6 : 03 ] And in verse 12, it's phrased a little strangely and I want to point it out. You know, Jesus says, come and have breakfast. Now, none of the disciples dared ask him, who are you? They knew it was the Lord. And it feels kind of weird.

It's like, why would you think about asking if you know it's the Lord? Like, what's going on here? And I think it's really an expression, probably, of just the emotions that they felt at that time.

Like, here is a man who has only appeared to them a couple times and that they saw die, right? And he's sitting on the beach cooking fish. Like, we are so used to hearing the story that the disciples, like, this is the first time that they've seen Jesus really interact with material, not, like, phase into a room magically, like, through a locked door.

So it's, like, a really typical experience and I think this is just the expression of, oh my gosh, like, this is the Lord. And you kind of want to ask because he should be dead, but here he is.

And so I think that's the expressiveness that's going on there. And so I mentioned that the purpose for this section is another testimony to Jesus' resurrection. But I think that the message of this section seems to be that Jesus simply loves his disciples and loves caring for them.

[ 7 : 15 ] You know, he gives them an overabundance of fish. So 153 could easily be over 1,000 pounds, right? And yet the net is not torn that they're catching the fish with. And he also cares for them and he prepares breakfast for them after a long night of work, right?

He's already cooking the fish on the shore. It's not necessarily the fish they caught. He's gone out and caught some and has prepared something specifically for them. And we have no real given reason. There's no allegory.

There's no symbolism. It's simply that Jesus loves his disciples and cares for them. And I think that it's much like washing his disciples' feet earlier. He's showing that he still serves them and is going to provide for them after his resurrection.

And I think it's worth highlighting this generous provision here because in our modern world, I think the common word for it is networking. But there's a lot of aspects in life where we're pushed to build relationships with people so that we can get some sort of advantage from them later.

So it's making connections or getting to know somebody. And often we think about, okay, if I get to know this person, what can I possibly get from them in the future? And I think that Jesus challenges that conception.

[ 8 : 24 ] I'm not saying that we shouldn't do those things. I am saying that we need to go out and love much like Jesus did without much benefit to ourselves. And so when I was a staffer at college camps, one of my camp directors would ask the question regularly, when was the last time that you did something for someone else when you received absolutely no benefit for it?

Like it was of no selfish motivation. Nothing was really returned to you. And every time that I remember that question, I can't think of the last time that I have selflessly served somebody in that way.

And I think that Jesus sets the example for us here of doing this, but he also shows us that this is how he continues to love us with this provision, this true care for us.

And so one of the ways in this story that Jesus goes on to uniquely love his disciples is by restoring Jesus after he denied, or by restoring Peter after he denied Jesus three times.

And so moving into 15 through 19, this is kind of, this is the counter passage to Jesus's three, or man, I'm going to keep saying this, Peter's three times denying Jesus when Jesus was at trial.

[ 9 : 35 ] And I think that Peter's denial of Jesus carries a special weight. This isn't just saying, oh, I don't believe in Jesus. He's not, you know, he's not real. This is someone who followed Jesus for three years and had a pre-built relationship with him.

And they had had exchanges and they had gone through things together. And then at the first sign of real challenge and difficulty, he's denied him and said, no, I don't know this man. It reminds me a little bit of kind of flare-ups that we have in the relationships with people that we care about.

A kind of funny but also sort of dangerous one sometimes is if you're arguing with your spouse or significant other and you say, oh, you remind me of your parents. Don't say that. Another thing is, you know, I think of children that get so upset and just riled up and they're like, I hate you, mom or dad.

Or, you know, and they just say that and they stomp off. And that's not like serious in that moment, but that's painful to the parents. Or, you know, a really powerful thing can be when a parent expresses disappointment in their children in really strong terms.

You know, unintentionally, maybe in the heat of the moment, but those things chip at the relationship that have been built up over all that time and it's a swift swing. It's, you know, it's really taken a chunk out of it and it's to test the endurance of that relationship.

[ 10 : 44 ] And I think that those are all kind of little types of what Peter has done with Jesus. You know, they've built that relationship together and now he's denied Jesus. And so Jesus is working on not just forgiving Peter for this, not just brushing it under the rug, but we'll see that he actually restores Peter and we'll get into that a little bit more in detail.

But one of the first things I want to talk about with this section is verse 15. And there's a couple things going on here that I want to stop and really examine. First, it seems like the conversation between Jesus and Peter probably happened by the campfire with all the other disciples sitting around.

I know in verse 19 or verse 20 it talks about Jesus is walking down the beach with Peter and John's behind them. But in verse 19 it seems to indicate that Jesus says, follow me and that's when they get up from after breakfast to walk down the beach.

And so this seems kind of awkward. Jesus is asking these questions. It's kind of like you don't want to be in the room when a parent is disciplining their child or chewing them out. That's just an awkward moment, particularly when you're growing up as a kid. If your friend is getting beat down by their parents, you're doing something wrong.

It's like you don't want to be there in that moment. So it feels awkward to us but I think that it fits with the story so far. Peter is really one of the main characters in John besides Jesus.

[12:06] And he often seems to be kind of set up as the de facto leader of the disciples. He often speaks for them. He's the one that publicly spoke for the disciples when a bunch of people stopped following Jesus in John 6.

And Jesus turns to the disciples and said, are you going to leave me? And Peter's the one that speaks up and says, who else would we go to? You are the one with the words of life. Peter publicly chopped off the ear of the servant in the garden.

And Peter also publicly denied Jesus three times. So a lot of Peter's actions have been in front of these disciples already. So it makes sense that his restoration would happen in front of all of them as well.

A second kind of confusing thing about the verse is that there's an undefined pronoun that Jesus uses in the first question. And Jesus says, Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these? And so it's, no one's like exactly sure what these is, but there's only so many things it could be. And I think the two main things are, it could either be the fish that he had just caught, or it could be the disciples who are sitting around him.

[13:07] Once again, the choice of the other disciples seems kind of awkward at first, like playing favorites or something. But it probably fits better with the story. And so the fish, what the fish has going for it is the explanation for the pronoun is that it's the less awkward of the two.

You know, okay, do you love me more than the fish here? But there seems to be no story and context for that. Right? There's never any conflict between fishing and following Jesus. And in fact, when the disciples are called from fishing, they always leave to go to follow Jesus.

And Jesus just blessed them with 153 fish. So it seems a little weird to come back and ask the question that way. So the more awkward explanation of the disciples seems to sit correctly.

And I think that this is expressing not literally, Peter, is there like some quantifiable more amount of love that you have than the rest of the disciples? What he's saying is, Peter, you know, is the passion that you've shown for me, is that true?

Because Peter, as we said before, Peter's frequently representing the rest of the disciples and even does outlandish things above and beyond them. A few others of them is that when Jesus is washing the disciples' feet, you know, Peter says, okay, whoa, whoa, don't wash my feet.

[14:14] This is crazy. And Jesus says, no, I have to wash your feet. And then Peter's like, okay, fine, but can you wash my hands and head too? And Jesus is like, just calm down. It's gonna be fine. So Peter's like always showing that exuberant passion.

And Peter says, I will lay down my life for you during the Last Supper, which ends up not being true, but then ends up being true later also. And then Peter is the one who also barrels into the tomb head first.

We talked about this in our community group a little bit last week. That's like, you have no idea what's in there. This dead body possibly could be really bad. And Peter just, boom, like straight into the tomb, like right by where Jesus was laying looking for what's going on.

So I think the question here is not that quantifiable love question, but is that passion and exuberance that you've shown, is that there? Do you love me? And so Jesus and Peter go back three times.

There's slight differences between all the questions and answers, but they're almost all identical. And Peter gets exasperated by the third time the question is asked. And that kind of makes sense.

[15:13] You know, you can say what once if you didn't hear what somebody said, but like if you don't hear them the second time, like you don't get another chance. You just have to pretend you understood what they said. So like there's, it feels like there's always room for like that clarifying question, but the third time is like, Lord, you know everything.

You know that I love you. And I think that the reason that Jesus asked him three times is not just because symbolism works well and you know, you denied me three times, so I have to ask you three times and that's how it's going to work.

I think that there's real restoration at work here. The answer to the question or the answer to Peter's answer is not, okay, you know, it's not, do you love me?

I love you. I forgive you. It's, do you love me? I love you. Feed my sheep, right? Jesus is doing, Jesus is doing more than just saying, don't worry about it.

He's really saying, I'm restoring Peter back to the commission I've given him to the church fully from that point of denial. And so I really think that each statement of denial is replaced with a call to serve.

[16:20] I think that the correct illustration here is probably something about restoring like old paintings and I looked at that a little bit when I was looking for like illustrations but I really don't understand enough about paintings. So maybe some of you do, it's like super meticulous the work they do to like restore a painting to look the way it used to but not too much and there's like these fights about, oh no, they made it too bright, that looks too much better.

Like whatever, I don't know. Car restoration is another thing where you have like a vintage car that you restore that's drivable so you can go and show it at shows. The thing that I know about is video games so I'm gonna share that with you.

And so about 30 years ago, you guys probably, a lot of you remember this, like the big TVs called CRTs, like when we didn't have HD TVs that were skinny and attached to the wall and you had to like lug them around like this to be able to set them down and the screen was only that big anyways.

Older video game systems were designed to run on those TVs and so if you find a way to finagle a 30 year old video game system onto an HD TV, you're gonna find out it doesn't look very good, and it doesn't respond very well.

And so there's this thing called emulation which is careful, tedious redesign of both the original systems processor and the game itself to be able to run it on modern TVs.

[17:30] And so one of the biggest gaming companies, Nintendo, made a small little emulator basically like that and reproduced, you know, the exact game as it was before. And so it handles absolutely beautifully but it also acts exactly like the game did and so it's restored in that sense.

And so Jimmy can actually attest to this. He was over at our house one afternoon. I think we were just like hanging out afterwards and Jimmy, like I showed it to Jimmy who had grown up with this system and he's like, this is amazing. He's kept being like, okay, just one more level.

Like if we're like, he was like, I'm just gonna try one level up front and then like 10 minutes later he's like, okay, I gotta stop for sure now. But it works exactly like it did. It was restored fully. And so when we think of restoration, we think of hard, tedious labor to bring something back to where it was.

This is not just a brushing under the rug. Jesus is really working on Peter here to restore him. And so once Jesus restores Peter from his past mistakes, he also gives him a future purpose to glorify God in his death.

And so verse 18, I mean verse 19 makes it clear that that's what he's describing. This is to show how he would glorify God in his death. Verse 18 is likely referring to crucifixion when it says stretch out your hands and being carried where you don't wanna go.

[18:47] And this is kind of the early church. That's the earliest records we have is that Peter was the first one martyred and that he was crucified. It's also possible, I would say likely that Peter had probably already been martyred by the time John had actually finished this gospel.

So he's probably describing at this point both the prophecy and that it did happen. And so what's interesting is that this is a reversal of the previous experience, right? John first lied to protect his own skin when he was in slight danger.

But Jesus is saying, next time that this happens, you're going to risk your own life and you're gonna give glory to God in doing it. So there's a future restoration there as well. One of the earliest instances of church martyrdom that we have recorded is of a bishop named Polycarp.

And he was put to trial before a proconsul and then executed. And the words that he uses are like, this is what I picture like Peter standing up before he was martyred.

And so the proconsul was insistent and said, take the oath and I shall release you to Polycarp. Curse Christ. And Polycarp said, 86 years I have served him and he never did me any wrong.

[19:58] How can I blaspheme my king who saved me? And so that's just a reversal. You know, Peter going from, oh, I don't even know this man to the example that Polycarp sets and probably Peter said, if we have the record, of absolutely affirming his belief in Jesus, even in the face of death.

So Jesus restores his past, you know, sets his future and then he gives him the open offer to restoration in the present with follow me, right? And I think that this is probably a literally like, hey,

come on, let's walk down the beach together, follow me.

But John does a lot of this double meaning stuff where it's, you know, okay, come and follow me. And so at this point, oh, sorry, follow me is kind of the way that Jesus calls the disciples back in John 1 originally too.

That's specifically the word he uses when he calls Philip. He says, you know, follow me. So at this point, Peter is fully back in the position he was before denying Jesus. And like I said before, restoration is not trivial.

It requires extreme work. And I think that work in this case is the death and resurrection of Jesus, that Jesus has died and come back to life. To bear Peter's sin in this instance, he can now call Peter back to restoration.

[ 21 : 07 ] And I mean, this is really like, this is one of the first actings out of the gospel that we see of direct forgiveness given to Peter. Um, every time personally that I wonder about whether God is, God forgives me or is like disappointed in me.

Um, this is the passage that I come back to because it's extremely clear to me that Jesus is the one restoring here. It's not about Peter coming back to Jesus. It's about Jesus working to forgive him even after he's denied Christ three times.

Um, and I hear two primary concerns from kind of two groups of people that might be wondering, you know, is God disappointed in me? Does God really forgive me? Does he really restore me?

Um, and I think the first group are, um, those who feel that they've committed, like, grievous faults.

Um, maybe they've hurt someone in a very lasting way or done something that was really wrong.

Um, and these people can, you know, hear, they might hear a Christian who professes, like, or confesses to, like, small sins, like, um, whatever it might be, just, you know, I struggle with pride or, you know, I'm struggling with, I got mad at somebody.

And they think to themselves, oh my gosh, what I've done is so much worse than this. Like, God's forgiveness is not for me or, like, God can't be pleased in me. Um, and those people never realize that Jesus can restore people from even the greatest of sins.

[ 22 : 20 ] Um, the second group of people are kind of the ones that might be sharing about, you know, I got angry at my neighbor or something like that. It's those who feel they consistently struggle with endlessly nagging small faults. And you may hear testimonies from, they may hear testimonies from people in the previous group of, you know, God bringing someone out of drug addiction or out of a strong belief against Christianity to believing in him.

And they might sit there and think, okay, God moves large things like that, but he's never gonna come after me in my small faults. Um, these people may never realize that Jesus is more persistent in his forgiveness than we are in our wrongdoing.

Um, and the fact that Jesus fully restores Peter should be an encouragement to all of us in that area. You know, Peter has fallen into both of these camps easily. He's made a lot of boneheaded small mistakes along the way consistently.

And he's had the great mistake of denying, literally denying Jesus. And keep in mind, this isn't just some guy. This is the man that goes on to lead the early church, right? And when I'm talking about restoration, I'm not talking about, oh, you can now do this little small thing.

No, Jesus fully restores him back to the calling that he had for him. Um, so I think that Jesus' restoration is powerful. Um, I think that we often think about restoration as something that only happens in heaven when things are made right.

[ 23 : 30 ] Um, and I think that God is working that in each and every one of us now. And I would not run it past him to, to, to work, continue working in your life. Ask him for these things because he continues to restore.

Um, so I imagine this is all kind of just swirling through Peter's head, um, including the statement, wait, didn't Jesus say I was going to die a brutal death before? Um, you know, I can just kind of picture that coming back to him while they're walking down the beach.

And Peter's like, okay, but you know, what about the guy behind me? Like, is he going to have to go through the same stuff I am? This sounds like, you know, pretty rough come to the end. Um, and Jesus' answer to Peter is pretty much, yeah, don't worry about it.

Right? He just is like, you know, if he, if it's my will that he remain until I come, what's that to you? You follow me. Um, and it appears that John's purpose for including this is initially the rumors, that rumors were spreading that Jesus like would come back before Peter died.

Someone took this out of context and spread it around. Um, and in contrast to Peter, John was likely the last apostle to be alive as he was writing, he was exiled and writing Revelation, uh, one of the latest books in the New Testament.

[ 24 : 36 ] Um, so it's possible that people are sitting there saying, oh my goodness, John's still alive. You know, you know, in five, 10 years or so, Jesus is going to come back because he's pretty old at this point, right? We've seen in the past that every prediction of Jesus is coming back that's before today has all been wrong.

And it also gets people really caught up in the, oh, when's it going to happen? Um, and so I could definitely see John giving this statement here to say like, okay, calm down. This is not what Jesus said. You've misinterpreted this.

This is what he actually said. He was just using me as a possible example of, um, Peter to contrast Peter not worrying about it and just to follow after Jesus. Um, and I think what's significant to us is how different Peter and John's calling was, right?

Even though that they both have this main goal to witness and glorify God. Uh, John ends up being the second most prolific author of the New Testament after Paul, right? He provides some of the most intimate testimony of Jesus and the testimony of his second coming again.

While Peter seems to be the de facto leader of the disciples, as we mentioned, but definitely goes on to lead the church and is at the front lines of God's Spirit's work in the church, particularly when they come to the Gentiles and that wall finally falls.

[ 25 : 44 ] The, it doesn't become the Jews or God's chosen people anymore, but there are chosen people from every tribe, race, and nation. And Peter's there for that, right? He's the one right there experiencing it. Um, as I mentioned before, John, you know, is called to live a long time.

Peter is called to an early death. Um, and something interesting is that they both have very different personalities. Um, it seems like, we don't know this for sure, but it seems like Peter and John were good friends from the writing here and the way that they, that John describes Peter.

Um, we know the two of them are working together, but they are just entirely different people. Uh, John's usually the first one to pick up on something and kind of think about it, and Peter's usually the first one to do something. Um, but God is using both of them for the same purpose.

Uh, and I think that there's both an encouragement and a challenge to us there. Uh, the encouragement is that Jesus's call on each of our lives can look very different from person to person. So if you're looking at somebody else next to you in church or someone else that you know, um, don't measure your spiritual success off of whether you've taken that same, the exact same path as somebody else, right?

It might look like somebody's living a better life than you are or has gotten something better than you have, but Jesus's answer to that is, no, just follow me, right? Um, and both of, uh, I think, you know, with this church, you know, some of us, we might be called to extremes here.

[ 27 : 05 ] Some of us may be called to preach Christ in countries that are violently opposed to Christianity. Um, and some of us may be called to live long lives and care for families and injustices in our own communities, but both of these things bring glory to God, and God is pleased with both of those callings.

Um, I think that the challenge is that, you know, in church, where this isn't necessarily like a friend group that you get together and pick, this is, each of us have been called by God to himself, and so there's gonna be different personalities here.

There's gonna be Peters and John sitting in this room, and there's gonna be all kinds of different personalities too, and you're not gonna get along with everybody right away. I'm gonna be honest with you, like, it doesn't work that way. You know that. There are some people you click with right away when you meet.

There are some people you're like, I just, I don't get that person. Like, how do they even process life? Like, it's just totally out of left field. Um, and Jesus provides the framework for this too, right? Yeah, my calling is on that person's life. You follow me, right? Um, and I think that this ends up being a blessing, and, um, I see people who, there are different recommendations.

[ 28 : 07 ] Should you, like, try to be mentored by someone who's similar to you? Should you try to be mentored by someone who's different than you, whether it's in work or in church or in life or whatever it might be? Um, and personally, like, all of my best mentors have been people that have processed things entirely differently than I have.

Um, Sean processes things entirely differently than I do, and I've really enjoyed sitting under him because of that. And I can, all the people that I've benefited from most in, like, work or life that I think back to are people that are like, they're, you know, I'm processing life this way and they're processing life this way, and it's just such a benefit to see all of those different perspectives and the different ways that people work.

Um, and so I think that that's, in God bringing together all the different people in the church, that's part of his design. Um, and a lot of personalities are meshing together, um, for the glory of God ultimately.

Um, so in the, the conclusion of this chapter, come to verses 24 and 25, uh, it, John kind of includes this as affirming his identity as the writer. You know, in John, in verse 24, he says, this is the disciple, this is the disciple who's bearing witness about these things, the disciple who, you know, uh, Peter and Jesus pointed back to.

Um, and so he's kind of, he's kind of signing the letter, he's kind of signing the letter at this point.

Um, and he's bearing witness about these things, which are the things that Jesus has done. And these things that he's done in this chapter, you know, he's referencing that.

[ 29 : 29 ] And a lot of the things he's done in this chapter are things he's done before where he, you know, loves generously, restores fully, calls uniquely. These are themes we've seen run through John. But, you know, Jesus has done miracles. He's spoken truths.

He's both called people to himself and scared them away from himself by the things that he said.

Um, and, you know, John is, John's ultimate purpose here is that he's clearly claiming to provide an eyewitness account to the greatness of who Jesus is.

Um, so if you're here and you're not a Christian or you're not sure what you believe or you're kind of, you're, you know, you're not, you're not quite sure where you're at. Um, a lot of these bold claims that John makes about Jesus I would just encourage you to pay attention to because he's making real truth claims here.

He's not just saying this is a cool idea that I had about this guy I met one time. He's literally saying, no, this is like an eyewitness account. This is the equivalent of a news story or a video reel because they didn't have those things back then.

This is literally as accurate as you can get at this point. And so he's saying, you know, Jesus is real and he's done these things. Um, but I hope more so for all of us, um, that we see the beauty of the things that Jesus did too.

[ 30 : 34 ] Um, particularly in this passage. We experience very little of the kind of love and forgiveness that Jesus demonstrates in this passage. But you know, if you've ever had someone that has worked with you to restore you after you've been beaten down by something in life, or if you've ever had a moment, big or small, where someone has come alongside you and loved you unconditionally in a way that's not beneficial at all to themselves, then you've, you've seen that these are beautiful moments.

Like you can remember those experiences and you appreciate them. And those are all little pieces of what Jesus' love looks like from this passage. And the encouragement to us is that those are the things that Jesus still does for his people today.

So, let me pray for us. Lord, I thank you for your love for us.

Lord, I thank you that you still generously provide for us. You still restore us. You still work in us.

That you call each one of us here uniquely, Lord, to different walks of life, but to walk together in you.

Lord, I pray that the words of John would just ring in our minds and our hearts for years to come just after going through John together as a church. Lord, I pray that there would just be some truths implanted in us, maybe that we don't even realize at this point, that we would carry with us for the rest of our lives.

[ 31 : 53 ] In Jesus' name, amen.