

**July, 2019 Bell**  
**Breakfast on the Beach**

“When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?” “Yes, Lord,” he said, “you know that I love you.”

Jesus said, “Tend my lambs.” 16 Again Jesus said, “Simon son of John, do you love me?”

He answered, “Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.”

Jesus said, “shepherd my sheep.” 17 The third time he said to him, “Simon son of John, do you love me?”

Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, “Do you love me?” He said, “Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you.” Jesus said, “Feed my sheep.

18 Very truly I tell you, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go.” 19 Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him, “Follow me!”

20 Peter turned and saw that the disciple whom Jesus loved was following them. (This was the one who had leaned back against Jesus at the supper and had said, “Lord, who is going to betray you?”) 21 When Peter saw him, he asked, “Lord, what about him?” 22 Jesus answered, “If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you? You must follow me.” 23 Because of this, the rumor spread among the believers that this disciple would not die. But Jesus did not say that he would not die; he only said, “If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you?”

Throughout Scripture we see people called to a specific purpose in God’s plan. Noah seems to begin this with building a really big boat. Abraham is called to leave everything and travel to a distant land. Moses, the stutterer, is called to lead God’s people out of bondage. Daniel is called to be different in a culture opposed to God. Jeremiah is called to preach destruction and judgement to his people. Hosea, poor Hosea, is called to marry a prostitute so that he could demonstrate to God’s people the unfaithfulness that God put up with from the Jewish people, who claimed to love Him. Each of these calls is unique. And each of these calls comes at the beginning of their ministry. Also at the beginning of their story as we know it.

The story in John 21 is the telling of Peter’s call to lead the disciples and the early church. One of the many unique aspects of Peter’s call in this chapter is that it comes half way through Peter’s story as we know it. Peter had always been seen as a leader, or the leader of the disciples even before Jesus ascended back to Heaven. Initially, Peter was called from his boat by Jesus to be a “fisher of man.” That was the beginning of his story. From that time on Peter shows himself to be a bit on the

brash side. Maybe brash isn’t the right word. Maybe ungrounded is a better word to describe Peter and his attitude and actions. He continually speaks long before actually thinking. He makes promises that he cannot keep. He makes statements about his own commitment that wouldn’t last a full night.

When chapter 21 opens up Peter is at the point of being ready to return to his former life. For three and a half years he had followed Jesus. But now Jesus is gone and Peter has no direction, no guidance and no view of the future. Jesus, as he had done earlier, picks up Peter, dusts him off and puts him back on the narrow path. Three times Peter had disavowed his Lord and three time his Lord asks him, “Peter do you love me?” One question for each rejection. Each time Peter professes his love, Jesus gives him a purpose. In other words, “Peter if you love me then you will tend my sheep, shepherd my sheep and feed my sheep.” Peter’s life was at its lowest possible point. He had rejected the man whom he followed for over three years, but now that man, his Lord, is forgiving him, putting him back together and preparing him for the future.

Jesus even gives Peter a glimpse of the future, when he tells him in verse 18, “Very truly I tell you, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go.” Ditttrich Bonhoeffer wrote in his work *The Cost of Disciplinship*, “when Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die.” That is exactly what Jesus does with Peter. It’s almost as if Jesus is saying, “Peter if you love me then serve the purpose I have given you and one day you can die for me. Follow Me.” It seems from the text that Peter didn’t even blink. But while it seems it was easy for Peter to accept this new commission from Jesus, it was impossible to get rid of the old Peter. At that moment Peter looks over at John and ask Jesus, “Lord, what about him?” Jesus answered, “If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you? You must follow me.” The easiest way to see this is as an admonition to Peter and to us, “Worry about yourself, everyone has a purpose and a mission. What is yours? You must follow Jesus to the purpose he has called you. Others may be serving a different purpose, another part of His will.”

If we are honest we can see a little of Simon-Peter in all of us. It funny when you read the Gospels you see Jesus calling Peter by the name Simon when he is being sinful or acting foolishly. When he calls him Peter it is always when Peter is acting like he is saved. Like he really knows Jesus.

My point in all of this is that like Simon-Peter, we are always competing inside with our selves over which calling we are going to embrace. Is it the call that Jesus makes on our lives or is it the call within us to follow the world, or our own purpose. We cannot serve both. Like

Jesus told Peter, "You must follow me." If we are following Him then we should see in our lives the fruit that comes from "tending His lambs, shepherding His sheep and feeding His sheep."

## Queries

5. Do you seek the conversion and spiritual development of your young people? Do you endeavor to instruct them in principles and practices of Friends? Do you strive to create a community life that will promote their spiritual, mental, and physical well-being?

6. Do you observe simplicity and moderation in your manner of living? Do you give proper attention to the rules of health? Are you careful to avoid all places of amusement and that are inconsistent with Christian character?

Do you practice total abstinence from tobacco, narcotics, and alcoholic beverages?

## **Coming Activities:**

Baby shower for our three new babies following potluck meal Aug 18

Deeper will start Aug 21

Family Camp at Quaker Heights  
September 13-15

USFW Fall Retreat  
September 20-21 CQH

## **LIBRARY LEDGE – QUAKERS**

**Growing Up Plain – The Journey of a Public Friend** by Wilmer A. Cooper, **The Quakers in Puritan England** by Hugh Barbour, **Faith and Practice by the Indiana Yearly Meeting, Discipline of Iowa Yearly Meeting of Friends 1990**, and **The Inward Journey of Isaac Penington**, which is a short publication of sections from the writings of Penington. **The Beginnings of Quakerism, The Second Period of Quakerism, Imagination & Spirit –**

**A Contemporary Quaker Reader, Friends for 300 years, Silent Friends – A Quaker Quilt, Quaker Quotations on Faith & Practice, Quakers on the American Frontier, A Living Faith – An Historical Study of Quaker Beliefs, A Near Sympathy – The Timeless Quaker Wisdom of John Woolman, and No Cross, No Crown**

*I appreciated all of you that came to hear about my ministry at Grand View University. The encouragement from you was overwhelming! If you would like to get in touch with me to learn more about this or have questions, my phone number is 641-751-8763. I would love to talk with you! I feel blessed to have grown up in this church! Jennifer Davis*

## **OF ALL THINGS WE WEAR OUR EXPRESSION IS THE MOST IMPORTANT**

Our Mystery Friend for July was born in Central Iowa. He/She went to school in a schoolhouse in Central Iowa. Their current job includes food production. Favorite food is prime rib, medium-rare. Most people would not know that this person has 27 living descendants. He/She has traveled to the mountains: Poconos-- Cascades, Brooks Range--Denali, Cascades--Adirondacks, White--Alps. They commented that they especially like the sincerity of Faith that is expressed and unexpressed at Bangor Liberty—and crying babies.

AEIITRNNML

The Mystery Friend for June was Ryan Woiwood.

*A coffee break is good, a prayer break is better; a praise break is best*