

Feed my Sheep

Introduction

To many, John 21 may seem to be something of an anomaly, a kind of add-on to an already complete piece of work. After all, the resurrection has been described, a great declaration of faith made and John's purpose in writing clearly spelled out. Why, they ask, the extra chapter? As may be expected, the discussion around the answer to this question is extensive and at times quite technical. For our purposes however, one simple fact must be born in mind: the answer to this question must arise out of what the text actually says. What then, does John 21 add? *First*, John 21 describes the three-fold restoration of Peter following his three-fold denial, and thus lays the platform for Peter's role as the spokesman for the church on the day of Pentecost. *Second*, John 21 reinforces Jesus' teaching in the upper room regarding the hostility of the world as well as His sovereign rule over the lives of each of His followers. *Third*, John 21 reaffirms the calling of the apostles – to be witnesses for Jesus as He Himself had commanded them. John 20vs30-31 reflects a later, more mature perspective on the part of the apostles. Following Thomas' declaration of faith however, Jesus must again appear to the disciples (this time in Galilee) and reinforce their calling to 'feed His sheep'. *Fourth*, John 21 underscores the truthfulness and reliability of John's testimony to Jesus – it should be believed and does lead to Life, because it is **true**. In our present world where like Pilate, so many say "what is truth?" this is no small or unimportant claim!

Study Questions

These questions help you to see clearly what the text is saying. This is a vital first step towards understanding what the text means. The questions should be answered from the text itself.

Read John 21vs1-25. Answer the following questions:

1. Where did Jesus appear to His disciples? What were they doing? What was the significance of this fact?

