

# When It Doesn't Seem to Make Sense

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[ 0 : 00 ] Turn in your Bibles to John chapter 3, beginning in verse 1.

John chapter 3, beginning in verse 1. On Wednesday nights, even though Awana is not happening, we still have youth.

And so we still have a few kids that come. And I give them a charge, if you will, this past Wednesday. I said, even though things are not as busy around the church, from here on, the rest is somewhere we're going to get pretty heavy in there.

And we started Wednesday night by getting to the hard stuff. Getting to the hard stuff of, what's your Christian walk look like?

What's going on with it? Are you in a rut? Are you not pursuing Christ? Are you going through the motions? What's going on with you?

[ 1 : 10 ] And so tonight, I kind of want to do the same, but also we have some microphones. And tonight, I have to admit, for the last couple of weeks, I said, Lord, would you give me a word?

And I feel like he hasn't given me a word. But maybe something along the lines of what we're doing in Wednesday night youth is looking at our hearts. Looking at our own hearts and seeing where we're at.

And so in John chapter 3, we're going to start here. There was a man from the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. This man came to him at night and said, Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God.

For no one could perform these signs you do unless God were with him. Jesus replied, truly I tell you, unless someone is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

How can anyone be born when he is old? Nicodemus asked him. Can he enter his mother's womb a second time and be born? Jesus answered, truly I tell you, unless someone is born of water and the spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.

[ 2 : 19 ] Whatever is born of the flesh is flesh and whatever is born of the spirit is spirit. Do not be amazed that I told you that you must be born again. The wind blows where it pleases and you hear it sound.

But you don't know where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the spirit. How can these things be? asked Nicodemus. Are you a teacher of Israel and don't know these things?

Jesus replied, truly I tell you, we speak what we know and we testify to what we have seen. But you do not accept our testimony. If I have told you about earthly things and you don't believe, how will you believe if I tell you about heavenly things?

No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the son of man. Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the son of man must be lifted up. So that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life.

For God loved the world in this way. He gave his one and only son so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his son into the world to condemn the world but to save the world through him.

[ 3 : 23 ] Anyone who believes in him is not condemned but anyone who does not believe is already condemned. Because he has not believed in the name of the one and only son of God. This is the judgment.

The light has come into the world and people love darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. For everyone who does evil hates the light and avoids it. So that his deeds may not be exposed.

But anyone who lives by the truth comes to the light. So that his works may be shown to be accomplished by God. This morning, there's a good word from Nick this morning. And something that he said early on talking about Sunfest. I don't know who it was but he said, I believe it was one of the ladies of the church.

Was nervous about sharing. Nervous about standing up for the truth. The gospel. And just doing that in the moment she did.

[ 4 : 22 ] The excitement. I mean, I can't imagine the excitement when this person was saying that to him. But that's what it's all about. When it doesn't seem to make sense.

Anybody ever had that moment? Maybe in your Christian life or maybe beforehand. Or you've heard the gospel. If you can take yourself back to that moment. When you professed that you are a sinner.

That you needed Jesus as your Lord and Savior. Afterwards, shortly after. Was there a moment for you that didn't quite make sense? If you have one of those.

Feel free to go up to the microphone. And I want to hear it. And we all need to hear it. We all need to be able to be vulnerable.

I've said many times in small groups and stuff. That we as a church. When the loss come in. We have this perfect smile on our face.

[ 5 : 22 ] We are these people. We show the world these people who truly do not exist. And so if you have that moment when the word of God maybe.

Or when he's asked you to do something. It didn't quite make sense. Would you be willing to share that with us? And for a couple of minutes. Anybody? I am the woman from Sunfest.

Okay. I was very nervous before. It's not that I haven't ever shared the gospel before. But before I just felt like I did such a terrible job.

And so we had the meeting for Sunfest to talk through that. Quite frankly, when I approached this young man.

And offered him water and all that. And I asked him if he had a church. And he said no. I said, well, have you heard the good news of Jesus Christ? And he said, no.

[ 6 : 20 ] And I said, well, would you mind if I share the good news of Jesus Christ with you? And then he said yes. And it was like, I just froze.

I just froze. But I just started. And I can't even remember how I started. But I remember thinking, you are off track. You need to go back to the beginning.

And so that's what I did. But it was an amazing thing. Because I was so nervous. And it's like everything that you know just flies out of your head.

And it's just like you're trying to, you know. But anyway, this young man looked me straight in the eye. And I looked him straight in the eye. And neither one of us ever looked away.

And what I found is that as I began to share the gospel with him, I could feel this power, this confidence, I guess maybe is what it is.

[ 7 : 26 ] Confidence. And I became more and more confident about what I was saying. And I just continued on through the end.

And I'm sorry I left Jesus on the cross. I hate that. But I got to the end. And then I said, if you don't know Jesus Christ, it's very simple to accept him as your Savior.

If you need more time to process what I've said, I do want to tell you how that can happen for you. And so I went through the steps of that.

And then at the very end, there was so much joy. I just reached out and took him by the shoulders. And I said, and your life will never be the same again. I don't know what he thought about that. But anyway, he asked me my name.

[ 8 : 34 ] And I told him. And I asked him his name. And he told me. And that was the end. Thank you.

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. And I was hoping I was going to get to hear that story. And for some reason, I kind of thought it would be you.

But, you know, as you tell that story, when it doesn't seem to make sense, but when you take those steps of obedience, it begins to make sense at that very moment.

And to see and to hear your joy. And I can imagine, because I've had that joy before, when you're standing in front of somebody, you're sharing the gospel, and you're telling them this amazing story of salvation.

And the way you grabbed him, that brings a smile to my face, because I get it. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. [ 9 : 42 ] Yeah. And, you know, you said you left him on the cross. The Lord will still honor your willingness to stand up and share the gospel. And I believe that that's not going to be the last time he's going to hear the gospel.

So the Lord will honor your willingness to be obedient, just to take that step. So, yeah, obviously Jesus didn't stay on the cross.

But like I said, I think the Lord will honor your willingness to be faithful. That's what he calls us to do. Anybody else? When it doesn't seem to make sense. I wouldn't say that this doesn't make sense necessarily, but I've been listening to some podcasts that say if you're not calling out sin when you're talking to someone about Christ, that you're not doing it right, that you've got to point that sin out first, because if there's nothing to be saved from, you don't need saving.

And I think a lot of times we think if we're not, if we sit silently, well, we're not accepting it. That's okay. Right? We're not agreeing with it. We can't be silent, though.

And so I made a post on Facebook about how the rainbow is a sign of a covenant from God saying he will never destroy the earth through a flood and not a sign about the pride of our sin.

[ 11 : 05 ] And, of course, the comments that came, the first one was, can you imagine so much hate and declaring that it's God? So I took a moment and I thought, and I said, there's absolutely no hate here.

In fact, it's quite the opposite. If I see someone walking to the edge of a cliff and they're going to fall to their death, of course I'm going to tell them to turn around. I want them to be saved.

I want them to know. And, you know, I think that murder is wrong. It's a sin. And I'm sure you would agree. Everyone would. I don't hate murderers.

I hate that they've murdered. Same goes for, you know, homosexuality or anything else. And I think, I eventually turned off comments because it was becoming overwhelming, but I had someone reach out and tell me that they were inspired, that I had listened to God saying, okay, it's time for you to speak up.

And that meant a lot to know that, you know, God said to her, to me, thank you for listening. In those times of obedience, he always has a way to show us that he's right there with us.

[ 12 : 17 ] And when I was trying to come up with this, and it doesn't seem to make sense, I look at Nicodemus here. And obviously he knew what Jesus had been doing in his ministry, all these miraculous things.

And he knew Jesus was from God. And so he wanted to talk to him. He wanted to talk to him at night. And so as he wanted to talk to him at night, Jesus began revealing truth to him.

And so it's still not making sense, obviously. And he talks about going back into the womb. And that sounds silly to us because we know the whole picture. But for him, he knew the scripture, the Old Testament, he knew all that.

But here's Jesus. He's kind of, he's filling in the gaps of, this is what your scripture says. This is what scripture says about who I am. And here I am telling you right in front of you.

I'm telling you, if you're not born again, if you're not, if your life is not changed, you won't be in heaven. So that's what Nicodemus is saying here.

[ 13 : 27 ] How can, in verse four, how can anyone be born when he is old? Nicodemus asked him, how can he enter his mother's womb a second time and be born? And Jesus, truly I tell you, unless someone is born of water and the spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.

What is ever born of the flesh is flesh and whatever is born of the spirit is spirit. So Nicodemus and all the people, all the higher ups like him, they knew the law, obviously.

They knew the ins and outs of the law. And it's something that they looked at was the cleanliness of the outside flesh, the cleanliness. And that's what Jesus is talking about, being born of water, is getting that, getting cleansed, getting your outside cleansed.

Obviously, they're going to be walking in dirt all the time. They're all going to be dirty. So being clean, that was something that they highly respected was to be a clean person.

And so here's Jesus telling him, no, unless you're born of the spirit, that's what cleans the heart. So it cleans the heart.

[ 14 : 40 ] And so oftentimes we get into that same position. We become legalists, so to speak. And again, like I said earlier, so often we put our best smile on on Sunday mornings when we have visitors.

Yeah, we need to be that godly example, but we also don't need to lie. We need to be truthful with people. We need to be, like Nick said this morning, we need to be truthful with each other.

That's what the Bible tells us, to confess our sins to each other. We don't get, we're not relieved of that confession by people, obviously through Christ and God's.

He's the one that restores us. But when we confess our sins to each other, it allows us to grow. It allows us not only to be vulnerable, but also to help somebody else say, this person's reaching out to me.

I need to get into the word. I need to understand what this person is trying to say. And I need to be vulnerable as well. That's how we grow. That's how we grow as a body.

[15:50] I look at the first church. I love the first church in Acts, how they were all together. If there was a need, they took care of it. If we'd all be honest, we all have needs in here, right?

But some of our needs, we don't want to share with each other. Because we may be worried about what our fellow brothers and sisters are going to say about our needs.

But we need to be honest. And that doesn't make sense to us. It doesn't make sense because the world tells us, and we've come into this mindset that we need to keep things to ourself.

We need to put our best foot forward. We need to be the godly example of almost perfect to the church and to the people who come in. That's what the world tells us.

We've got on this foot somehow. But we see, and we often forget the truth. Just like Jesus is giving Nicodemus the truth, it's hard for Nicodemus to understand because he's not grasping it.

[17:00] He's grasping all the other things like the cleansing of the skin instead of the cleansing of the heart. Sometimes that's how we miss it too. I remember when reading about Nicodemus and reading that and kind of giggling because that sounds silly.

That sounds silly to be born, to go back into the womb and be born again. That sounds like a silly statement, but the way we react to some things, we're basically doing the same thing.

The way we live and what we say, we're doing the same thing. We're not, we're in a sense like Nicodemus here. We're saying something silly when it should be obvious.

Truly I tell you, unless someone is born of water and the spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. whatever is born of the flesh and whatever is born of the spirit is spirit. Do not be amazed that I told you that you must be born again.

The wind blows where it pleases and you hear it sound, but you don't know where it comes from or where it's going. See, when we're of the spirit, even though we can't see the spirit, we see the fruits of the spirit.

[18:17] We can see the spirit working in people. Just like two examples tonight, we see the spirit working in people. But it's hard to, when somebody is lost, it's hard to explain to somebody, okay, this is the Holy Spirit.

Holy Spirit lives within you. When you're talking to somebody that's lost, it really doesn't make sense. But when they see the joy of sharing the gospel with somebody, man, this is good news. Grab them by the shoulders. Or when you speak up and proclaim sin, and you see God at work in both of those instances, people can see the spirit in them.

I'm sure you made an impact on that guy, on that, however old he was. I mean, for him just to stand there and listen to you.

At Sunfest, there was a young guy, he was probably 15 or so. I just tried to say hi to him. I said, you need some water. He didn't even look at me. Kept his head down, just shook his head, and just kept walking.

[19:32] And so for you to make that kind of an impact, for him to stand there and listen to the good news of Jesus Christ, the spirit, that's the spirit working. And here we see Nicodemus, again, not necessarily getting it.

As Jesus continues to tell him over and over, in John 3.16, we see that in this set of scripture. So Jesus is telling him all of this.

He's intrigued. Nicodemus is intrigued. And so it stops right there at the end of verse 21. Verse 21 says, but anyone who lives by the truth comes to the light so that his works be shown to be accomplished by God.

in John chapter 7, verse 45. John chapter 7, verse 45.

It says, then the servants came to the chief priests and Pharisees who asked them, why didn't you bring him? The servants answered, no man ever spoke like this. Then the Pharisees responded to

them, are you fooled too?

[ 20 : 54 ] Have any of the rulers or Pharisees believed in him? But this crowd who doesn't know the law is accursed. Verse 50. Nicodemus, the one who came to him previously and who was one of them, said to them, our law doesn't judge you before it hears from him and knows what he's doing, does it?

You weren't from Galilee too, are you? They replied, investigate and you will see that no prophet arises from Galilee. So we see another instance of Nicodemus popping up.

Obviously, the conversation that he had with Jesus made an impact. So when Jesus comes up again amongst the rulers, he says, hold on, he takes Jesus' side here.

It doesn't yet say that he's a believer, but he's taken up on Jesus' side here. The Holy Spirit's working in Nicodemus who knew the law inside and out.

Who obviously, in John 3, it didn't make sense to him. But he's thought about it. I'm sure we went back and read scripture in the Old Testament and he's beginning to figure things out.

[ 22 : 19 ] In John chapter 19, verse 38. John 19, verse 38. verse 38 says this, after this, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly, because of his fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might remove Jesus' body.

Pilate gave him permission so that he came and took his body away. Nicodemus, who had previously come to him at night, also came, bringing a mixture of about 75 pounds of myrrh and aloes.

They took Jesus' body and wrapped it in linen cloth with fragrant spices, according to the burial custom of the Jews. There was a garden in the place where he was crucified. A new tomb was in the garden.

No one yet had been placed in it. They placed Jesus there because of the Jewish day of preparation and since the tomb was nearby. we see Nicodemus again before he met with Jesus at night because he didn't want to be seen with him.

Even though he was intrigued by his ministry so far, he didn't want to be known to be with Jesus.

And so when Jesus comes up to the higher ups again in chapter 7, we see that Nicodemus takes a small stand for Jesus.

[ 23 : 51 ] But we see here in John 19, Nicodemus makes it known before everyone in daylight that he's there because of Jesus.

He's making it known to everyone that he loves Jesus when it doesn't seem to make sense. Going back to John 3, thinking about that when it doesn't seem to make sense.

Obviously, it didn't make sense for Nicodemus. But we see the working of God within Nicodemus to where all of a sudden he couldn't help but be known to love Jesus Christ.

He couldn't help. He loved him. And when he died, he wanted to take care of him. And they said it took a lot of money to buy all that stuff.

He was willing to give up some of his own possessions, his own money to make sure Jesus was buried correctly when it doesn't seem to make sense.

[ 25 : 01 ] You know, the last six or seven years, it does make sense, but it doesn't make sense to me of who I am, of a big Native American been changed by the Lord.

Lord, and I know I have the Holy Spirit dwelling with inside me because I've done some crazy things that really, when I look back, sometimes I'm like, wow, I did that. But no, the Holy Spirit did that.

And I tell you, the working of the Holy Spirit and the working of how the Holy Spirit works with inside us as God's children, and he made that promise to us that we would receive the counselor, that we would receive the Holy Spirit to help us in our daily life.

Now, I'll share an instance with you. My first trip to Zimbabwe, I was in youth at First Baptist Oshalada, and that was my first time to go overseas or outside the country, and I was scared to death that whole 10 days.

But since I was in charge of the youth in Oshalada, they asked me to do a youth class on a Sunday morning, and so I did, and they asked me to do it over purity. And so I did the class, and it was about 40 minutes long.

[ 26 : 33 ] It wasn't anything like this. We were outside, away from a secondary school. They didn't have any church or anything, and so all the kids, they ranged from, I would say, from 12 to like 20, 22, 23.

They were all sitting on these rocks just listening. They listened very well. And so when I finished up, again, just talking about purity and how God honors that and how God desires that for us, and I said, are there any questions?

And there's one, one young, well, I say younger. He was probably in his late teens. He raises his hand. I pointed at him, said yes. And this is all the Holy Spirit.

he says, does God hate me because I was raped when I was little? And all of a sudden, my heart just sank because at that moment, I began thinking on my own accord, but all of a sudden, the Lord says, I'm here.

And I said, Lord, even though I didn't bow my head and even though I didn't say it out loud, I said, Lord, give me the words to say. And so I kind of looked at my interpreter for a second, looked back at the student because he was really intently listening, and I just shared what I thought and I went back to babies when kids are able to make that decision to follow Christ and to realize that they are a sinner.

[ 28 : 16 ] I went back to that in the sense of, I said, God loves you because you had no control over your life and what was happening at that time in your life because he was a little kid.

I said, God loves you. God can restore you. I said, just because that happened to you, and I know I said and I talked about when we were talking about purity, you had no control over that.

That's what I told him. I said, you had no control over it. God loves you. He still wants a relationship with you. And at that moment, I looked at my interpreter interpreter.

He says, that's good. I said, okay. But that was the Holy Spirit. And that moment where that question didn't make sense to me because I didn't understand it.

I didn't, I didn't know where that, where that guy was coming from, where that teen was coming from because I never experienced it. but when it didn't make sense, the Holy Spirit did.

[ 29 : 27 ] And he allowed me, he allowed me to be his voice that day. And what a joy that is. Just like, just like you said, it was a joy. And, and, and I, and I can assume when you shared on Facebook and that person reached out to you and said that was an encouragement to you, that was a joy, right?

There was some joy there. Would you, Christian, would you, would you say there was some joy when you got that encouraging to know that God is always there. He calls us to do things that don't make sense to us in our, in our own minds.

It doesn't make sense. But when you do it and when you're led by the Holy Spirit and you begin to see how it makes sense this weekend, um, or on Friday night, it doesn't look like it, but I used to do what's called Oklahoma Freeway.

It's a bicycle ride from the southern border of the state to the northern border. So you'd go right to the Texas border and on Saturday and then next Saturday you'd ride into Kansas.

And, um, I did that for four years and, uh, three of my friends that I last did it in 2014, as you can tell. It's, it's all come back. uh, but I got to meet with, um, three of my friends who did it back then and they were in Grove.

[ 30 : 53 ] That was their Friday night stop. So Nikki and I, we drove to Grove, took Ruby with us and Ruby was a hit. But, I had a brother, um, one of my buddies that was one of the three.

He's a, he's a, he's a believer. And he just began sharing with, with Nikki and I what's been going on with him lately and just seeing the Holy Spirit work in him and, and he used to be an educator.

And then a student's parent got into his face because his student, this student was bullying another student and, and he, um, oh, what's him?

Disciplined the child and then the parents, then the child's parent came and just reamed him out. And from that, then, from that moment on, he had all kinds of anxiety.

He had to get out of the profession and he still struggles with it. But he was telling Nikki and I the other day and there came to a point to where he just had to give it over.

[ 32 : 01 ] He finally give it over and just to see him, you could tell he's been released, he's beginning that release of that anxiety to where he can continue to function.

Because as an educator, you got to deal with parents. You're going to deal with parents. But to hear him say the anxiety was where he, he couldn't sleep.

It was eating him up. He said he was crying on his wife's shoulder all the time. And he just talked about he's not in that profession anymore.

And I think this was within the last year or so. And he's giving it over to God. And because he's giving it over and stopped trying to figure out all the, all the little things about it, he's seeing God work in his life.

He's beginning to be able to get out. And he said that ride this, the Oklahoma Freewell this past week has really helped him out with that. He didn't realize it would. But for him, it didn't make sense. [ 33 : 10 ] But when he released it, he began to see God's hand at work. in 1 Peter 3, beginning in verse 13. 1 Peter 3, beginning in verse 13.

Verse 13 says, who then will harm you if you are devoted to what is good. But even if you should suffer, but even if you should suffer for righteousness, you are blessed.

Do not fear what they fear or be intimidated. But in your hearts, regard Christ the Lord as holy, ready at any time to give a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you. Yet do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience so that when you are accused, those who disparage your good conduct in Christ will be put to shame. For it is better to suffer for doing good if that should be God's will than doing evil.

What strikes me about this, about we're getting a encouragement to suffer. Can I look at who's writing this, Peter?

[ 34 : 25 ] And just as Pastor Mike has been preaching in John and we see Peter and we see Peter deny Jesus. It's so comforting to know that someone who treated Jesus as Peter did can write such an encouraging word.

We see where Peter was by denying Jesus to see here Peter is. take the suffering. It's better to suffer.

It's interesting how God changes lives. It's amazing how he changes lives. Something that really struck me about when Peter was denying Jesus was God John chapter 18 verse 18 it says now the servants and the officials had made a charcoal fire because it was cold.

And if you're just reading this you're like okay charcoal fire they're cold anybody in that situation will warm themselves up by making a fire. fire. And for me I was looking at I read out of the CSB but also I looked it up in the ESV and then this moment it mentions a charcoal fire.

And this is some scripture that I went over with the students a few Wednesdays ago talking about that charcoal fire. When I think of charcoal I think of the barbecue and man that smells good.

[ 36 : 09 ] goodness y'all have is there a smell that when you smell it it just takes you back to something some fun time some good time.

I have plenty of them. But is there something in a sense maybe a smell maybe a sign maybe a TV show that takes you to a point where you were hurting really bad.

I have those too. I have those too. But to see it being mentioned here right when Peter is denying Jesus it says after Peter denied Jesus he was distraught he was crying he was beside himself because he realized that's what Jesus said was going to happen even though Peter said no I'm not going to do that I'm going to be here for you.

And then once the rooster crows Peter realized he just denied Christ three times just as Christ said and then it said he wept about it and all along as he's weeping all along he realizes the way he betrayed Jesus and denied him I think of that charcoal smell that smell of it's stuck in his nose and from that moment on when he smells a charcoal fire he's going to be taken back to that moment to where he denies Jesus one of those things that reminds us of something bad happening in our life at some point in time there's a smell there's a sign a TV show whatever it is it takes us back and we don't like to go back to those things but in John 21 John 21 verse!

John 21 verse 9 when they got out on land they saw a charcoal fire there with fish lying on it and bread bring some of the fish you just caught Jesus told them Simon Peter climbed up and hauled the net ashore full of large fish 153 of them even though there were so many the net was not torn come and have breakfast Jesus told them none of the disciples dared ask him who are you because they knew it was the Lord Jesus came took the bread and gave it to them he did the same with the fish this was now the third time Jesus appeared to the disciples after he was raised from the dead when they had eaten breakfast!

[ 39 : 15 ] He told him he asked him a third time Simon son of John do you love me Peter was grieved that he asked him the third time do you love me he said Lord you know everything you know that I love you feed my sheep Jesus said truly I tell you when you were younger you would tie your belt and walk wherever you wanted but when you grow old you will stretch out your hands and someone else will tie you and carry you where you don't want to go he said this to indicate what

kind of death Peter would glorify God after saying this he told him follow me so just as this is how I take it just as Peter denied Jesus his nose was filled with that smell of the charcoal fire and so every time again when he would smell that charcoal fire and again this is me this is my thought that he would be taken back to that moment he denied Jesus every time he smelled the charcoal fire but we see here as they meet

Jesus for the third time after the resurrection there's a charcoal fire and I wonder if Peter began to be heartbroken by that again and then as Jesus began to ask Peter do you love me three times just as many times he denied him just as many times each time he said do you love me yes Lord you know that I love you feed my lambs!

Jesus is saying I still going to use you feed my lambs I have a plan for you and again Jesus says Simon do you love me yes Lord you know that I love you shepherd my people I have another job for you I have another job for you Peter and then the third time Simon son of John do you love me Peter was grieved that he asked do you love me a third time Lord you know everything you know that I love you feed my sheep and then he began to tell him how he was going to die see at that moment Jesus has just entrusted Peter to share the gospel to share the truth with the world even though just few days earlier he denied

Jesus and think about it at this again this is my thinking there's a charcoal fire I can't imagine having a pep talk like this even though Jesus is looking at the heart even though Jesus is saying this is what I need you to do can you imagine having Jesus come up and tell you hey I need you to do this for me I need you to go talk to this person I need you to go help them out can you imagine how much of an encouragement it would be just to hear Jesus' voice in your ear saying that to you in person knowing that he has redeemed you from denying him because Jesus just redeemed Peter from the three times that he denied him he just redeemed him by asking Peter by saying do you love me and Peter says you know my heart and he says feed my sheep and

I have to think at that moment that that that charcoal fire that once have a bad odor of this is what I did to Jesus has just been replaced by oh what a joy it is to love in Christ to be with Christ every day and to be redeemed by Christ and so I think every time I have to feel every time if it was me that every time I would smell a charcoal fire I have to my mind instantly goes back to the moment Jesus redeemed me so when Peter took that moment of denying Jesus and his nose was filled with charcoal smoke Jesus even took care of that for him by giving that smell a new odor of being redeemed now I'm going to ask you guys as well Wednesday night I asked the students I want you to think about this for a second here we are

[ 44 : 08 ] Sunday night crowds a lot smaller but as we are God's children he has redeemed us for a moment I want you to go back to the moment that you realized you were a sinner that you needed Jesus as a savior go back to that moment you made that decision go back to what it felt like at that moment think about that for just a minute you remember that weight being lifted off of your shoulders the weight of God's wrath the feeling of God's love embracing you I told the kids I remember I was walking down was walking down the side of the aisle and I felt I felt completely different and I remember a student from Falls

Creek last year and I told him I said he said he wanted Jesus in his life I said well you tell Jesus what you want he said I don't know how to pray I said yes you do you're talking to God and you're telling him what what you've just found out and what you need in your life and so he prayed he said God I need you in my life every day I'm a sinner I need you to I need you to guide me every day I need you every day and afterwards I hugged him I said how do you feel he said I feel light he's smiling he's kind of being jumpy he was already jumpy anyways but he was really jumpy he felt different you could see it in his face but I said I want you guys all right you've thought about what remember in that moment that decision was made that weight being lifted now come to today and Jesus said to each and every one of you and me do you love him if Jesus said to you right now do you love me based on he knows your heart right now at this very moment based on what's going on in your life he knows your heart based on where you're at what he said I need you to do some work for me I ask again if Jesus said to you at this very moment do you love me maybe you have the same reaction of Peter yes Lord you know I love you but there's a reason why he asked us and Peter here so many times he asked us to do something for him and by our obedience that's how he knows that we love him that's why he's always asking us to do something to show us for that he knows that we are willing to listen that we are willing to go out of our comfort zone when it doesn't seem to make sense and he says do you love me what steps are you taking for to say to say you

know to shepherd my sheep feed my sheep so

I want to challenge you all tonight as well just like I challenged the Wednesday night youth class I challenged what these these three times that Jesus asked Peter do you love me and like I said he and you guys know he knows your heart already but it's something that we need to look at as individuals we know how we're responding to Jesus asking this question when's the last time you were obedient see we've been redeemed Jesus says do you love me I think it's something we need to run by ourselves every day by our actions by our words by our obedience does Jesus really see in our hearts that we do love him I could tell the students this isn't easy it's not easy to bring to bring up this kind of hardships because we could go into other parts of the Bible and study that but I really feel like the Lord has pressed!

[ 49 : 27 ] upon my heart to get down to the nitty gritty so to speak by bypassing the hard stuff I'm not doing what I'm called to do I'm not encouraging I'm not helping students pushing them out of their comfort zone to where we can be to where that didn't make sense at the time but now it does because I saw God's hand on it when it doesn't seem to make sense I'm thankful we got God's word that we know we know there's no we don't have any questions that can't be answered when it doesn't seem to make sense we have all kinds of examples of we look at Peter we look at Nicodemus to when you hear truth and when you're faced with the hardships!

of life sometimes we take the easy route out but as we see in both of these God had his hand on the situation just like our lives so I hope this would be an encouragement to you like I was saying earlier I really didn't feel like the Lord had given me a preachy word so to speak but I wanted to hear from you all I wanted to hear that story especially because I was intrigued by that this morning to hear that knowing that you now hearing your joy that you had we need to share how the Lord is working with each other go up and ask your brothers and sisters how has the Lord been working in your life we need to hear that this world has beaten us down we have to be one!

we have to be!!! united when we're united when we are taking up the burdens on each one of us and we're taking up your burden your burden whoever's burden when we're sharing that and the world sees that the lost world sees that they see the Holy Spirit at work they see the Holy Spirit at work and that's what we're called to do that's how we grow that's how we get sanctified by getting out of our comfort zones when it looks like it doesn't make sense let's pray Heavenly Father I just thank you for this time that we had together Father thank you for each one that's here and Father as as you asked Peter do you love me three times and Father as I see as Peter's response to where he is torn up over but

Father help us be real with ourselves and that if we're real we're in the same boat as Peter that you have to ask that question you have to ask that question even though we've been redeemed Father I just pray that you would help each one of us be bold you would help each one of us be obedient whatever that obedience looks like sharing the gospel sharing each other's burdens whatever it is Father I just pray that you would just continue to sanctify us as a body Father you would continue to sanctify us as individuals so that Father when when we are out in the world when you're in this crazy place that Father they would not see us individuals or they would see you they would see the Holy Spirit at work they would see that we have you and they would want it Father I pray that again that you would just guide our steps

Father let us not stray even a little bit from you Father I pray that you would be with those in here that are hurting from whatever it is Father I just thank you for being so good to us for being so gracious and so merciful to us even though we don't deserve it and Father I thank you for sending Jesus to take your wrath upon himself that we can have salvation Father again thank you so much for being who you are for being holy for being the standard of everything it's in Christ's name I pray!  
[ 53 : 58 ] Amen!

Thank you.