

stretch forth thine hands; an old man, helpless in the hands of his enemies. *Whither thou wouldst not*; to suffering and death. Though Peter would willingly die for Jesus, yet he would shrink, even as His Lord Himself had shrunk, from a shameful death.

V. 19. *By what death*; the death of a martyr. There is a tradition that Peter suffered death by crucifixion at Rome under Nero. *He saith unto him, follow me*; apart from the others, perhaps for a private interview. There is also the deeper meaning of following Jesus as His disciple in the way of self-denial, suffering, and, if necessary, death.

Vs. 20-22. *Turning about*. As Peter followed Jesus apart from the others he looked around and saw John also following. *Whom*

Jesus loved, etc. See ch. 13: 23-25. John modestly nowhere mentions his own name. *What shall this man do?* "What shall befall him?" Peter is sympathetically anxious about John's future. They were close companions. *If I will*; implying divine authority. Christ's will is law. *Tarry*; wait or abide in life. *Till I come*. He does not say that John would live until the Second Advent. It is simply a supposed case, as though Jesus had said, "even supposing he should live until I come again, that is no affair of thine." *Follow thou me*. His duty was to follow Christ in love and obedience and not to be so anxious about the affairs of others. God would care for John. Peter must work out for himself the plan God had for him.

APPLICATION

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Simon, son of Jonas, v. 15. The disciple who had basely and repeatedly denied his Master in the hall of the High Priest, did not deserve to be called Peter, the "rock-man." The contrast between Simon and Peter is the contrast between what we are in ourselves and what the grace of Christ can make of us. Simon asserting with oaths and curses that he does not know Jesus (John 18: 25-27), and Peter, declaring in the teeth of his enemies that he will obey God rather than man (Acts 4: 19, 20), are the same person. There he was trusting in self and fell; here he was trusting in Christ and stood fast. The grace that did so much for Simon can do as much for us.

Lovest thou me more than these? v. 15. Judson tells of a Karen woman who offered herself for baptism. "After the usual examination, I enquired whether she could give up her ornaments for Christ. It was an unexpected blow. I explained the spirit of the Gospel; I appealed to her consciousness of vanity; I read to her the apostle's prohibition (1 Tim. 2: 9). She looked again and again to her handsome necklace: and then, with an air of modest decision that would adorn beyond all ornaments any Christian in the land, she took it off, saying, 'I love Christ more than these!'"

Lovest thou me? v. 15. He alone who

loves is fit to serve; if the service is to be from any higher motive than wages; and whole-hearted service, a service that never stops to count the cost, or having counted the cost, rejoices to pay it even to tears and blood, is the truest evidence of genuine love.

Feed my lambs, v. 15. Here is a word which teachers and preachers do well to remember. "The work begins with the little lambkins. Put the food therefore where they can get at it. Some preach as though the Lord said, 'Feed my camelopards.' Nothing but giraffes would be able to reach it from the lofty rack in which they place the food."—Spurgeon.

Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? v. 17. It recalled his three-fold denial and the very fact that he looked back at that sin with grief, repentance and hatred, was the surest of signs that he loved Christ. In the soul, as in mechanics, action and reaction are equal. Our hatred of sin is the measure of our love to Christ the Holy One.

Feed my sheep, v. 17. "There is distinct progress in the ideas—(1) 'Feed my lambs: (2) Rule (shepherd) my sheep: (3) Feed my little sheep.' First, let Peter, let the apostolic company, let all preachers and teachers, learn the delicate duty of supplying the just and appropriate nourishment to those that