

and Jesus' three commands. Call attention to the point in Jesus' first question which refers to the strength of Peter's love. "More than these" can refer only to the disciples. Peter had earlier boasted of his superior devotion. Further, note that Jesus and Peter at first use different Greek words for "love". Not till v. 17 does Jesus accept Peter's word. The kind of love that Jesus asks for "is higher, nobler, less emotional, and more associated with the whole mind and will". Peter offers the inferior kind, "the more warm, more sensuous, more passionate and emotional". Jesus accepts the lower kind, since Peter shrinks from offering the higher. (But see also Exposition.) Note how sensitive Peter is at Jesus' repeated question. How Jesus searches! Jesus varies His commands. Note the special application of each (see Exposition). The second point is the personal prophecy, vs. 18, 19. Peter is fully restored to his old place among the disciples, and Jesus briefly declares that he will live in such a manner as to become worthy of a martyr's crown.

(b) Jesus and John, vs. 20-23. We owe this scene to Peter's question. Peter is cautioned against comparing himself with others, and it is implied that John shall have a different life and death from his. John fitly represents the calm, patient seekers waiting for the Master. Each disciple would have his own life and death, but both at last would be safely gathered home.

The whole interview of the Lesson serves to enhance the beauty of Jesus' personal relations with His disciples after the resurrection. The little band would be broken up. Each would face new and untried ways. Hardship and death awaited them, but each would be faithful. Faith was growing into love, and sight into spiritual vision. John leaves the disciples with their faces towards the east, waiting for the coming of the new kingdom in power.

For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

The postscript is often the best part of a letter—the little interesting bit, which gives flavor to the whole.

The Lesson is a postscript, an after word, which adds a unique touch to the picture of

the risen Saviour. It shows Him, not only revealing Himself to His disciples, but living with them, accompanying with them.

Begin with a *bit of geography*—the old familiar Sea of Tiberias or Galilee, where some of them (have the scholars name these) had been fishermen when they were called to be disciples; and about and on which so many of Jesus' wonderful works had been done.

Then a *fishing scene*. The disciples had come back from Jerusalem and resumed their old occupation. They were waiting, to keep the appointment made in Matt. 28:10 (compare 28:16). The scholars will talk freely of the night's fruitless fishing, v. 3.

The Friend on the shore. Again, the scholars will have much to say of the details of vs. 4-8; especially of Peter's eagerness: so like Peter.

The breakfast on the beach. Jesus does not need to wait for their fish. He has already made provision, perhaps miraculously. He is the Host; they are the guests; and they are hungry. The thoughtfulness of Jesus for His followers, is a good subject for conversation. Did they know Him? Simon Peter did, v. 7, and the miracle of v. 11 would open the eyes of the dullest of them. Why did they not address Him? The awe of the unseen world was about Him, and upon them. (For an explanation of "the third time", see Exposition.)

An after breakfast talk. Try to lead the scholars to realize just who these were that talked together: the risen Lord, the very Son of God; and a fisherman who had professed to love Him, had basely denied Him, had bitterly repented, and was now eager to serve Him (see v. 7). Have the scholars follow the dialogue:—

JESUS—"Lovest thou Me more than these other disciples love Me?" (Recall Peter's words in ch. 13:37.) Show that Jesus did not wish to humiliate Peter; but only to give him a straight, steady look at his foolish boastings, and a heartening in his penitence and desire to serve.

PETER—"Yea, Lord; Thou knowest." It is a very humble Peter that answers.

JESUS—"Feed My lambs." If you love, serve. If you love much, take the very hardest service, the care of the weak and the helpless.