

## Try Praying: News It

- Do "Try Praying - News It" with the kids...

## Introduction

### "I love you"

- Three simple, words - yet profound and wonderful and disturbing!!
- They echo throughout our lives:
  - the safety and security of all that a home should be, summed up in the deep love parents give their children;
  - the joy and excitement and hope and vitality of romantic love, the thrill it sends down your spine;
  - the acceptance and companionship, the freedom of the deep love friends can share
- Just need to look at the themes that drives so much of the film world, the television world, the world of books and, of course, poetry
- We yearn to be loved; we yearn, too, to love, to give our energies and personalities to another:
  - that's the way we're made, the way we're wired up!
  - may have very different expression in different peoples lives and situations - singles, marrieds, young, old, with or without children - but it is there in all of us
- Following his betrayal of Jesus, Peter was left wondering whether Jesus could ever love him again - and whether he had ever really loved Jesus
  - lets spend some time learning how Jesus dealt with Peter in his bewilderment, and what Peter learned about Jesus as he did so:

## Three Questions

### Scene:

- lakeside, Galilee, fishing, caught nothing, Jesus appears on shore, tells them to put out their nets;
- **day time!!** (scene from Miracle Maker - captures Peter's disgust at Jesus' suggestion of fishing during day on an earlier occasion of a miraculous catch!!);
- did it; caught lots; realised it was the Lord; Peter plunges over the side impetuously!
- Breakfast; profoundly simple scene - Jesus with his disciples, his friends
- *"Peter, can I have a word...?"*
- Takes him aside; I've always pictured a walk up the beach...
- Three questions:
  - *"Do you love me?"*
- Scholars have debated purpose of the three, slightly different questions over the years:
  - highlighting small differences in the words used, etc
  - but distinctions don't really come to much!

### Repetition

- Most likely that the repetition is the key to understanding what is happening!
- Three questions for three denials
- Repetition hammering something home that a simple statement wouldn't manage!
- Value in repetition:
  - times tables at school....
  - learning Scripture - I've known value of having learned a chunk of Philippians 2 off by heart many times, not merely in ministry but in life
  - use it in songs - chorus of hymns!
  - use it as we repeat Lord's Prayer week by week;
- Has value - not to be despised, but appreciated!
  - use it - eg daily prayer and Bible Study - habits, repetitions, whose value comes often as we repeat them time after time!

## Second Chance

- Jesus' point in using the **threefold** repetition was to give Peter a **second** chance
- Three questions to give Peter a second chance
  - he needed to wipe away Peter's guilt;
  - he needed to emphasise that no sin was too big or bad to be wiped away!
  - (notice: denying Jesus isn't like murder or whatever, and can be something we do from time to time almost without noticing; Peter has been made acutely aware of how profoundly awful denying Jesus really is!)
- *Illustration of a second chance???*

## Single Purpose

- Jesus' principle purpose in giving Peter his second chance was to restore relationship; to sort out their friendship
- But something flowed from that
- Through the three questions came a second chance, and from the second chance comes a single purpose:
  - not just for Peter to feel better, but for him to work hard to serve his Lord
- **Peter is not simply restored to relationship but commissioned for service!**
- You can't be a Christian without that call to serve!
  - *"Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men." (Mat 4:19)*
- Putting it broadly, the responsibility of each and every single one of us is to see people come to know Jesus better:
  - come to know him in the first place; bearing witness; some evangelists;
  - welcomed into and discipled in the congregation - teaching, encouraging to grow in faith and understanding, praying for;
  - serving others that they may see Christ's love - and helping others serve too!
- Are we observers or participants?
- Jesus is asking us: "Do you love me?"
  - how do we respond? how is that response shown in our lives?