

An Overlooked Path to Peace and Success

Dr. John Carmichael

[Jhn 21:15-23 NASB95] 15 So when they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, [son] of John, do you love Me more than these?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Tend My lambs." 16 He said to him again a second time, "Simon, [son] of John, do you love Me?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Shepherd My sheep." 17 He said to him the third time, "Simon, [son] of John, do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You." Jesus said to him, "Tend My sheep. 18 "Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were younger, you used to gird yourself and walk wherever you wished; but when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands and someone else will gird you, and bring you where you do not wish to [go.]" 19 Now this He said, signifying by what kind of death he would glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He said to him, "Follow Me!" 20 Peter, turning around, saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following [them;] the one who also had leaned back on His bosom at the supper and said, "Lord, who is the one who betrays You?" 21 So Peter seeing him said to Jesus, "Lord, and what about this man?" 22 Jesus said to him, "If I want him to remain until I come, what [is that] to you? You follow Me!" 23 Therefore this saying went out among the brethren that that disciple would not die; yet Jesus did not say to him that he would not die, but [only,] "If I want him to remain until I come, what [is that] to you?"

- Sometimes we shoot ourselves in the foot. We do things that thwart God's will of peace and success.
- God wants us to stop hurting ourselves. He wants us to walk in peace and success.
- One of the ways to walk in peace and success is when we stop comparing ourselves to others, focus on His plan for our lives, and trust He will get us where we need to be.
- When we do not do that, we lose peace and become less effective.
- Jesus has just reinstated Peter after his denial of Jesus. He did not only forgive him, but He recommissioned Peter to "feed my sheep." The call was restored. Peter got distracted by wondering about He was going to do in John's life. Jesus corrects Peter. He was helping Peter walk in peace and success.

What can we learn from this interaction about how to walk in the peace and success God wants for us from John 21?

Here are three truths we can learn from John 21 about how to walk in peace and success.

I. For a path of peace and success avoid the comparison trap.

- a. Peter was wondering about what God was doing to do in John's life. Jesus was redirecting him from John.
- b. Comparison is not smart. You don't know enough to compare. [2Co 10:12 NASB95] 12 For we are not bold to class or compare ourselves with some of those who commend themselves; but when they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are without understanding.
- c. Pride can be the source of comparison. [Gal 5:26 NASB95] 26 Let us not become boastful, challenging one another, envying one another.
- d. Ask the Holy Spirit to help keep your eyes off of other people.

II. For a path of peace and success focus on your own path.

- a. Peter, like many of us, was a bit too curious about John's future. Jesus' response was essentially, "Mind your own business!"

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- b. [Pro 4:25-27 NASB95] 25 Let your eyes look directly ahead And let your gaze be fixed straight in front of you. 26 Watch the path of your feet And all your ways will be established. 27 Do not turn to the right nor to the left; Turn your foot from evil.
- c. Warning 1 - [Luk 9:62 NASB95] 62 But Jesus said to him, "No one, after putting his hand to the plow and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."
- d. Warning 2 - [Luk 17:32 NASB95] 32 "Remember Lot's wife." (See Genesis 19)
- e. Keep your eyes on Jesus and His plan for you. [Heb 12:1-2 NASB95] 1 Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.
- f. Decide today that you are going to focus on Jesus and His plan for your life.

III. For a path of peace and success trust God's plan for your life.

- a. Jesus' words remind us that God's plan for each person is unique and sometimes mysterious. Peter might have been wondering if John had a better deal. But Jesus reminds him that each of us has a unique path.
 - b. God knows what He is doing. [Rom 11:33 NASB95] 33 Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways!
 - c. God is establishing your steps. [Psa 37:23 NASB95] 23 The steps of a man are established by the LORD, And He delights in his way.
 - d. He wants peace for you.
 - e. He wants success for you.
- **God wants us to experience peace and success in 2025 by learning to avoid comparing ourselves to others, focus on His plan for our lives, and trust Him to get us where we need to be.**