

Self-Effort and Spiritual Power

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I. Introduction. Text: John 21:1-14.

II. Loose ends at the end of the book of John.

- A. How will Jesus provide for the needs of the believers?
- B. What happened to Peter?
- C. Is Jesus still protector of the disciples?
- D. Is John going to die?
- E. What about the other signs Jesus performed?

III. How will Jesus provide for the needs of believers?

A. Jesus often expressed Himself indirectly.

B. There is a contrast between self-effort and spiritual effort. Self-effort is characterized by disobedience, failure and a lack of personal fellowship with God.

1. Spiritual success is a matter of frequency and not perfection.

2. The natural man does not know Christ. No man can know Jesus until He shows Himself to him.

3. Peter demonstrates his self-will in going back to fishing. The disciples went back to the profession with which they began. (John 16:32)

4. Self-effort becomes bad when it is contrary to spiritual effort. Self-effort results in failure. (John 15:5)

5. Self-effort results in loss of personal fellowship.

C. Jesus shows that the post-resurrection Christ will provide by showing them that they cannot provide for themselves. (Revelation 3:17)

D. We are to follow God's commission and not worry about how He will provide.

E. Spiritual-effort results in obedience, success and fellowship with God. (Genesis 22:18)

F. Spiritual-effort is God's will cooperating with the believer's will.

IV. Those that are not relying on God's power are being disobedient.

Application questions:

1. What is the danger of self-effort?

2. How do you tend to rely on your own power instead of God's? Explain.

3. What might God be calling you to do that you have been ignoring in favor of working out life in your own power? What can you do to change this?
