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EMPOWERED BY JESUS: A RESEARCH PROPOSAL FOR AN EXPLORATION OF JESUS' EMPOWERMENT APPROACH IN JOHN 21: 1-25

The person of Jesus has been under heavy investigation in both theological studies and leadership studies. While the literature about Jesus is extensive, it fails to address Jesus' amazing abilities to empower others. A comprehensive review of the literature about Jesus yields only one article that discusses Jesus' ability to empower others (Pickett, 2005). Even this one article does not directly discuss Jesus' skills of empowerment, but rather addresses the empowering nature of the account of his resurrection (Pickett, 2005). This void in the research concerning Jesus' empowerment approach demands attention from contemporary research concerning empowerment theory and from a theological and exegetical perspective. Therefore, the current research investigation seeks to explore Jesus' empowerment approach through an exegetical analysis of John 21:1-25. The goal of such research is to paint a clearer picture of Jesus and to enhance the applicability of his empowerment strategies for the leaders of today. The following discussion addresses contemporary empowerment theory, the scope of analysis and the exegetical methodology for the current research effort, and the inner textural analysis of John 21:1-25. Inner textural analysis examines the patterns of language that occur in a given text, such as repetition or dialogue, for the purpose of providing insights into the events, meaning, and application of the text (Robbins, 1996).

This analysis subsequently reveals Jesus' model of empowerment. For today's leaders, following Jesus' model of empowerment provides a positive means of engaging followers and motivating them toward higher levels of purpose and action.

EMPOWERMENT THEORY

Empowerment theory has received a great deal of attention in the contemporary leadership literature (Thorlakson & Murray, 1996). According to Thorlakson and Murray (1996), past empowerment research identifies empowerment as a motivational process that can influence employee perceptions of power relations, leadership styles, and motivation in the workplace. The process of positively developing these follower perceptions poses a challenge to many leaders (Pigg, 2002). Contemporary research efforts have described the empowerment process as focusing on three areas of follower development, including confidence and self-efficacy, values and beliefs, and work-related skills. In terms of follower confidence and self-efficacy, empowerment can improve follower perceptions of self-efficacy (Choi, 2006). Specific leader strategies for strength-

ening follower self-efficacy include placing employees in work settings that are conducive to success (Choi, 2006; Pigg, 2002; Zhu, May, & Avolio, 2004), encouraging information sharing, resource sharing, and participative management (Kizilos, 1990; Pigg, 2002), and removing obstacles that create powerlessness (Zhu, May, & Avolio, 2004). Concerning follower values and beliefs, empowerment researchers note that empowering leaders challenge their followers' thinking about work-related issues such as autonomy and their self-confidence on the job (Choi, 2006; Pigg, 2002; Kizilos, 1990). Finally, empowering leaders assist followers in developing work-related skills that may be weak or nonexistent (Choi, 2006; Pigg, 2002; Kizilos, 1990; Zhu, May, & Avolio, 2004).

SCOPE OF TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

As mentioned above, the lack of research about Jesus as an empowering influence demands exegetical attention. Therefore, to analyze Jesus' empowerment approach, his empowering actions should be reviewed. Of the four Gospels, the Gospel of John most profoundly portrays the leadership of Jesus (deSilva, 2004). According to deSilva, John is divided into two primary sections as well as an introduction and epilogue. The two primary sections include the book of signs, which depicts Jesus' active ministry and leadership to the world, and the book of glory, which reveals Jesus' instructions to his followers (deSilva, 2004). Thus, the Book of John consistently addresses the leadership actions of Jesus. deSilva points out additional features of the Book of John:

The Fourth Gospel begins to contribute to the formation of ministers and counselors and others who reach out to bring the light of Christ to people in need by presenting the model of the good Shepherd, Christ, the minister par excellence. (2004, p. 445)

The fact that the Gospel of John so thoroughly addresses Jesus as a leader in his time and to the ministers of today makes this Gospel an excellent source for leadership and empowerment studies.

Within the Book of John, the text contained in John 21:1-25 serves as an excellent example of Jesus' empowering influence over Peter and the disciples, and will be used as the basis for analysis in this research effort. Oladipo (1997) refers to this portion of Scripture as an epilogue to the Gospel of John that depicts Jesus' rehabilitation of Peter after his denial of Jesus and Jesus' subsequent challenge to Peter's life and ministry. According to deSilva (2004), "John 21 preserves something of a counseling session arranged by Jesus for Peter. . . . Jesus gives Peter the opportunity to confess his love for Jesus three times and empowers him with a commission three times to look after Jesus' followers" (p. 445). Additionally, Wiarda (1992) notes that John 21 focuses on "Jesus as the one who confronts Peter at every stage in the narrative, upsetting his equilibrium and challenging him to make decisions and take new action" (p. 53). Given these descriptions of John 21 and that empowerment theory builds its foundation on the actions of developing follower confidence and self-efficacy, challenging values and beliefs, and developing work-related skills, the text of John 21:1-25 is well-suited to a study of Jesus' empowerment.

EXEGETICAL METHODOLOGY

An exploration of the empowerment style of Jesus found in John 21:1-25 is essential to the understanding of effective Christian leadership principles. Through inner textual analysis, a deeper level of insight into Jesus' empowerment style can be attained. Bekker (2005) writes that, "rhetorical analysis of texts (Robbins, 1996a, 1996b, 1999) can assist us in our quest for a respon-

Table 1. Repetitive Texture and Pattern of John 21:1-25

Verse Key Words

1	Appeared						Jesus						
2								Simon Peter	Two other disciples				
3		Going Go Went	Told Said					Simon Peter		Fish			
4					Realize		Jesus Jesus			Friends			
5			Called								Fish		
6											Fish		
7			Said Say	Loved			Jesus Lord	Peter Simon Peter	Disciple whom Jesus loved				
8		followed							Other disciples	Fish			
9					Saw					Fish	Bread		
10							Jesus			Fish			
11			Said					Simon Peter		Fish			
12		Come	Said Ask		Knew		Jesus Lord		The disciples		Breakfast		
13		Came					Jesus			Fish	Bread		
14	appeared						Jesus		The disciples				Dead
15			Said Said	Truly love Love	Know	Feed	Jesus Lord Jesus	Simon Peter Simon Son of John			Eating	Lambs	
16			Said Answered Said	Truly love Love	Know	Take care	Jesus Lord Jesus	Simon Son of John				Sheep	
17			Said Said	Love Love	Know Know	Feed	Jesus Lord	Simon Son of John Peter				Sheep	
18			Tell										
19		Follow	Said Indicate Said				Jesus God	Peter					Death
20		Following	Said				Jesus Lord	Peter	Disciple whom Jesus loved		Supper		
21			Asked				Lord	Peter					
22		follow	Answered				Jesus						Alive
23							Jesus		Brothers This disciple				Die Die Alive
24									This disciple				

Table 2.
*Progression of
Directive Verbs
in John 21:1-25*

Verse	Key Words
3	Going Go Went
8	followed
12	Come
13	Came
19	Follow
20	Following
22	Follow

sible and contextually sound reading of this Gospel and our understanding of the leadership of Jesus” (p. 8). In chapter 21 of John’s Gospel, Jesus makes another appearance to his disciples following his resurrection from the dead, and demonstrates effective empowerment skills in preparing them for the time after his ascension into heaven. Therefore, it is important to explore an inner texture analysis of this chapter of John in order to develop a model of Jesus’ empowerment.

According to Robbins (1996), “The inner texture of a text resides in features in the language of the text itself, like repetition of words and use of dialogue between two persons to communicate the information” (p. 7). He identifies five categories that provide structure for analyzing such patterns of communication, including repetitive-progressive texture, narrational texture, opening-middle-closing texture, argumentative texture, and sensory-aesthetic texture.

JESUS’ EMPOWERMENT: AN INNER TEXTURAL ANALYSIS OF JOHN 21:1-25

By analyzing John 21:1-25 according to the guidance of Robbins’ five categories, the empowerment style of Jesus can be better understood and applied to the challenges of contemporary leadership.

Repetitive-Progressive Texture

Repetitive texture and pattern “resides in the occurrence of words and phrases more than once in a unit” (Robbins, 1996, p. 8). Progressive texture, however, exists in sequences of words or phrases in the unit. Both can provide insight into the text that can enhance interpretation.

Table 1 shows that the major characters in this portion of Scripture include Jesus, Peter, and the disciples. Important topics discussed or mentioned in John 21:1-25 include fish, bread (and eating), lambs or sheep, and the subject of life and death. The major actions in this section include direction (coming, going, and following), discourse, loving, knowing, and feeding. According to this repetitive texture and pattern, John 21:1-25 discusses the relationship between Jesus and his disciples (Peter in particular) after his resurrection from the dead in John 20. Chapter 21 is the final interaction between Jesus and the disciples in John’s Gospel.

The repetitive texture and pattern of John 21 becomes even clearer when understood in light of the progressive texture and pattern of this chapter. In terms of the progressive texture and pattern in this portion of Scripture, four main progressions occur: directive verbs, the names of Jesus and Peter, references to food and animals, and knowledge and love.

The first is the progression of the directive verbs, such as going, coming, and following. This progression is outlined in Table 2.

When compared with the repetitive texture and pattern of characters involved in this text, the action words of going, go, and went in verse 3 occurred when the disciples were interacting without Jesus. Such words imply independent action, or action without the influence of others. Once the disciples recognize Jesus in verse 7, the action words attest to the relationship between Jesus and the disciples. Peter jumps into the water, a directive action toward Jesus, and the other disciples follow in verse 8. The words follow (v. 19), following (v. 20), and follow (v. 22) still imply directive action, but they speak to more than the physical act of following. These words refer to the eternal relationship between Jesus and the disciples. It is clear that the progressive texture

Table 3. *The Names of Jesus and Peter in John 21:1-25*

Verse	Key Words	
1	Jesus	
2		Simon Peter
3		Simon Peter
4	Jesus Jesus	
7	Jesus Lord	Peter Simon Peter
10	Jesus	
11		Simon Peter
12	Jesus Lord	
13	Jesus	
14	Jesus	
15	Jesus Lord Jesus	Simon Peter Simon Son of John
16	Jesus Lord Jesus	Simon Son of John
17	Jesus Lord	Simon Son of John Peter
18		
19	Jesus God	Peter
20	Jesus Lord	Peter
21	Lord	Peter
22	Jesus	
23	Jesus	

Table 4. *Food and Animals in John 21:1-25*

Verse	Key Words			
3		Fish		
5		Fish		
6		Fish		
8		Fish		
9		Fish	Bread	
10		Fish		
11		Fish		
12			Breakfast	
13		Fish	Bread	
15	Feed		Eating	Lambs
16	Take care			Sheep
17	Feed			Sheep
20			Supper	

and pattern reveals the nature and development of the disciples’ relationship with Jesus.

The second progression is that of the names of Jesus and Peter throughout their interactions. This progression is outlined in Table 3.

In addressing the progressive texture and pattern of the names of Jesus and Peter, several aspects of their relationship become apparent. Whenever the disciples refer to or address Jesus, they use the name Lord. In verse 12, which states that the disciples “knew it was the Lord,” the disciples call Jesus Lord even in their mental references to him. Such references indicate that the disciples had great respect for Jesus. It also indicates that they viewed him as their personal Savior, not just the man named Jesus. However, in John’s narration of the events, he refers to Jesus as the main character. Verse 19 is the only occurrence of the name God, as Jesus is referring to the fact that Peter would glorify God through his death.

Peter’s name also has a progressive texture and pattern in John 21. With one exception in verse 7, Peter is more formally referred to as Simon Peter throughout the fishing event in verses 1-14. According to John, Jesus gave this name to Peter in John 1:42, which says that “Jesus looked at him and said, ‘You are Simon son of John. You will be called Cephas’ (which, when translated, is Peter).” Jesus returns to calling Peter his former name, Simon son of John, in verses 15-17. Jesus does this three times, symbolic of the fact that Peter denied Jesus three times before Jesus died on the cross. After the third reference is completed, Peter is referred to by the name given him when Jesus called him to be a disciple, Peter.

The final progressive pattern of note is the interplay of food and animal throughout the text. This interaction is outlined in Table 4.

John 21:1-25 begins by emphasizing fish as food and livelihood in verses 3-13. For many of the disciples, fishing had been their primary occupation. Once Jesus provides them with bread to eat, the refer-

ences to fish or fishing are completed. Throughout the Gospel of John, Jesus is referred to as the Bread of Life (John 6:35, 41, 48, 51). The use of bread in this text indicates that the disciples’ life of fishing for a living is ended, and will be replaced by an occupation involving a different food. The food-animal interaction turns from bread and fish for the disciples, to the disciples’ responsibility to feed and care for his lambs and sheep. It is possible that the progression from lambs to sheep can be understood in terms of the spiritual development of new believers in Jesus.

The fourth and final progression in this text, that of loving Jesus and its implications for action, is outlined in Table 5.

Table 5. *Love for Jesus and Desired Action in John 21:1-25*

Verse	Key Words	
7	Loved	
15	Truly love	Feed
	Love	
16	Truly love	Take care
	Love	
17	Love	Feed
	Love	

The connection between love for Jesus and the desired responsive action is evident in this chapter of John, particularly in verses 15-17. Table 5 represents the conversation between Jesus and Peter concerning Peter’s love for Jesus. Three times, symbolic of Peter’s denial, Jesus asks Peter if he truly loves him. With each of Peter’s affirmative responses, Jesus gives Peter a command to feed his lambs, take care of his sheep, or feed his sheep. Each of these phrases demonstrates that Jesus expects Peter’s love for him to be shown by sharing Jesus, the Bread of Life, with others.

The repetitive-progressive texture and pattern of John 21:1-25 offers many important insights into the relationship between Jesus and Peter and the other disciples. It illustrates this relationship in terms of the disciples’ directive action, the interaction between the names of Jesus and Peter, the food and animal concepts, and the disciples’ love for Jesus and its implications for action.

Opening-Middle-Closing Texture

Robbins (1996) writes that “opening-middle-closing texture resides in the nature of the beginning, body, and conclusion of a section of discourse” (p. 19). However, Robbins goes on to say that interpreters tend to have differing opinions concerning the exact place where each

Table 6. *Opening: John 21:1-14*

Section	Verses	Description
Open:	1-3	Disciples fish without Jesus and catch nothing
Middle:	4-11	Disciples fish with Jesus and catch 153 fish
Close:	12-14	Jesus feeds the disciples

section begins and ends. Still, this method of studying Scripture is a valuable tool for analyzing the opening, middle, and closing sections of John 21:1-25.

Table 7. *Middle: John 21:15-22*

Section	Verses	Description
Open:	1-3	Disciples fish without Jesus and catch nothing
Middle:	4-11	Disciples fish with Jesus and catch 153 fish
Close:	12-14	Jesus feeds the disciples

The opening section of this chapter consists of verses 1-14. These verses constitute the fishing event in which Jesus miraculously helps the disciples catch fish and subsequently feeds them breakfast. This opening

section can be further subdivided into an opening, middle, and closing. Robbins (1996) notes that “the opening itself may have a beginning, middle, and ending” (p. 19). These subdivisions are outlined in Table 6.

Table 6 demonstrates that the beginning of this opening section is made up of verses 1-3, which narrate the disciples going out fishing without Jesus and catching nothing. Verse 4 transitions to the interaction of Jesus and his disciples. Jesus appears on the shore, but the disciples are not aware that it is Jesus. At his miraculous command, the disciples throw their fishing net on the right side of the boat, catch a great number of fish, and recognize that the man on the shore is Jesus. A final transition in this section occurs in verse 12, when Jesus invites them to come and eat a breakfast of fish and bread. John then reminds the reader in verse 14 that this interaction was the third time that Jesus appeared to his disciples after his resurrection.

The middle section of John 21:1-25 consists of verses 15-22. Like the opening section, the middle has the subdivisions of opening, middle, and closing, as illustrated in Table 7. In the opening portion of this middle section, Jesus reinstates Peter by asking him three times, “Simon son of

John, do you truly love me more than these?" Though Peter was hurt by the fact that Jesus asked him this question three times, Jesus had a purpose. Peter had denied Jesus three times before Jesus' death, so Jesus used this question once for each of the times Peter had denied him. Through this questioning process, Jesus returned Peter to his status as the rock on which the church would be built. Verse 18 serves as the middle section here, as Jesus predicts Peter's death as a martyr. This section ends with Jesus twice giving Peter the command to follow him. After Jesus' initial command, Peter becomes distracted by John walking behind them. He changes the subject, asking Jesus a question about John, but Jesus redirects Peter's focus and repeats his original command.

The closing section of John 21:1-25 consists of verses 23-25. In this section, the focus of the chapter turns to the result of Peter's question about John, followed by the implications of Jesus' ministry as it extends to the world. In verse 23, John mentions that a rumor had spread as a result of Peter's question, but simply restates Jesus' answer to the question and does not perpetuate the rumor. In verse 24, John stands by his account of Jesus' ministry as a true testimony of what happened. The chapter closes in verse 25 with a statement that Jesus performed many things that were not discussed in the book. John briefly alludes to the potential impact a book of Jesus' complete ministry could have on the world.

Narrational Texture

Bekker (2005) states that "narrational texture and pattern introduces the reader to further data found within the narrative, it allows the exegete to mark the scenes in the unit and to take cognizance of the nuances of the plot" (p. 35). As Bekker expands on the nature of narrational texture, he notes that four elements should be in the narrational analysis of any text: (a) the "scene" or "scenes" in the narrative, if any, (b) identification of voices in the text, (c) the sequence of the narrative, and (d) the "plot" of the narrative (p. 35). John 21:1-25 contains each of these elements, including scene, voices in the text, narrative sequence, and a plot.

There are two major scenes in the text of John 21:1-25, each beginning with a comment from the narrator. A third scene serves as an epilogue, in which the narrator adds an aside to the reader. The first scene is made up of verses 1-14, and starts with the narrator, John, stating that "afterward Jesus appeared again to his disciples, by the Sea of Tiberias." He spends the next two verses setting the stage for the action of the scene. The second scene is contained in verses 15-22. Again, John as the narrator introduces the scene, and begins the scene with the comment, "when they had finished eating. . . ." The third and final scene resides in verses 23-25. John uses his role as narrator to give the reader details about the interaction that he did not include in the dialogue of the text. He also assures the reader that everything he had written was the truth about Jesus, and that he had been selective in what he shared with the reader about Jesus' life and ministry.

The voices in John 21:1-25 include the narrator, Jesus, Simon Peter, and the disciples. The first scene begins with the narrator setting the scene for the events that are about to take place. He mentions that the scene involves Jesus in an appearance to the disciples, who are going out to fish at night. Jesus appears on the shore of the sea where the disciples are fishing, and calls out to them, asking if they have caught any fish. Not recognizing Jesus, the disciples reply that they have not caught any fish. Jesus responds by telling them how to find some fish, and then invites them to breakfast. After this breakfast, Jesus asks Simon Peter about Peter's love for him. Peter's

Table 8. *Argumentative Texture and Pattern of John 21:1-25*

Verse	Description	Character
3	Statement	Peter
3	Agreement	Other disciples
5	Question	Jesus
5	Answer	Disciples
6	Command	Jesus
7	Statement	John
10	Command	Jesus
12	Command	Jesus
15	Question	Jesus
15	Answer	Peter
15	Command	Jesus
16	Question	Jesus
16	Answer	Peter
16	Command	Jesus
17	Question	Jesus
17	Answer	Peter
17	Command	Jesus
18	Prophetic Prediction	Jesus
19	Command	Jesus
21	Question	Peter
22	Re-directing Question	Jesus
22	Command	Jesus

response is affirmative. This question and answer exchange occurs two more times. Jesus then predicts Peter's martyrdom, and commands him to "Follow me!" (verse 19). Peter, seemingly distracted by the presence of John behind them, asks Jesus about John. Jesus responds by reminding Peter of the command he had just given. The narrator concludes this section of Scripture by discussing what happens immediately after the conversation between Jesus and Peter, that his testimony is true, and that he was selective in presenting Jesus' life and ministry.

The sequence of the narrative in John 21:1-25 moves quickly. There are no long sermons or speeches in this text, but rather a fast-paced interplay among the voices of the narrator, Jesus, Simon Peter, and the disciples. The fact that the main dialogue occurs between Jesus and Peter demonstrates that Jesus is the main character, and that his purpose in this interaction is to influence Peter. Throughout the sequence of this section, John as narrator moves from one event or interaction to the next, without much analysis or discussion of what happened. His tone is concise, which also lends to the quick pace of this text.

Finally, the plot of John 21:1-25 centers on the disciples' catch of fish after Jesus' command, and the interaction between Jesus and Peter after the group has eaten some of the fish. The

plot begins by highlighting another of Jesus' appearances to the disciples as he works a miracle among them which results in the capture of 153 fish. The plot continues as the interactions become more intimate in nature and focus on Peter. Jesus' conversation with Peter serves to reinstate Peter after his denial of Jesus. At the end of the plot, Peter is given the command to follow Jesus.

Argumentative Texture

To study the argumentative texture and pattern of a text is to study the "multiple kinds of inner reasoning in the discourse" (Robbins, 1996, p. 21). According to Robbins, some aspects of the argumentative texture are logical, involving supported assertions and arguments. Other aspects of this texture are qualitative, persuading the reader to view the portrayal in the text as true and real. Bekker (2005) simplifies the process of analyzing argumentative texture by focusing on the intention of each character's statements. This type of analysis is represented in Table 8.

Table 8 demonstrates that the purpose of communication in this text is to show the relationship between Jesus and his disciples. In each scene, the argumentative texture demonstrates that the ultimate result of questions in John 21:1-25 is a command from Jesus. The first scene of this interaction occurs in verses 5-12. Jesus begins the dialogue by asking his disciples a question. They answer his question and immediately receive a command from Jesus to throw their fishing net on the right side of their boat. He continues this opening command sequence by telling the disciples to bring some fish and have breakfast (verses 10 and 12). The line of argumentation in the first scene is that the disciples need Jesus in every aspect of their lives. With Jesus, their

Table 9. *Zone of Emotion-fused Thought in John 21:1-25*

Verse	Key Words
4	Realize
7	Loved
9	Saw
12	Dared Knew
15	Truly love Know Love
16	Truly love Know Love
17	Hurt Love Know Know Love
18	Wanted Want
19	Indicate Glorify
20	Saw Loved
21	Saw
22	Want
24	Know
25	Suppose

fishing trip is successful. With Jesus, the Bread of Life, the disciples are fed and nourished.

In the second scene, the question-answer-command argumentative pattern continues as Jesus confronts Peter. Jesus asks Peter about the extent of his love for Jesus, and Peter willingly answers by saying, “Yes, Lord, you know that I love you” (verses 15-17). Upon hearing Peter’s response, Jesus commands Peter to “feed my lambs,” “take care of my sheep,” and “feed my sheep” in each of the three verses. Jesus’ line of argumentation is that love for him must be demonstrated by obedience to his commands. Therefore, as Peter indicates that he loves Jesus, Jesus tells Peter that he should live out this love by heeding the commands in verses 15-17. Jesus’ use of questions in this scene serves as a test for Peter. Once Peter “passes” this examination, Jesus concludes this scene by making a prophetic statement about Peter’s death. Jesus offers Peter this prophetic statement with the understanding that Peter will love him and obey these commands until his death. Out of encouragement, Jesus concludes the prophetic statement by commanding Peter to follow him. The second scene takes a small detour as Peter becomes distracted by John’s presence in verse 20. As a result of his distraction, Peter initiates another question-answer-command sequence. He sees John and says to Jesus, “Lord, what about him?” in verse 21. Rather than giving in to the tangential question, Jesus re-directs Peter’s attention with a rhetorical question and repeats his command that Peter should follow him.

The third scene, John 21:23-25, is the narrator’s line of argumentation concerning the result of Jesus and Peter’s discussion and the truthfulness of everything recorded in the book of John. First, John gives his analysis of the conversation between Jesus and Peter, and points out that there was no truth to the rumor that had been spreading among the disciples about him. In the last two verses, the

argumentative texture and pattern illustrates that John’s statements as narrator were the truth, and that he had been selective in what he included in his writings about Jesus’ life and ministry.

Sensory-Aesthetic Texture

The final element of exegesis is the sensory-aesthetic texture and pattern of a text. According to Robbins (1996), “The sensory-aesthetic texture of a text resides prominently in the range of senses the text evokes or embodies (thought, emotion, sight, sound, touch, smell)” (pp. 29-30). He goes on to say that this type of analysis also includes “the manner in which the text evokes or embodies them (reason, intuition, imagination, humor, etc.)” (p. 30). There are three zones of analysis in the sensory-aesthetic texture and pattern, the zone of emotion-fused thought, the zone of self-expressive speech, and the zone of purposeful action.

The zone of emotion-fused thought includes “the areas we refer to as intellect, will, judgment, conscience, personality thrust, core personality, affection, and so forth” (Robbins, 1996, p. 31). The zone of emotion-fused thought occurs in John 21:1-25 as illustrated in Table 9.

The most notable conclusion illustrated in the zone of emotion-fused thought is in John 21: 15-19. In this section, there is a strong emphasis on love, particularly Peter’s love for Jesus. After the nature of Peter’s love is determined, the result of that love is captured by the word *glorify*. This

Table 10. *Zone of Self-expressive Speech in John 21:1-25*

Verse	Key Words
3	Told Said
4	Heard
5	Called Answered
6	Said
7	Said Say
10	Said
12	Said Ask
15	Said Said Said
16	Said Answered Said
17	Said Asked Said Said
18	Tell
19	Said Said
20	Said
21	Asked
22	Answered
23	Say Said
24	Testifies Testimony

word refers to Peter's martyrdom, the ultimate form of his love for Jesus. Through such a death, the result of Peter's persistent love, God would be glorified.

The zone of self-expressive speech consists of "self-revelation through speech, communication with others, the human as listener who dialogues with others in a form of mutual self-unveiling, and so on" (Robbins, 1996, p. 31). Table 10 represents the zone of self-expressive speech in John 21:1-25.

Based on the information presented in Table 10, it is clear that speaking is the characters' main activity in this text. Such speaking activities include asking questions, providing answers, and giving commands. There is a connection between the type of speech activity and the level of authority ascribed to the person performing that activity. Jesus, who holds the highest level of authority in this section, asks questions from the perspective of a master or teacher. When Jesus does not use questions, his tone is one of giving commands to the disciples or Peter. It is the disciples, Peter in particular, who answer Jesus' questions and respond to his authority. The final act of self-expressive speech is that of the testimony given in verse 24. John defends his authority as narrator and testifies that what he has written is the truth.

The final category of the sensory-aesthetic texture and pattern is purposeful action. Robbins (1996) describes this category as "the area of outward human behavior, all external activity, human actions upon the world of persons and things" (p. 31). The purposeful action in John 21:1-25 is presented in Table 11.

These purposeful actions lay a foundation for understanding and interpreting the events in John 21:1-25. The major actions in this section are connected by forms of the word *come*. In verse 3, the story begins with the words *going, go, and went*. These words indicate the independent actions of the disciples in the absence of Jesus. Once Jesus enters the scene in verse 5, the acts of coming toward Jesus and following Jesus are prominent in the text. Such purposeful actions indicate that Jesus is a leader of the disciples and that they heed his call and willingly come after him.

JESUS' MODEL OF EMPOWERMENT IN JOHN 21:1-25

In John 21:1-25, Jesus' actions serve as an example of empowering one's followers. Though his example of empowerment is prevalent in the entire text, the most poignant example occurs in his interaction with Simon Peter in verses 15-22. Therefore, it is important to define Jesus' empowerment and to focus in on the example he sets throughout his interactions with Peter. As previously discussed, empowerment theory has received a great deal of attention in the leadership literature (Thorlakson & Murray, 1996). Contemporary research efforts have described the empowerment process as focusing on three areas of follower development: (a) confidence and self-efficacy, (b) values and beliefs, and (c) work-related skills. Jesus' empowerment approach models these three leadership behaviors in John 21:1-25.

Jesus empowered his disciples in John 21:1-25 by building their confidence and enhancing their senses of self-efficacy. Jesus' ability to empower his disciples is evident by their response to

Table 11. *Zone of Purposeful Action in John 21:1-25*

Verse	Key Words
1	Appeared
3	Going Go Went Got into Caught
4	Stood
6	Throw Find Haul
7	Wrapped Jumped
8	Followed Towing
9	Landed
10	Bring Caught
11	Climbed Dragged Torn
12	Come Have
13	Came Took Gave Did
14	Appeared Raised
15	Finished eating Feed
16	Take care
17	Feed
18	Dressed Went Stretch Dress Lead
19	Follow
20	Turned Following Leaned Betray
22	Follow
23	Spread Die Die Return
25	Did Written Written

his presence throughout John 21, particularly with respect to Peter. The exegetical analyses of these verses reveal the various empowering facets of the interactions between Jesus and Peter, especially in the progressions that occur in the text. The progression of directive verbs indicates that Peter and the disciples paid careful attention to Jesus' calls to follow him, and their attention turned to action. Additionally, the zone of purposeful action component of the sensory-aesthetic analysis reveals the impact of Jesus' leadership on Peter and the disciples, as they eagerly and willingly follow Jesus. In verse 7, the reader becomes aware of Peter's impulsive and excited attitude toward Jesus' presence. The impact that Jesus' leadership has had on him prompts him to jump into the water and rush to the shore to meet Jesus. Though Peter's haste to meet Jesus is evidence of the effects of Jesus' leadership, the more powerful example occurs in verses 15-22 of this text. Based on the opening-middle-closing textural analysis, this portion of the text comprises the middle section of John 21. In verses 15-17, the opening of the middle section, Jesus empowers Peter by reinstating him after his denial of Jesus. As Peter affirms his love for Jesus, Jesus assigns him greater responsibility in advancing God's kingdom on earth. Jesus also demonstrates great personal knowledge and understanding of Peter as he predicts Peter's mission and resulting death in verse 18, the middle of this section. Finally, Jesus communicates his desire for Peter to be a follower and worker in the kingdom, for he commands Peter to follow him in the closing of this section, beginning with verse 19. Through this command, Jesus focuses Peter on the task of serving God and taking the Gospel message into the world to build God's church. All of these actions serve as significant turning points in the opening-middle-closing texture of John 21:15-22 and demonstrate Jesus' desire to give his disciples opportunities to be successful and build their ministerial confidence and self-efficacy. Contemporary leaders can benefit from Jesus' example of developing his disciples' sense of confidence and self-efficacy. Careful observation and interaction with followers not only highlights areas where followers feel less confident but also offers insights into how to increase their levels of self-efficacy.

In addition to developing the disciples' sense of self-efficacy, Jesus challenged the values and beliefs of Peter and the disciples in John 21:1-25. The argumentative texture of John 21 depicts Jesus' challenges to the disciples. Throughout the chapter, Jesus asks the disciples questions that challenge their current mode of thinking. In verses 14, Jesus challenges the disciples' current method of fishing. He challenges them to try a new method, throwing the net on the right side of the boat, and promises that they will be successful. He then works a miracle, and the disciples catch more fish than they are able to haul into the boat. In a way, Jesus communicates that relying on him brings God-ordained results. Jesus also prepares the disciples for a vocational shift, from fishing for a living to winning souls through the Gospel message. In verses 15-22, Jesus challenges the current paradigm of his expectations for his followers, Peter in particular. He questions this paradigm and asks Peter about the degree of his love for him. Once he

responds affirmatively, Jesus challenges Peter to step up to the next level of operation by ministering to the people on earth. Jesus also commands Peter to follow him out of love and obedience. It is clear that Jesus challenged the disciples' values and beliefs in John 21:1-25 with the intent of empowering them for service in God's kingdom. In today's organizations, challenging followers' values, beliefs, and work practices can help overcome the obstacle of complacency and lead to increased innovation, creativity, and productivity.

Jesus also equipped the disciples for the ministries they would carry out after his ascension. The above exegetical analysis reveals that Jesus' loving relationship with the disciples served as the disciples' motivation for carrying out the desired actions that Jesus communicated to them. In addition, Jesus provides the disciples with everything that they need to persevere in sharing God's promise after Jesus' ascension into heaven. Jesus uses the miraculous catch of fish in verses 1-14 to show the disciples that they need to rely on him for success. He also feeds the disciples, a symbolic act that represents the disciples' mission to feed the world with the Gospel. In the next section, Jesus reinstates Peter, a process that asks Peter to demonstrate his love for the Lord. Jesus then issues the prophetic statement about Peter's death to remind Peter that his mission of love for God is to be carried out to the point of death. Jesus' final words of encouragement to Peter are "Follow me!" Such a command tells Peter to rely on Jesus, follow his will, and persevere in the mission of spreading the Gospel. Similarly, today's followers need to be equipped for their roles and ministries. As suggested by Jesus' example in John 21, Jesus based this equipping process on a well-developed relationship with his disciples. Contemporary leaders should follow suit and use the interpersonal knowledge gained through solid relationships as a foundation for equipping each follower in a manner that is tailored to his or her unique situation. Then, just as Jesus demonstrates, followers need to feel encouraged and supported in their roles and ministries. Jesus offered his disciples the ultimate support system by offering himself in the command, "Follow me!" Today's leaders can certainly implement Jesus' example to equip, encourage, and support their followers. However, leaders should not forget that the best resource their followers can turn to is the person of Jesus Christ!

SUMMARY

Current research concerning Jesus' earthly existence is certainly extensive, but it does not specifically acknowledge the role that empowerment played in his relationships with his disciples. Through the exegetical analysis tool of inner textural analysis, Jesus' empowerment approach was analyzed with respect to John 21:1-25. In this section of Scripture, Jesus' actions offer insights into his empowerment strategies with Peter and the disciples. Much like current empowerment strategies set forth in the leadership literature, Jesus' empowerment approach consists of developing his disciples' confidence and self-efficacy, challenging their values and beliefs, and equipping them with the skills needed for their ministries. Future research should address this topic with the intent to offer additional practical empowerment strategies to today's leaders.

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