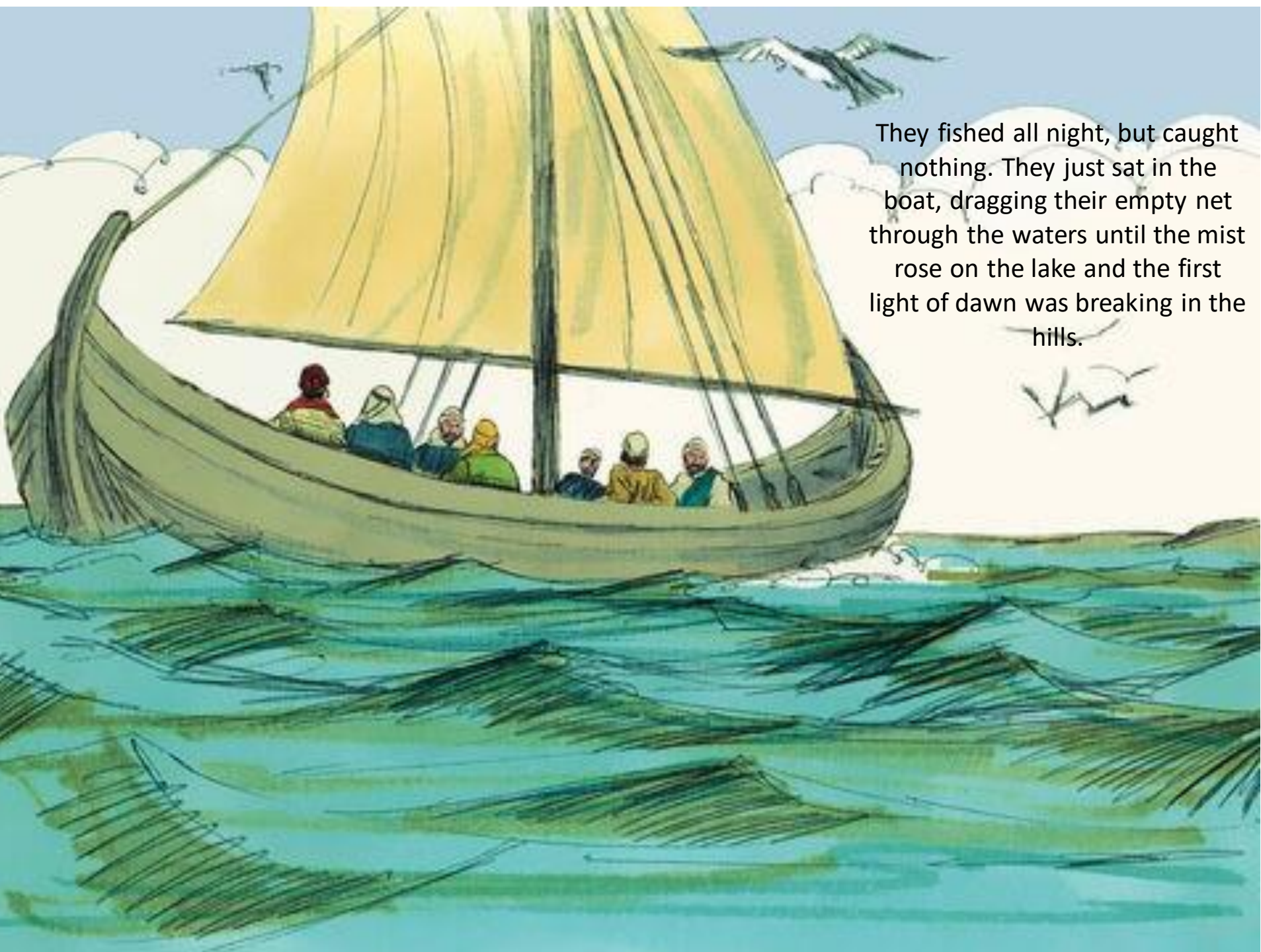


Breakfast by Galilee

John 21

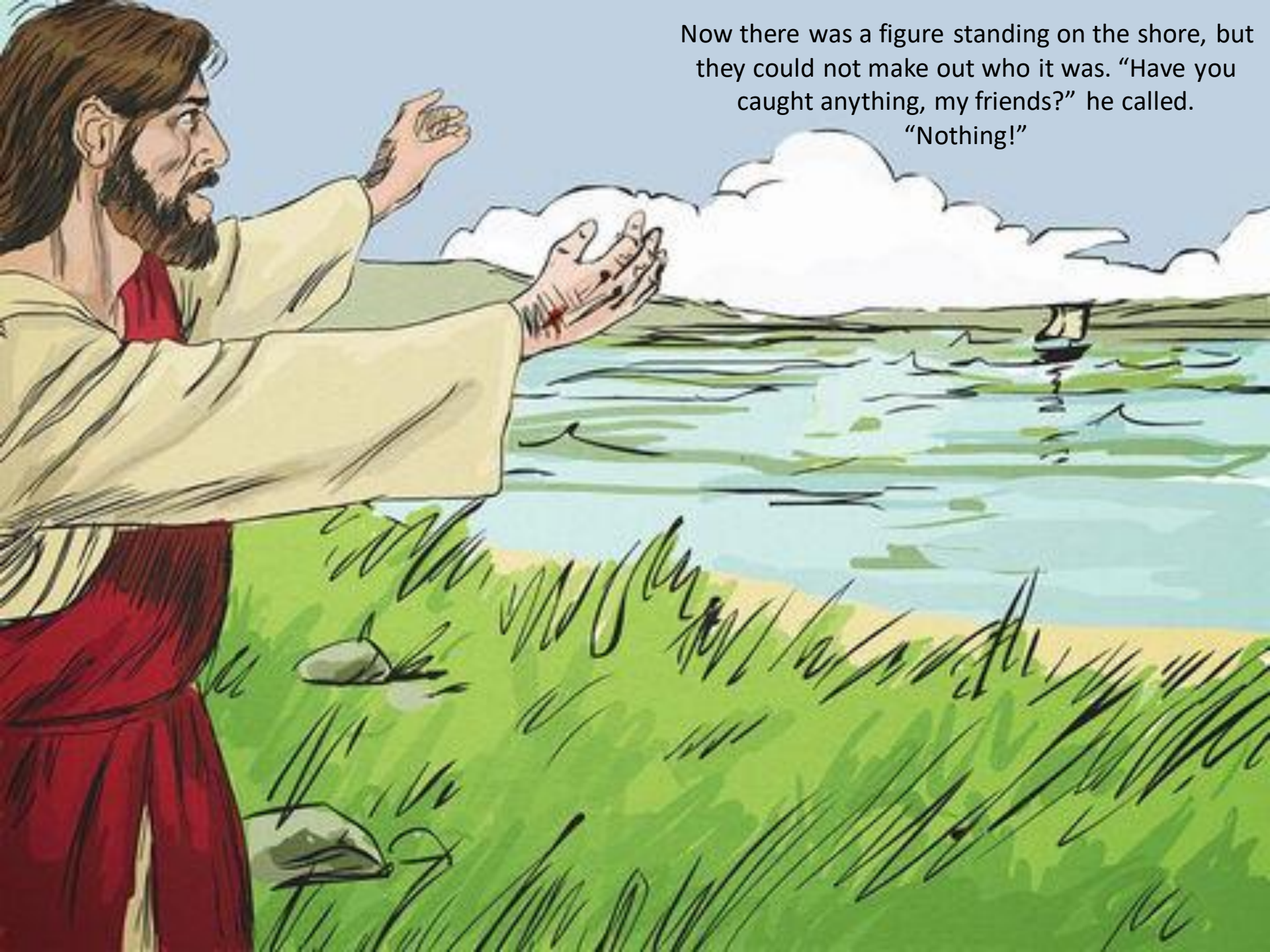
Soon after the friends of Jesus had seen him alive again in Jerusalem, they returned to their homes in Galilee.

One evening, Peter said, "I'm going fishing," and the others, including Thomas, James and John, said, "We'll come too."



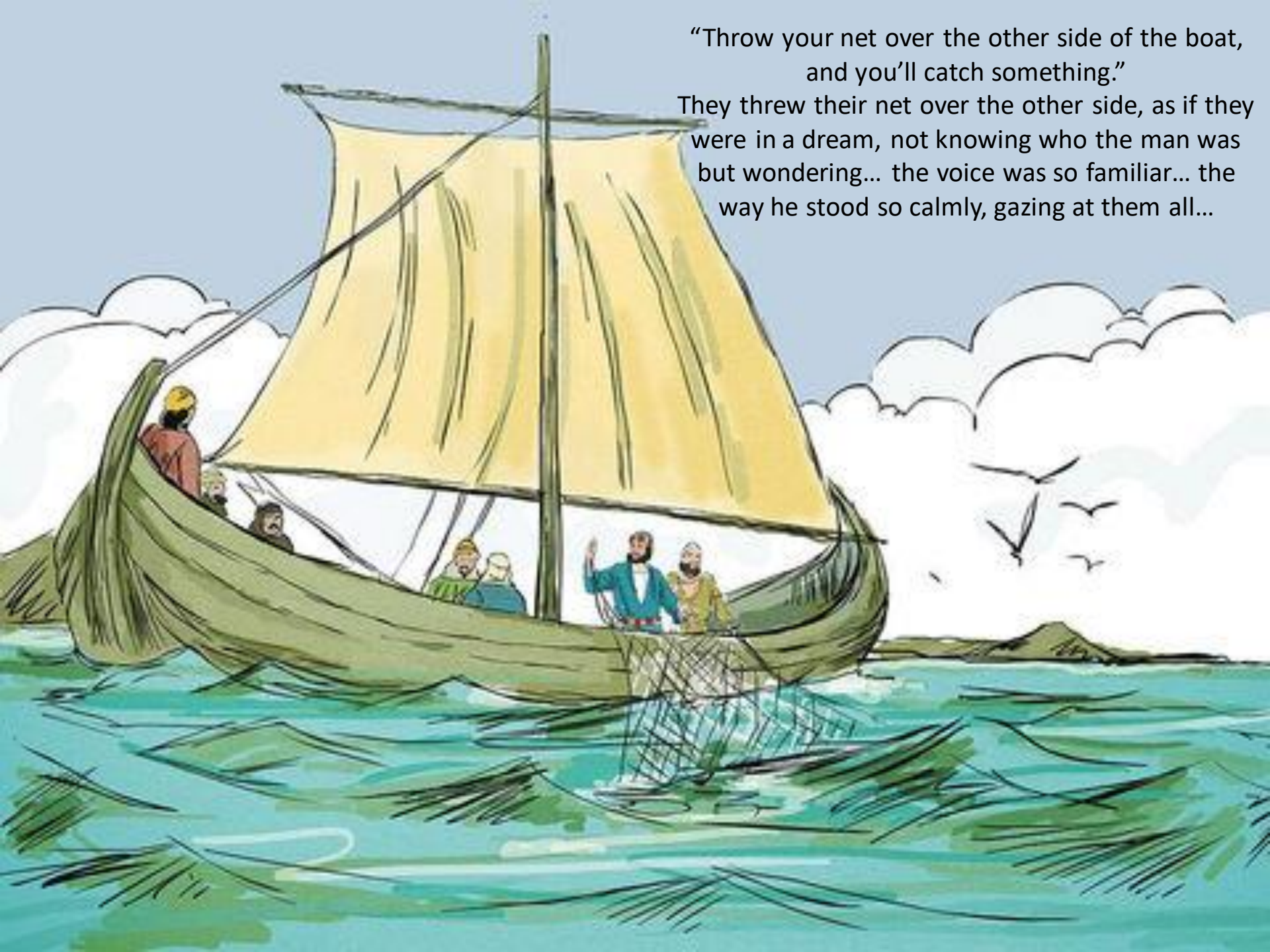
They fished all night, but caught nothing. They just sat in the boat, dragging their empty net through the waters until the mist rose on the lake and the first light of dawn was breaking in the hills.

Now there was a figure standing on the shore, but they could not make out who it was. "Have you caught anything, my friends?" he called. "Nothing!"



“Throw your net over the other side of the boat,
and you’ll catch something.”

They threw their net over the other side, as if they
were in a dream, not knowing who the man was
but wondering... the voice was so familiar... the
way he stood so calmly, gazing at them all...

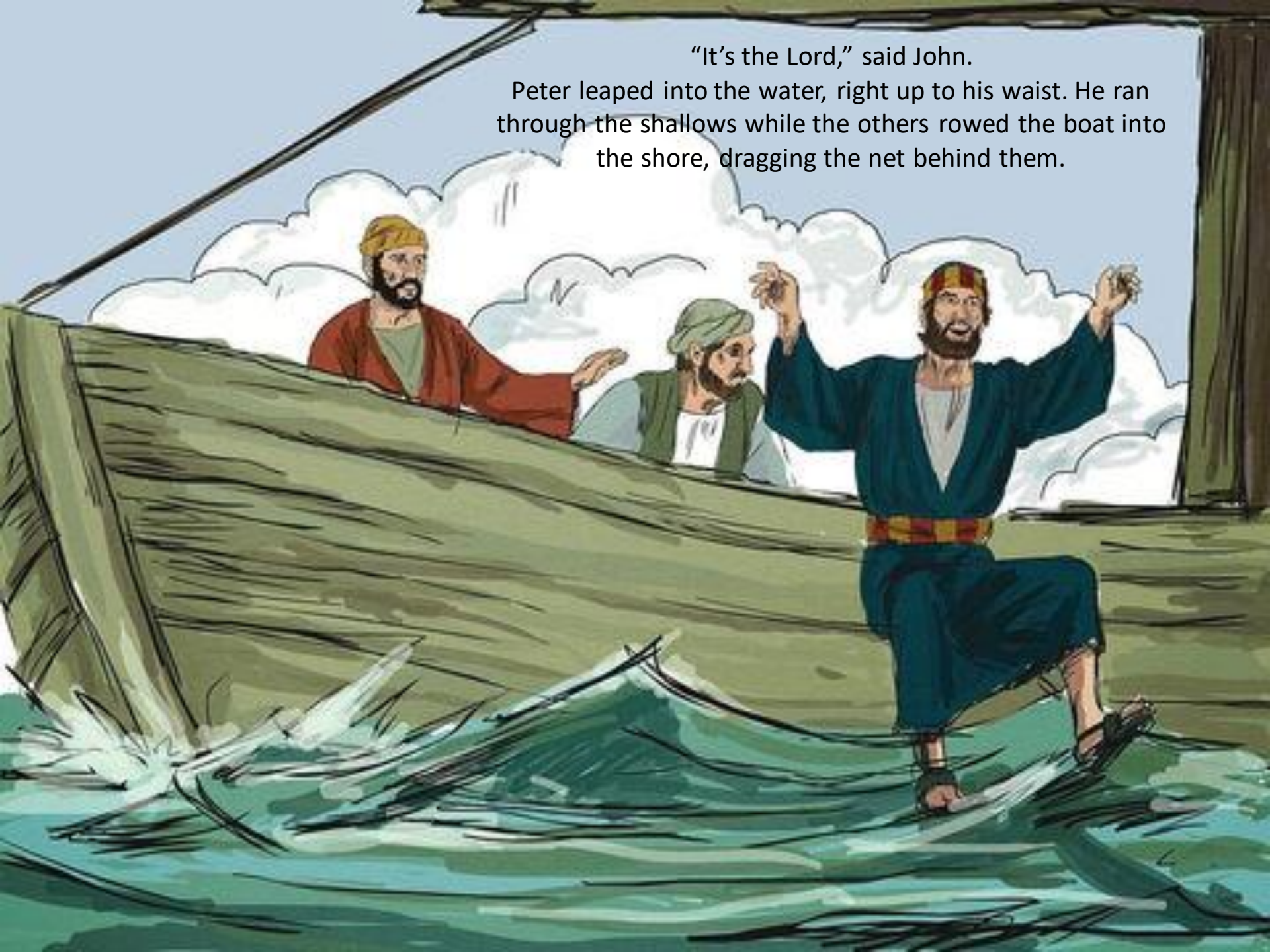


Suddenly, the net was full of fish, scales flashing in the sunlight, flipping and jumping, dazzling. A cascade of white and silver, so heavy that the men could scarcely haul the nets into the boat.



“It’s the Lord,” said John.

Peter leaped into the water, right up to his waist. He ran through the shallows while the others rowed the boat into the shore, dragging the net behind them.

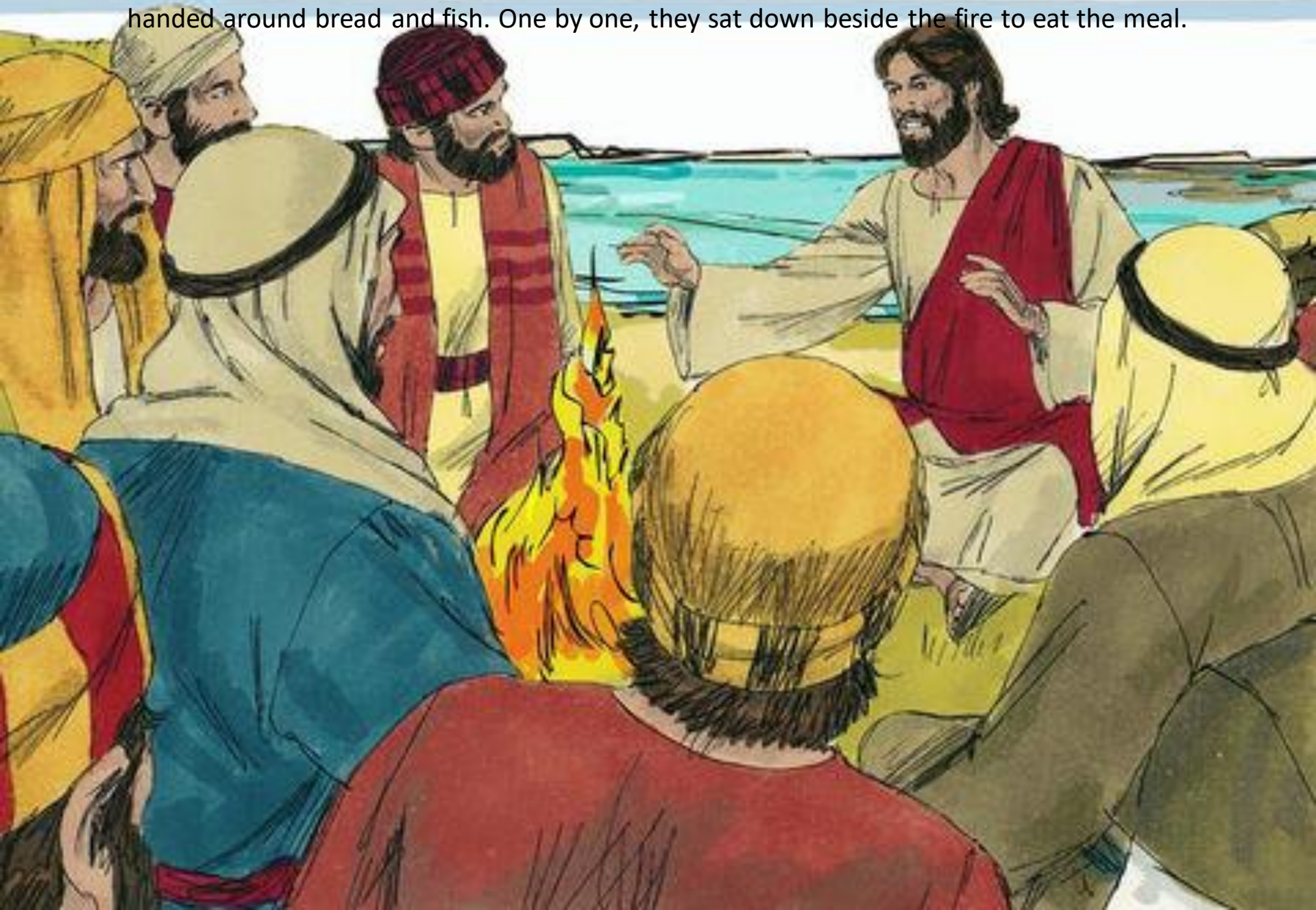


They reached the figure, who was standing beside a charcoal fire, cooking some fish. It seemed so ordinary. Jesus was standing there beside a fire, cooking breakfast. They stood there in silence like little children, suddenly unsure what to do or say.



“Bring some of the fish you’ve caught,” Jesus waved to them. “Let’s eat.”

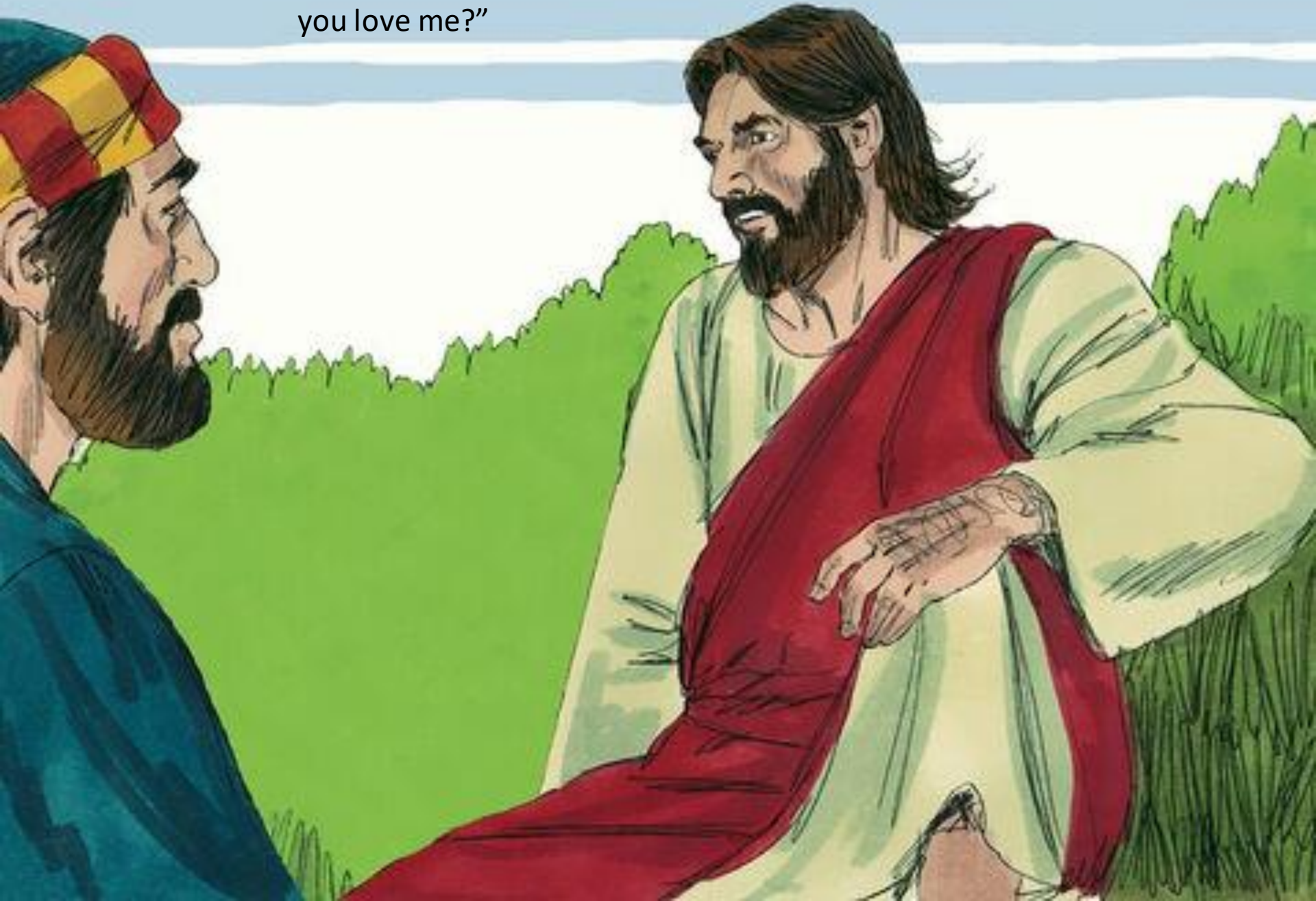
No one dared to ask, “Is it really you, Lord?” because they knew who it was. They knew it was Jesus as he handed around bread and fish. One by one, they sat down beside the fire to eat the meal.



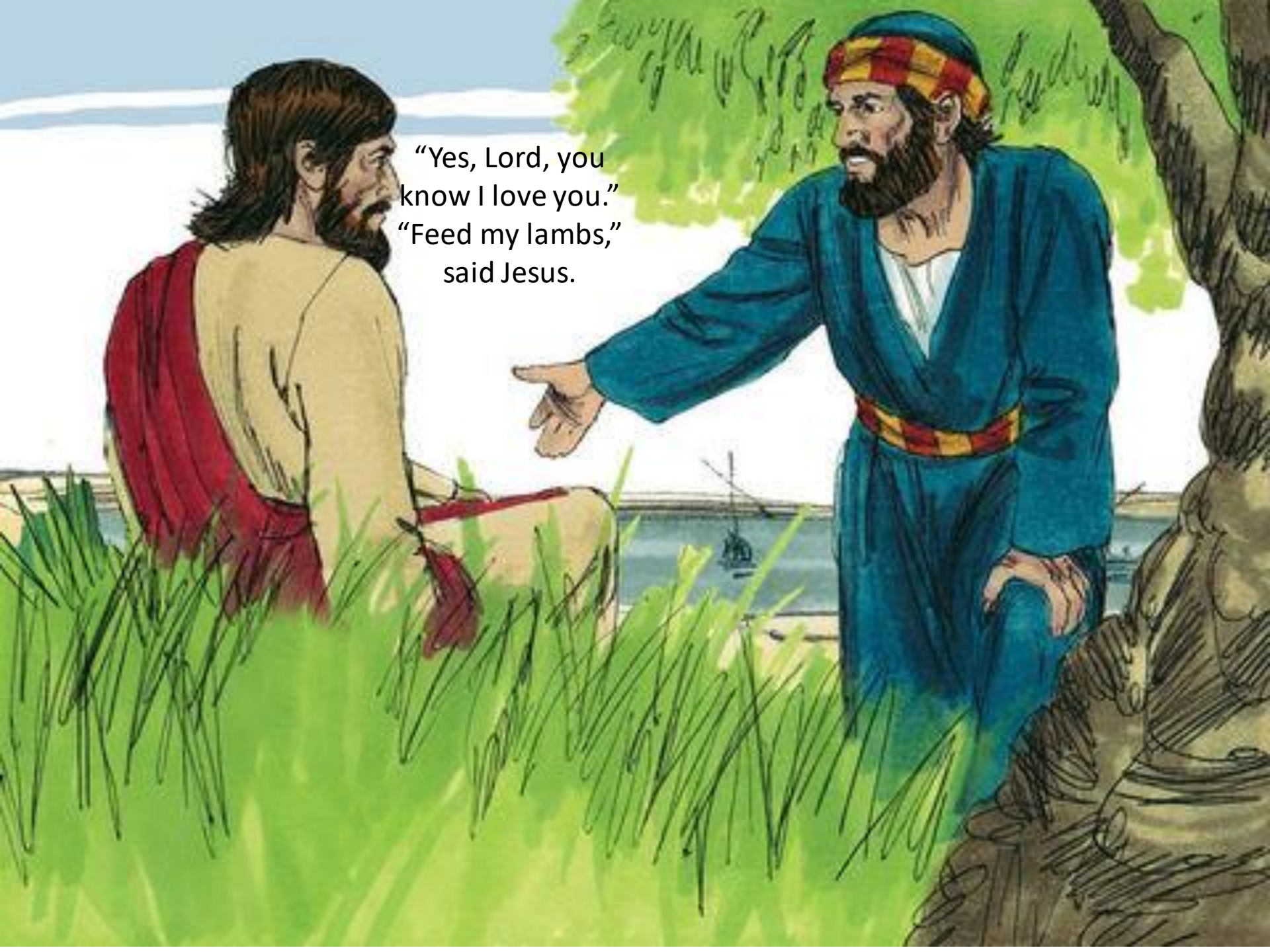
The flames were fanned by the morning breeze, and the smell of fish and the scent of flowers in the meadows floated through the air. The men sat there all around their master, eating silently in wonder.

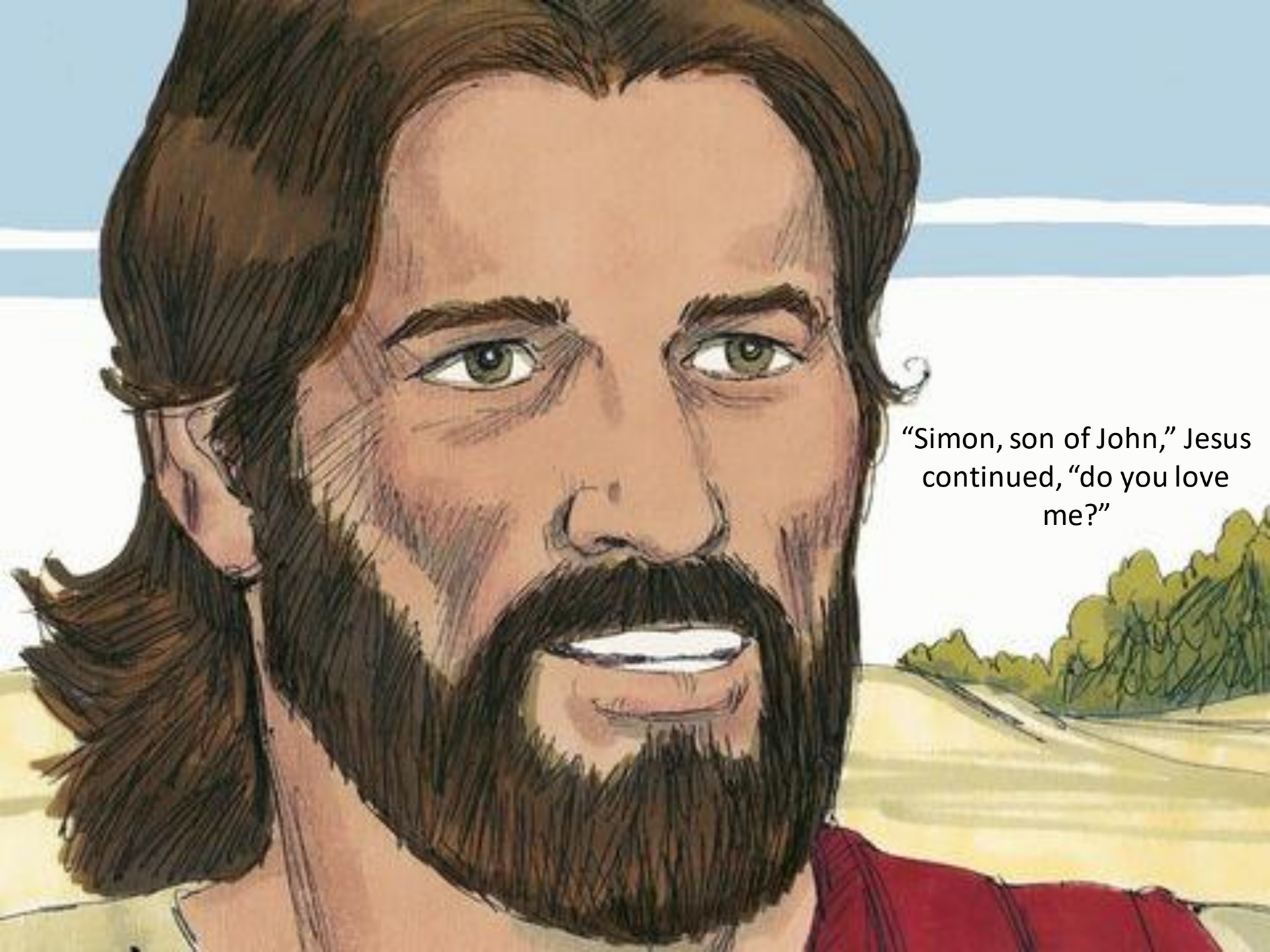


When they had finished eating, Jesus sat down beside Simon Peter. "Simon, son of John, do you love me?"

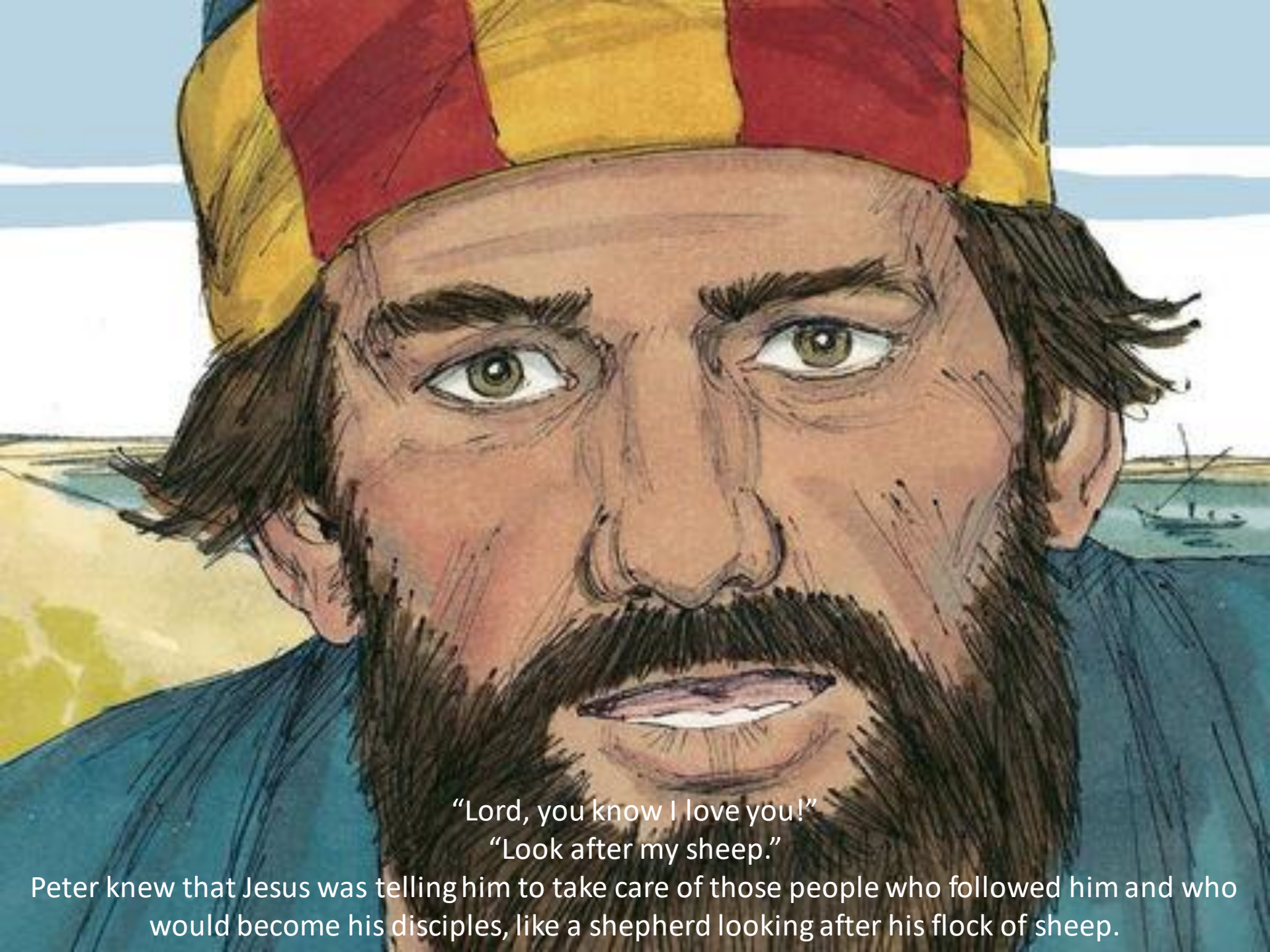


“Yes, Lord, you
know I love you.”
“Feed my lambs,”
said Jesus.





“Simon, son of John,” Jesus continued, “do you love me?”

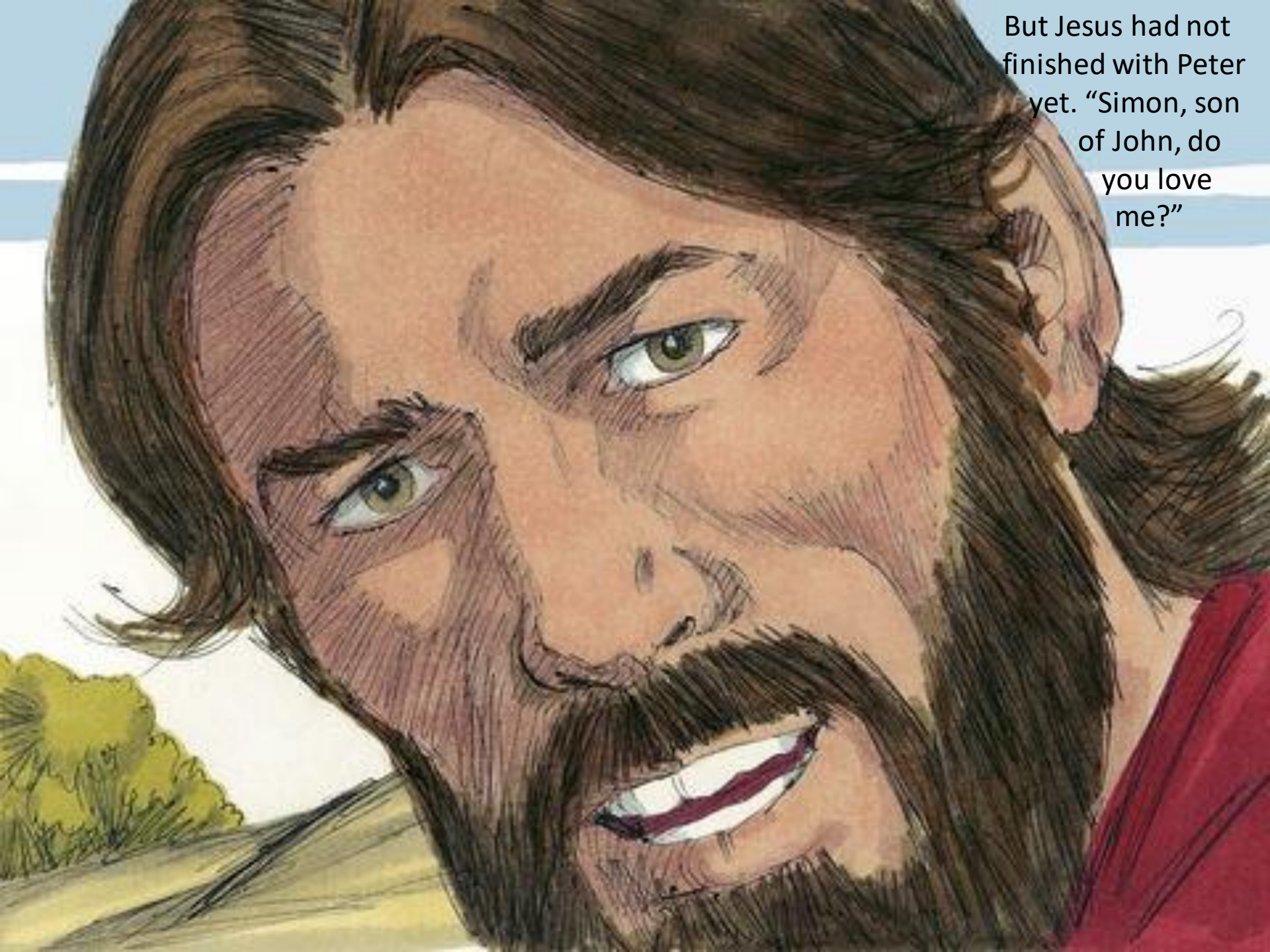


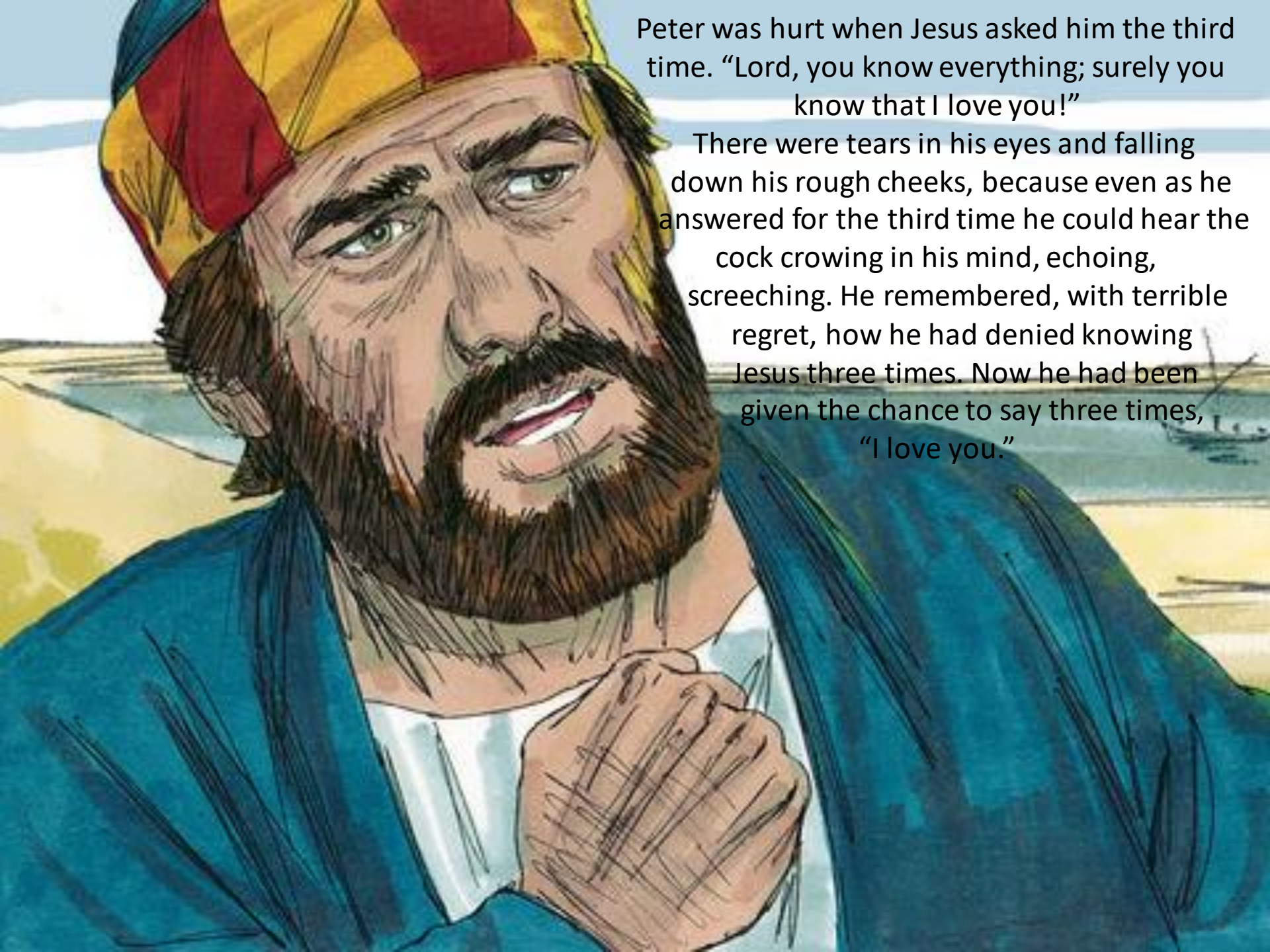
“Lord, you know I love you!”

“Look after my sheep.”

Peter knew that Jesus was telling him to take care of those people who followed him and who would become his disciples, like a shepherd looking after his flock of sheep.

But Jesus had not finished with Peter yet. "Simon, son of John, do you love me?"

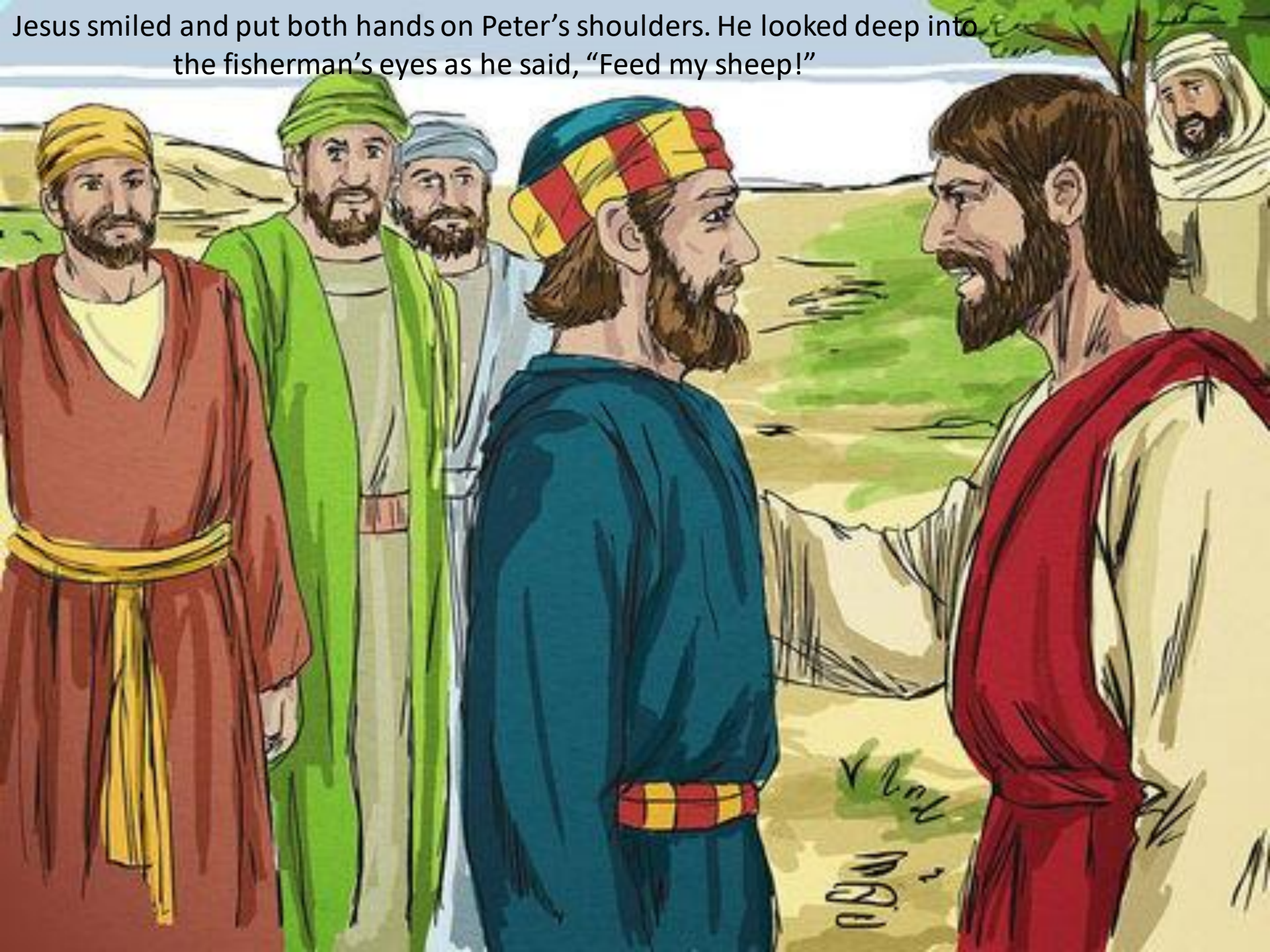




Peter was hurt when Jesus asked him the third time. “Lord, you know everything; surely you know that I love you!”

There were tears in his eyes and falling down his rough cheeks, because even as he answered for the third time he could hear the cock crowing in his mind, echoing, screeching. He remembered, with terrible regret, how he had denied knowing Jesus three times. Now he had been given the chance to say three times, “I love you.”

Jesus smiled and put both hands on Peter's shoulders. He looked deep into the fisherman's eyes as he said, "Feed my sheep!"



On that bright dawn beside Lake Galilee, Peter took courage. He knew he was forgiven and loved and ready to be a leader of the followers of Jesus.

