

**Remnant Life Church**  
March 16, 2025  
**Hope for the Peter in All of Us**  
*Mark 16:1-8; John 21:15-19*

We are approaching the time on the church calendar that means a great deal to Christians

- The final week of Jesus' earthly life (known as Passion Week)
- Specifically the events of Thursday night leading to the day of Jesus' crucifixion
- Then the day of His great triumph over death, hell and satan at His resurrection on Sunday morning

And I think one of the most important and interesting people throughout the final week of Jesus' life was Peter.

- Peter, in this time of great turmoil and emotion, like I'm sure many of us would have, experienced a wide range of emotion and action.
  - From great bravery to embarrassing cowardice
  - From the height of great honor to the low of crippling shame
  - From undisputed leader to that of a self-exiled emotional outcast

And I believe Peter is, by his actions and what happened to him as a result, a representative of each one of us.

What is important for us to see, however, is not only did Jesus not forget about Peter or dismiss him because of what he had done but went out of His way to restore him.

**READ – Mark 16:1-8**

- Now notice what the angel says
  - But first, recognize that angels act as messengers of God and not of themselves
  - They only do and say what God tells them to do and say
- Look at verse 7 again - *But go, tell his disciples and Peter, He is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.*
  - What is strange about what the angel says?
  - *Tell the disciples...and Peter*
  - Why was Peter singled out?
    - Because at that moment, Peter was experiencing the lowest point of his life
    - He was filled with shame, humiliated, and embarrassed
    - Why?
      - Because he had done exactly what he told Jesus he would never do, betray Him
      - And not once, but three times!

What makes Peter's failure in this situation so prominent is who he was for the previous 3 years of Jesus' ministry

1. Peter was the most vocal and intense of the 12

- a. Peter was always the first to speak up
  - b. He could be considered the spokesman of the group
  - c. And it was Peter who made the bold statement, *“Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you.”* (Matt 26:35)
2. He was also a part of Jesus’ inner circle
    - a. Peter was present along with James and John at the transfiguration (Matt 17; Mark 9; Luke 9)
      - i. And it was Peter who recognized and identified Moses and Elijah
      - ii. But it was also Peter who then said, let’s live here forever! (Matt 17:4)
    - b. Peter, along with James and John, was closest to Jesus when He prayed in the Garden and saw Him at His most human moment (Matt 26:37-38)
    - c. It was Peter who walked on the water on the Sea of Galilee (Matt 14:29)
    - d. And it was to Simon (Peter’s birth name) that Jesus said, *And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.* (Matt 16:18)
      - i. In the original Greek Peter is *Pet-ros*, which means “rock”
    - e. But Peter was also a man of great insecurity
      - i. We see this by his actions during and after the crucifixion
  3. The slide for Peter toward the betrayal begins in the Garden of Gethsemane
    - a. Soldiers have come to arrest Jesus led by Judas
    - b. *Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it and struck the high priest’s servant, cutting off his right ear. (The servant’s name was Malchus.)* (John 18:10)
      - i. A good question to ask is why did Peter even have a sword with him?
      - ii. Had he not been with Jesus for the past 3 years?
      - iii. When did Jesus ever advocate force for anything He stood for?
        1. Jesus’ ministry was never about coercing people to follow Him
        2. Not physically, emotionally, or mentally
      - iv. The point here is that Peter was already beginning to rely on the flesh rather than the Spirit
  4. It then escalated when he, with all the other disciples, fled from the garden
    - a. Matt 26:56b – *Then all the disciples deserted Him and fled.*
    - b. Isn’t it amazing how fast the flesh can control your thinking and actions when given the opportunity?
  5. It finally culminated with Peter denying Jesus 3 times when asked if he knew or associated with Jesus
    - a. This would be the moment of greatest regret for Peter
    - b. But was what Peter did really that serious when you consider the purpose of Jesus’ life and ministry?
    - c. Matt 10:32-33 - *Whoever acknowledges me before others, I will also acknowledge before my Father in heaven. But whoever disowns me before others, I will disown before my Father in heaven.*
      - i. What does it mean to disclaim or disown?

- ii. It means to totally reject
- iii. And Peter did it not just once but 3 times

**READ – John 21:15-19**

When we recognize the magnitude of what Peter did, we can then better understand why Jesus asked Peter 3 times in the same conversation the exact same question

- Jesus was in essence, telling Peter that He was aware of what happened
  - We should also note that Jesus is now calling Peter by the name of his old nature (Simon)
  - Remember when we said that a person’s name was a description of them?
  - Peter was no longer acting like Peter (the one “ordained” by Jesus)
  - He acted like Simon – the man he was before Jesus came into his life
- Second, Jesus not only restored Peter (in front of the others)
- But, for the 3 denials, in the three questions He asked, Jesus forgave each one

As we see this concept more clearly, I want to look quickly at a comparison between Peter and one other disciple.

- Perhaps the last one you would expect to compare with arguable the leader of the 12 disciples
- But let’s take a moment to look at Peter and Judas – not only to compare what they did but how it ended so differently for them

First, both men did the exact same thing – they betrayed Jesus

- On the one hand, Judas’ actions were deliberate and planned
  - He went and sought out the high priests ([Matt 26:14](#))
  - He then waited and watched for an opportunity to betray Jesus ([Matt 26:16](#))
    - Now it involves not only planning but scheming
    - IOW - Spying with evil intent
  - He led the priests and soldiers to Jesus in the Garden – ([Matt 26:47](#))
  - He performed the prearranged act of betrayal ([Matt 26:49](#))
    - He conceived, planned, and acted out each stage
    - Through each and every one of these steps, Judas could have stopped at any time
    - That same statement is true for each of us – it is never too late to turn from sin
- But within that, as I have shared with you in the past, I believe that what Judas did actually began with a good intent
  - I believe Judas had determined that a fire needed to be lit
  - He would, for all intents and purposes, force Jesus’s hand by creating a situation that would have to be dealt with immediately
  - And it would force Jesus to reveal His true nature and divinity
  - But intent never justifies sinful actions

- Peter’s actions, however, were not planned but, like most things in Peter’s life, took place on the spur of the moment
  - Peter spontaneously tried to defend Jesus in the Garden with the sword (**John 18:10**)
  - He instinctively fled the Garden with the others (**Matt 26:56**)
  - But then, perhaps realizing what he had done, followed Jesus after His arrest (**Luke 22:54**)
    - He wanted to see what was happening but not get too close
    - How many Christians live their lives in the exact same way?
      - They want to call themselves followers of Jesus
      - But they don’t want to get too close, meaning give up too much of their old nature – the pleasure part of sin

The aftermath, for these two, however, was very different and not what you might expect

- Both men were filled with remorse and regretted their actions
  - Peter wept bitterly (**Matt 26:75**)
  - Judas was filled with remorse (**Matt 27:3**)
- But only Judas tried to make things right (**Matt 27:3-4**)
  - He returned the money (**27:3**)
  - He spoke on Jesus’ behalf, calling Him innocent blood (**27:4**)
- Peter was also very upset, but he never sought forgiveness or confessed to anyone what he had done
  - He told none of the other disciples what he had done
  - He kept it all to himself

And so what were their outcomes?

- As we know, Judas killed himself (**Matt 27:5**)
  - He, too never went to the others to pray with and for him
  - And because he ended his life, he was never able to speak with Jesus following the resurrection
- Peter on the other hand was restored
  - Would Jesus have treated Judas any differently than Peter?
  - Which begs the question, could Judas have also been restored?
  - I believe so
    - And if that is so, will we see Judas in heaven?
    - A fellow pastor I posed this same question to immediately said “no”
    - My question is: Did his remorse and action of returning the money constitute a confession on his part that would have resulted in his forgiveness?
    - I think the same question can asked of the centurion who stood at the foot of the cross and said, *Surely He was the Son of God.* (**Matt 27:54**)
      - Rom 10:9 - *If you declare with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.*
      - Certainly, that soldier completed the first part of Paul’s required statement of faith!

**I John 1:9** - *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.*

That same forgiveness of sin is available to each of us this morning

- Was Judas's sin greater than Peter's because it handed Jesus over to be crucified?
- Was Peter's less so because there was no immediate harm to Jesus?
  - Peter, it could be argued, hurt no one other than himself
  - Does that make it any less of a sin?
- Would you not say that there is a bit of Peter and perhaps even Judas in every one of us?
  - The capacity to falter in the face of trouble or adversity
  - The right intent that is swept aside by wrong action
  - The overwhelming sense of self-preservation or entitlement
  - The ease at which the flesh takes over our lives as the spirit is pushed aside?
- But there is hope that when that moment comes, you will not be drawn in by the temptation to act in a way that is, like Peter, self-serving
- It takes thought, commitment, and a willingness to lay down your pride – but there is hope!
- Not because of what we do but because of Jesus Christ!

*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. (I John 1:9)*