

Peter's Threefold Denial Of The Lord.

Mark 14:68-72.

Sunday, March 1, 2009.

I. Peter was no coward.

Among all the disciples Peter appears to have been the most daring.

- A. It was Peter who had said to the Lord in the Middle of a storm on the sea of Galilee: "Lord if it is You, tell me to come to you on the water." Matt. 14:28.
- B. It was Peter who had gone out on the limb and boldly declared: "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God," when the other disciples were not yet ready to make such a bold confession. Mark 8:29.
- C. It was Peter who took on the whole mob that had come to arrest Jesus in the garden. Mark 14:47.
- D. It was Peter who had followed the Lord right into the Lion's den as it were, when he ventured into the courtyard of the high priestly palace where Jesus was tried. John 18:15.
- E. Peter was possessed of a carnal courage.
 1. A courage devoid of passive graces such as patience and endurance. The Lord Jesus was possessed of a courage that displayed the passive graces.
 2. A courage devoid of understanding what the Lord is doing in a given set of circumstances. "See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise... Therefore do not be unwise but understand what the will of the Lord is." Eph. 5:15,17.
 3. A courage devoid of moral principle. It will use whatever means necessary to get the job done; good or bad; evil or just; even calling down curses on yourself if thereby you can deceive the enemy.
Mark 14:71.
- F. Later Peter's courage would be sanctified after receiving power from the Holy Spirit.
 1. "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ." Acts 2:36.
 2. "Let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the Name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands before you whole." Acts 4:10.
 3. "We can not but speak the things we have seen and heard." Acts 4:20.
 4. "We ought to obey God rather than man." Acts 5:29.
 5. "The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom you murdered by hanging on a tree." Acts 5:30.
 6. "This is commendable, if because of conscience toward God one endures grief, suffering wrongfully... for to this you were also called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow in His steps." 1 Peter 2:19,21.
 7. "Therefore let those who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls to Him in doing good as to a faithful Creator." 1 Peter 4:19.

II. The Lord Jesus was not passive with regards to Peter.

- A. The Lord knew Peter's impulsive, carnal courage.
- B. The Lord knew that Satan would have a hay day with Peter's carnal courage; that he had his eye on Peter, and desired to have him. Luke 22:31.
- C. The Lord knew that Peter would get himself into trouble and deny the Lord three times. Luke 22:34.
- D. The Lord prayed for Peter that He might have him in the end. Luke 22:32.
- E. In telling Peter all these things ahead of time the Lord as it were put the bumper pads along the bowling lane of Peter's life. They kept the ball of Peter's life from becoming a "gutter ball."
- F. No doubt the Lord was praying for Peter even as Peter was busy denying Him, and even as the Lord Himself was beaten and abused. How else do we explain the Lord turning around and looking at Peter when the rooster crowed for the second time? That turning and that looking again were the bumper pads along the bowling lane of Peter's life, and which kept the ball of his life from becoming a gutter ball. Luke 22:61.
- G. To Peter's credit he was looking to the Lord Jesus when the rooster crowed the second time; else the turning and looking of the Lord would have been in vain.
- H. Later in Peter's letters he was able to write about Christians as those "who are kept by the power of God, through faith, for salvation..." 1 Peter 1:5 Read the letters of Peter especially against the backdrop of this chapter in Peter's life.
- I. Were there no bumper pads in the gutters of Judas' life? Yes there were.
 - 1. The Lord's words to His disciples "One of you will betray Me... It would have been good for that man if he had never been born." Mark 14:18,21.
 - 2. The Lord's answer to Judas' question "Lord it is not I is it?" "You have said it." Matt. 26:25.
 - 3. The Lord dipped a piece of bread and gave it personally to Judas. John. 13:26.
 - 4. The Lord's words to Judas when he betrayed Him: "Friend, why have you come?" Matt. 26:50.In the end both Peter and Judas got what they had their eye on; what they really wanted in the final analysis. Peter got Jesus and Judas got the money.

III. Christians often cause themselves great grief.

Peter went out and wept bitterly Matt. 26:75

- A. In the process of hitting the Lord's bumper pads the Lord's children often incur great grief. They end up in prisons; in divorce courts; in bankruptcy courts; in hospitals, crippled, maimed, with broken hopes and broken hearts; weeping bitterly.
- B. Yet in the end it comes all down to this: Where are you looking and what do you want more than anything else? For Peter it was Jesus and for Judas it was the money. God gave to both their ultimate quest, and He will give it to you too.
- C. Both hit God's bumper pads more than once. Judas jumped over the bumper pads, and Peter scored a strike in the end. Jesus, and in Him an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and one that does not fade away. 1 Peter 1:4. What about you?