

Peter's Road to Remorse

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[0 : 00] If you have a Bible, then find the gospel of Luke chapter 22.! Luke chapter 22. Luke chapter 22. While you're finding your place, if you've been born again, if you have believed on Jesus Christ, have believed on Jesus Christ, have believed on Jesus Christ, have believed on Jesus Christ, You found what it is to have peace inside of you.

You found what it is to know forgiveness of sin and to be at peace with God. You find that Jesus Christ is altogether lovely and that there's nobody else.

If you know Jesus Christ, you don't want anybody else. If you have salvation that Jesus Christ gives, you don't desire to seek any other thing because you found it. You found the real deal in Jesus because it's real.

He's alive. And we would then, if we're believers in Christ and have found the truth, we would never say that we're not believers, would we? We would never tell a person that we don't know anything about Jesus.

If they asked us about the Word of God, we're so thankful for the Word of God. We wouldn't say, oh, I don't know. We wouldn't cower if somebody confronted us about our Savior or our Christianity.

[1 : 25] We would never openly declare that we don't know Him, right? I mean, you wouldn't do that, would you? Well, we're going to see in this passage in Luke 22 that an apostle named Peter did just that.

And if I read the accounts of his life in the Bible correctly, I would say that he had a considerable amount more boldness than I do. He was a very bold man.

And yet, in this passage of Scripture, he denied Jesus, denied even knowing Him three times. So let's read it together, Luke 22, verses 54 through 62.

Then took they Him, Jesus, they took they Him and led Him, and brought Him into the high priest's house, and Peter followed afar off. And when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the hall and were set down together, Peter sat down among them.

But a certain maid beheld him as he sat by the fire and earnestly looked upon him and said, This man was also with him. And he had denied him, saying, Woman, I know him not.

[2 : 32] And after a little while, another saw him and said, Thou art also of them. And Peter said, Man, I am not. And about the space of one hour, after another confidently affirmed, saying, Of a truth, this fellow also was with him, for he is a Galilean.

And Peter said, Man, I know not what thou sayest. And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew. And the Lord turned and looked upon Peter.

And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him before the cock crow, Thou shalt deny me thrice. And Peter went out and wept bitterly.

Now this is a terrible night on many levels. Not only is the Savior, the Son of God, the Messiah, Israel's Messiah, the Savior of the world, not only is he being betrayed and then arrested and now on trial and false witnesses and false accusers and the beatings and then eventually the crucifixion. Not only is that underway, but for Peter, he's got now these feelings of cowardice and of betrayal and of failure.

[3 : 46] But how is it that this zealous and seemingly fearless man is sneaking away privately to bawl his eyes out?

How is it that this burly and bold apostle can't contain himself any longer and is just falling apart, weeping bitter tears of remorse?

Well, the answer is simple. He failed. He failed the Lord this night. Because when push came to shove or when it came down to this moment of fear, this moment of pressure upon him, he caved.

And that image, the Lord turned and looked upon Peter. And I believe that image is burned into his memory. He is not going to forget the look when his guilty eyes met the innocent eyes of Jesus Christ, his Lord.

All of the frustration and the anger that was built up in him were now sharply rebuked by that swift glance of compassion and love and care.

[4 : 59] Peter, the one that he claimed he didn't even know, looked right at him and looked right through him. And Peter had to get out of there.

And he went and found a private spot and just wept. And the agony of his remorse, of defeat, of failure just poured from him that night.

So how did it get to this? How did it get to this point? I want to know because I don't want to follow the steps of Peter. I don't personally want to ever get to this and I don't want it to ever get to this for any of you here today.

Where we would deny even, I know not the man, deny the Lord Jesus Christ who's done so much for us. When the moment of testing comes in our life, when we get called on the carpet and forced to choose, do we take a stand or do we cower in shame?

I don't want to one day have to look Jesus Christ in the eyes and know that I couldn't stand up for him after everything he was doing that night was for me.

[6 : 15] And I don't want that to be the case for you either. So how did it come to this? We're going to walk with Peter on what I'm calling Peter's road to remorse. And I want to notice a major flaw that Peter carried with him all the way.

That flaw is that Peter thought more highly of himself than he ought to think. There are several things that he had wrong about himself and each one led to this moment of remorse and to this bitter weeping and to this just cowardly shame.

Peter's road to remorse. Let's pray and ask God to do something here and then we'll get into this passage some more. Lord, please meet with us in this moment as we are seated and stilled around the word of God and this story, this historical account.

Lord, make it come to life in our world today where we live. Help us to see ourselves. Help us to avoid these pitfalls and to be willing and ready to take a stand for the Lord Jesus Christ and to never be ashamed.

We pray that you'll minister the word to each person where they need it. We ask in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Amen. So the first thing this morning that led to his bitter remorse was that Peter was not as strong as he thought he was.

[7 : 32] Let me show you what I mean, what he thought he was. Look earlier in this chapter. Come back to verse number 31. And just read a few verses here, four verses, 31 through 34.

Earlier that night, The Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not.

And when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren. And he said unto him, Lord, I'm ready to go with thee both into prison and to death. And he said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day before thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me.

Peter walked with Jesus. And Peter believed that he had it in him. When Christ said, I prayed for you, Peter, I prayed for thee that thy faith fail not.

And Peter, he didn't even flinch to respond and say, you don't have to pray for me. I'm good. I'm in. I'm all in, Lord. I'm ready right now to follow you to prison.

[8 : 43] If that's what it is. I'll follow you all the way to death. I'm all in. Ride or die, God. That's me. I'm ready to go. The Lord said, no, you're not, Peter.

You're not nearly as strong as you think you are. He was so confident in himself. If you consider Peter's, these last three and a half years, Peter was chosen and called by God because Jesus said to the Father, those that thou hast gavest me, I lost none, save one, the son of perdition.

Peter was one that God gave to Jesus. He was chosen to follow and be a disciple of the Messiah. He had an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ.

He and his brother were sent out to preach the kingdom of heaven. And they were entrusted with a great responsibility to go. Not to take Jesus with them, but he trained them and sent them out.

And he went through the villages and towns of Israel preaching to these people that the kingdom of heaven is at hand. He was not only entrusted with responsibility, he was empowered with ability.

[9 : 53] Because along the way, Christ gave these men power to heal the sick. Like Peter carried that with him into a town to heal the sick people. To give sight to the blind.

To raise the dead, believe it or not. God gave him that ability in that moment in time. On top of that, Simon Peter received revelation from the Father that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God.

Jesus said, Blessed art thou, Simon. Flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. God gave him insight, special understanding and revelation.

Peter, in this very night, he was not afraid to stand against an entire band of soldiers that were come to take Jesus Christ.

As long as he had a sword in his hand, he was something else. I'm telling you, the man was special. He left an impression everywhere he went. He was strong, but not as strong as he thought.

[11 : 06] Because Peter, by his own testimony, believed that he could handle any pressure. And that Peter would stand up against any opposition. He was deceived, however, about how strong of a man he was.

I believe he presumed that his zeal would overcome any situation he found himself in. And it wasn't until the situation that night took an unexpected turn.

And to where it wasn't just the arrest of his Lord and the trials and all of that. It wasn't just the soldiers and the swords. But immediately, the spotlight gets put on him.

Well, he wasn't expecting that. He had been operating undercover. He was following afar off. He was just kind of keeping his eye on what's happening here tonight. Laying low.

Until a young woman calls out him. And calls him out and says, You're one of them. And his knee-jerk response is preserve himself and says, I know him not.

[12 : 08] I don't know what you're talking about. Because it turns out you really don't know what you're made of until you get tested. And that night, Peter got tested. He talked a big talk.

He believed a big thing about himself until he got called on the carpet. It's not unusual for followers of Jesus to feel like they're stronger than they are. Because most have never been tested in any way like this.

Any significant way. You've never been threatened with bodily harm, likely, for being a believer in Jesus Christ. There's nobody going through your neighborhood, knocking down doors, hauling Christians to prison.

Or casting stones at them. Or like they did in the past, tying them up to a pole and lighting them on fire. You've never seen that happen. It's not a reality to you. You've never been tested like that. It's easy to be a Christian if it's acceptable to be one. When nobody's after you. Much like Peter's life, nobody was after him. And so he thought he was strong.

[13 : 11] And maybe you do too. Think you're stronger than you are. I looked up some stats this week and found that the top three countries, and there's many countries that are pretty harsh against Christianity, that literally persecute Christians today.

The top three is North Korea, Somalia, and Yemen. And just to throw three out to you, how do you suppose you would...

How long do you think you'd last if you were transported to live your life and your lifestyle in one of those countries? I wonder if anything about your life would have to change.

Does anybody on your street know that you're a Christian? Does anybody at your work or your job or your family know that they name the name of Jesus Christ?

I wonder maybe you're already living your life as an undercover Christian. Maybe you're already keeping it to yourself and not letting folks know.

[14 : 17] If so, if that's you, you're probably not as strong as you think you are. You haven't been tested yet. You might say, well, I'd never deny Christ.

Actually, you'd be the first one. You'd be the first one. You're on the same road Peter is, the road to remorse. You know what you need to do today?

As soon as you can? You need to tell somebody else that you're a Christian. That you're a child of God. You've been born again, washed in the blood.

You believe the Bible. You go to church where they preach the Bible. You know why you need to do that? Not to convert them and to tell them and to get them in.

You need to do that for you. You need to get stronger than you really are. You think you're as strong as you are until you find out when it's unexpected and it comes?

[15:17] Peter did. And Peter is a lot tougher than you and me. It came at him at a different angle and he wasn't ready and he was weak and he was a coward.

And he denied the Lord Jesus. You know who would do that? You. If you're ashamed to name his name today, if you're ashamed to tell your co-workers today, if you're ashamed to denounce to your family today, you'll be the one that's not as strong as you are.

And I don't want you. I don't want me and I don't want you to go out and end up weeping those bitter tears when you finally see Jesus Christ face to face. Secondly, Peter was not as involved as he thought he was.

He wasn't as strong as he thought he was, but he wasn't as involved as he thought he was. For this I want to continue in Luke 22 and read another portion. And we're going to read about verse 39 down to verses 51.

So follow along as I read. Peter was not as involved as he thought he was. And he came out and went as he was wont to the Mount of Olives. And his disciples also followed him. When he was at the place, he said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation.

[16:30] And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast and kneeled down and prayed, saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will but thine be done.

There appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him. And being in agony, he prayed more earnestly. And his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

When he rose up from prayer, and came to his disciples, he found them sleeping for sorrow, and said unto them, Why sleep ye? Rise and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.

And while he yet spake, behold, a multitude, and he that was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them and drew near unto Jesus to kiss him. But Jesus said unto him, Jesus, betrayest thou the Son of Man with a kiss?

And when they which were about him saw what would follow, they said unto him, Lord, shall we smite with a sword? And one of them smote the servant of the high priest and cut off his right ear. And Jesus answered and said, Suffer ye thus far.

[17:32] And he touched his ear and healed him. Let's consider something here that Peter was not as involved as he thought he was. In the moment that Jesus needed the support in the garden as he prayed, if we connected this with Matthew and Mark and John, we put all the Gospels together, the story kind of develops a little bit further.

Luke just gives us a few details. Jesus took his disciples to that garden, minus Judas, and with the eleven, then he took three, Peter, James, and John, and went into the garden further and told them to pray.

Then he himself went a little further and fell on his face and prayed. He came back to find Peter, James, and John asleep. And he did this back and forth a few times, woke them up and said, Pray. Jesus was weak in the flesh. He was experiencing much sorrow. In Matthew he says that his soul was exceeding sorrowful even unto death.

He felt the weight of what was coming, of the crucifixion coming that night. But these disciples, Peter, they weren't in touch with this gravity of sorrow.

[18:49] They weren't even feeling the situation out at all. The agony that Jesus was experiencing, they weren't. They were tired. It was late. They fell asleep when Jesus needed their help.

But when the soldiers came, it was Peter that drew the sword. In John chapter 18, it was Peter that cut off the ear of the high priest's servant.

His name was Malchus. And Jesus turned and you could read the other gospels. He rebuked Peter and said, It's not time for that. In Peter's mind, it's go time.

Here come the soldiers. We've got a sword and I'm going to defend you. Lord, I told you. I told you that I'd fight for you. I told you I'd be there for you. I'm ready to die for you.

Get behind me. But the time for defending Jesus had already passed. He had his chance to intercede.

[19:51] It was earlier in the garden. He had his chance to help the Lord. He had his chance to fight for Him. It was just a different form of fighting. fighting. It's what the Bible describes as spiritual warfare.

Getting on your face and interceding with God. Peter was ready for a fight. But Paul says the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty through God.

He said, We fight the good fight of faith. And when Paul instructed Christians to be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might, He told them to put on the whole armor of God and do what? Pray. Turn to Ephesians chapter 6 and let me let you see this clearly. Ephesians chapter number 6. All of this imagery of getting armored and getting prepared for battle.

Paul talks about taking a stand and girding your loins and getting your feet shod and having your shield and the helmet on and the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God.

[21 : 02] And when you get all armored up, then you go to battle. And I'll read the passage. We'll read it all. Verse 10. We'll start there. Verse 10 to 18.

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness and high places.

Wherefore, take unto you the whole armor of God that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day and having done all to stand, stand therefore having your loins gird about with truth and having on the breast prayed of righteousness and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. Above all, taking the shield of faith wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked and take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God praying always with all prayer and supplication and the Spirit and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.

perseverance is what those disciples did not have that night. They were told to watch and pray.

Peter was ready to fight but he was fighting the wrong battle.

[22 : 32] When it was time to pray, Peter was checked out. when it was time to pray and help the Lord, Peter was not involved.

That was not the thing that Jesus called him to help him with with the sword. You know, a lot of Christians too are checked out when it's time to engage in spiritual warfare.

When it's time to get busy doing the real work of the church, there's not too many present. Why sleep ye, Christians? Why sleep ye when it's time to pray, when it's time to seek the lost, when it's time to go out and lift up the Lord Jesus Christ publicly?

You're checked out. You're nowhere to be found. Why sleep ye, Christians? There's more to God's church than just attending the building.

There's a spiritual battle that's raging for the souls of men and some of them are your family members. Please don't think that you're arrived, that you're involved because you're saved and come to church.

[23 : 43] You might be involved but probably not as much as you think you are. Peter was present that night but when the Lord needed him most, he really wasn't involved, was he?

But he thought he was. He thought he was ready to go. He thought he was doing his job. Turns out he wasn't in touch with it at all. So Peter's not as strong as he thought he was.

Peter wasn't as involved as he thought he was and all of this led to this remorse. There's one more thing in this passage I want to point out from Luke 22 is that Peter was not as close as he thought he was.

He wasn't as close to the Lord Jesus Christ. Now I have to back up a little bit and just allow you to understand the experience that Peter did have. He was in what we call the inner circle.

He was in there. A couple passages of the Gospels, I think this one's from Mark, when he came into the house, there was a girl that had passed away, when he came into the house he suffered no man to go in save Peter and James and John and the father and mother of the maiden.

[24 : 54] It's interesting that he didn't allow all of his disciples to see and to experience what he was about to do in raising this girl from the dead. But he said, you, you, you, Peter, come on. You three, I want you in here.

Another time, after six days, Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John, his brother, and bringeth them up into a high mountain apart. And up in that high mountain, apart from all the other disciples, it was Jesus and those three men that walked up that mountain.

They got to see something that knocked them out cold. Jesus Christ was transfigured before them and his face did shine as the sun and his raiment was as white as the light and they were knocked out cold on the ground.

Another time and very much into this evening, he took with him, this is Matthew's account, he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee and began to be sorrowful and very heavy as they went a little bit further away from the other disciples.

There was absolutely an inner circle amongst the twelve disciples and Peter was in, Peter was close to Jesus Christ. He heard things and he saw things that the others did not and in some cases Jesus charged him, tell no man what you saw, what you heard.

[26 : 10] It was secret amongst them. Experiences like that can create a false sense of confidence in a man like Peter. He's close. Oh, but he's not as close as he thinks he is.

Jesus taught them, if a man will be my disciple, let him take up his cross and follow me. Well, Peter's following this night but not as close as he should be.

Would you look back at verse number 42? I'm sorry, I got the wrong page here. Verse number 54. Luke 22, verse 54. Verse 54.

Then took they him and led him and brought him into the high priest's house and Peter followed afar off.

Peter followed afar off. Now let's contrast that with what we read earlier back in verse 33. Because this is what Peter claimed.

[27 : 10] In verse 33, he said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee both into prison and to death. I'm ready to go all the way and yet Peter's not going with him anywhere that night, is he?

Oh, he's close but not as close as he thinks. Peter's following him afar off. It's possible that if Peter did indeed stay by Jesus' side that he might be in prison that night.

If he'd have stayed by his side, it might be that he died that night too. We'll never know. But Peter wasn't as close as he claimed to be. He stayed afar off. Matter of fact, as the night progressed, look at verse 55.

The next thing we know about Peter is that he's keeping company with those accusers and those rejecters of Jesus Christ. In verse 55, when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the hall and were set down together, there's Peter.

Peter sat down among them. Among them. Do you realize this is like early hours of the morning? This is not just some people hanging out at like normal to and fro business, commerce.

[28 : 24] This is, everybody's at home in bed. There's only a few people that know what's going on and it's the chief priests and the Pharisees and the soldiers and those involved that had gone and arrested him in the wee hours of the night out of the garden and brought him back to the high priest.

It's only a couple people that know. So the people that are there sitting down together are party to getting Jesus and getting him tried and ultimately crucified and there's Peter.

Peter sat down among them. He's not as close to Jesus Christ as he thought he was. Comparing Peter to you and I, you may be the only believer in your family, the only one that has received Christ as your Savior and knows him and knows the Bible.

You may be the only one in all of your family. You may be the only one at your job site that's a Christian. Or there may be other Christians that you know and they don't know the truth about the King James Bible and they are a little bit messed up on some of their doctrine but you know the truth.

You know what's right and what it is. You're close to Jesus, right? Because you have a King James Bible and you know the truth. You're saved, a child of God.

[29 : 43] You know where you're going when you die. You have eternal security and that confidence. You know some things. You've seen some things. And with so many people surrounding you in your life that don't know the Lord or don't know the truth, well you're close to Jesus if you look at them.

Makes you feel better about yourself. Makes you feel maybe closer than you truly are. But when the situations of life get tense, when in one night everything gets turned on its head and the spotlight's on you then you find out how close you really are.

And it's sad but it's true that in these cases some people it turns out they're just not that close to the Lord Jesus Christ. It turns out that they end up following a far off and then they end up taking a seat with the very people that are trying to crucify Him.

How did it get to this Peter? Well you're not as close as you thought you were. Church this morning I'm only pointing out some flaws in Peter's thinking.

Peter was a great man by all accounts. Peter was chosen by God. He did do things that I'll never do. He did see things and hear things. Peter was a great man. He was bold.

[31 : 15] He was very zealous. But what it comes down to and what we see he's the one that went out and wept bitterly. Why is that? Well because he wasn't as strong as he assumed he was and he found that out and it hurt.

And it's my message to you today that I don't want you to be Peter at the judgment seat of Christ. When you see the Lord face to face to realize I wasn't nowhere anywhere near strong as I thought I was.

As I talked. As I pretended to be. Because I denied him. Peter wasn't as involved in the work. The real work.

The work that he was needed for in the moment. He wasn't anywhere to be found. And he wasn't as close as he claimed to be. He said he was ready to go with him all the way.

But instead the last thing we read in verse 62 is he went out. He went out. Lord I'm ready to go with thee.

[32 : 23] And it ended up Peter went out and wept bitterly. I don't want to be in Peter's shoes. I don't want any of you to be in Peter's shoes. This is Peter's road to remorse to bitter weeping.

What can we do to keep from getting there? I say you're going to have to take an honest evaluation of yourself on your knees in front of God.

An honest evaluation. One thing that I say regularly and this isn't me puffing up and boasting or anything this is pathetic. But I'm on my knees in that couch and say Lord I am a weak man.

I don't have much in me. If you're going to do something you're going to have to do it because I don't have it in me and you know it and I know it. Maybe Peter needed to get a better assessment of himself because he's not as strong as he thinks he is.

He's not as involved not as close and if the Lord today is using Peter to start to prick at your heart and show you yep that's me yep that part's me then use that use this example use this story to correct it use Peter's mistakes to fix it in your life so that it's not the look of Jesus Christ at the judgment seat looking at you and you just melting and falling on your face because you know you weren't as close as you pretended to be you let that quiet time with God go all the time just let it go and just got on your phone and read a verse looked at a spiritual video and pretended that was fellowship with Jesus Christ you're not as close as you pretend there is no substitute for reading the Bible there's no substitute for talking to God in prayer and opening your heart to him and then just listening in the stillness of your spirit listening for God to move and to direct you and to strengthen you and help you

[34 : 31] Christians need to get close Jesus asked that question to his disciples I'm asking you this morning why sleep ye why are you sleeping on the job when there's things to be done for Jesus Christ this life is but a vapor and it's disappearing yesterday gone all that you've done it's over you've got today and it's disappearing fast wake up God forbid that any one of us is mimicking Peter in the day of judgment God help us to see the truth about what we are and to correct it by his grace by his strength and by our humility let's bow together let's bow our heads we're going to dismiss we're going to dismiss kind of a sobering thought to consider what we've witnessed with Peter but with your head bowed and just kind of in a moment and an attitude of prayer would you consider we're not looking at Peter we're looking at you we're reading about your life right now how you're not as strong as you think you are how when push comes to shove is it in you like you think it is to stand up for Jesus Christ all by yourself when there's nobody else around but the worldly ungodly sinners and they're mocking him and they're laughing about what they're going to do to him and you're sitting right there hearing it all is it in you to stand up for righteousness when you live among unrighteousness is it in you to shine as lights in the world as a crooked and perverse generation you're surrounded with and he put the light inside of you believer but do you take a stand do you let your light so shine before men are you as strong as you think you are are you as involved when opportunities present themselves to fight spiritual warfare to get involved to get on your knees to get the church to go out and try to win the lost why sleep ye when Jesus needs you to get engaged he saved you and wants to work through you and you're nowhere to be found we're looking at you this morning

Christian that story's for you may God help us father please strengthen your people God I sincerely pray and hope that no one here stands before your judgment seat and has the bitter remorse and the bitter tears of knowing that we failed you you've given us the tools you've given us your Holy

Spirit to strengthen and guide us you've given us eternal life Lord help us to be faithful and help us to be bold help us to be the sons of God and to let it known would you please deal with hearts this morning and get something out of us that would bring glory to you some are praying if you want to come and pray come here and pray talk to the Lord there's no shame in that invite you to come who who!