

Jesus Between Peter And Satan

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[0 : 00] Amen. And he said this plainly.

And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. But turning and seeing his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, Get behind me, Satan, for you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man.

Many people wonder, why did Jesus rebuke Peter with such vehemence? And imagine calling Peter, this beloved disciple, this disciple who was so passionate about the Lord Jesus.

Imagine calling him Satan. Or did Jesus really call Peter Satan? That is a question that we'll see in a moment, or the answer we'll see.

Anyway, the rebuke that was given was very severe. Now we find that Jesus and the disciples are walking on the road to Caesarea Philippi. And there was normally huge crowds following the Lord Jesus.

[1 : 31] But on this occasion, Jesus is there just with the disciples. And it's just his immediate disciples that he's with at this particular time. And so Jesus asks him a question.

And the question really was very simple. He was asking them, we read that from verse 27. Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi.

And the way he asked his disciples, Who do people say that I am? Now very often, the questions that Jesus asked were springboards to new teaching.

You'll often find that this is a kind of a pattern that Jesus used. That he would ask a question. And then following on from the answer that he would get from whoever answered, it would be a launch pad, as it were, into new teaching.

And that's exactly what we have here. And of course the disciples begin to tell some, saying John the Baptist, and some that he was one of the great prophets, like Elijah or so on.

[2 : 36] And Jesus then asked them themselves, Okay then, who do you say that I am? And then we have this wonderful answer, really, from Peter.

But the thing is, when Jesus asks a question, it's very direct. That's one of the things about Jesus that you'll always notice. His questioning is very direct.

Jesus doesn't just go around things. It's always direct. It's straight to the point. And that's one of the things about the Gospels. One of the things that we love about the Bible is its directness.

It doesn't miss. You're not left in doubt, saying, I wonder what is this saying? The Word of God is very direct with regard to God's revealing of himself to us.

It's very direct with regard to God's command to us to believe and to accept Jesus Christ as Savior. Nobody who reads the Word of God can be left in any doubt as to what our duties and what our responsibilities are.

[3 : 42] It is so clear. So there's a directness. So often the command is believe. Believe in the Lord Jesus. Seek. Knock. Ask. There's always this directness.

To do. To ask. So there's a beautiful directness about the Word of God. And Jesus, of course, he asks, who do people say that I am?

And Peter answered, you are the Christ. In fact, in Matthew's account, you are the Christ, the Son of the living God. So Peter's answer is, it's so clear.

It's so direct. And it's really, it couldn't be better. And at one level, the heart of Jesus would have delighted at Peter's response.

Because that's exactly who Jesus is. You are the Christ. You are the Messiah. You are the Anointed One. You are the Son of God. You are the one who has come into this world.

[4 : 47] But then it appears almost a strange request from Jesus when Peter answers, you are the Christ. And he strictly charged them to tell no one about him.

And you say to yourself, well, that's kind of strange. Surely the great mission of Christ is that everybody will know about him. Well, it is. And that was the great, and that still is the great mission of the Lord Jesus Christ.

That's what he said. Last thing he said to his disciples, go into all the world. Go into all the world and preach the gospel. Tell everybody about me. So why is he saying here, charge them to tell no one about him?

Well, very simply, because the people needed a change of mind. Before they were ready to accept Jesus Christ as he is.

And to accept his mission, his work, his everything. Because you cannot have Jesus Christ kind of a part of a bit of a Jesus and accept a bit of him.

[5 : 56] You have to accept the entirety of who he is. And the people weren't ready for that. Because the people, as you, we all know, that there was this idea.

It was taught through the rabbinical schools. It was taught right throughout that all the great teachers and the great students were of the absolute persuasion that when the Messiah would come, that it would be a time of great liberation for the Jewish people, that the Messiah would be somebody who would come, who would be powerful, who would deliver them.

Now, you see, this is the thing. These were actual truths. The Messiah was powerful and is powerful. He is a deliverer. But they were looking on it as somebody who would be a sort of a military ruler, a great political figure.

Somebody who would be there and he would take command and he would maybe whip them up as an army and deliver them from the tyranny of whatever powers that be would be there in the day.

Of course, that was the Roman Empire. So that was the thinking that the people had. Now, when Jesus began his ministry in Galilee, some of the people genuinely began to think this could be the Messiah.

[7 : 16] We have an instance of that after Jesus fed the thousands. And remember, they wanted to take him and to make him a king. They said, this is him. They began to, oh, there was just an excitement.

You could feel the buzz going around all those who were gathered there. They said, this is him. And they wanted to go there and then make him king. And remember, he got away from them and he went up into the mountain alone apart.

Because the problem was they were wanting to make him a king that would take out a sword, a king that would challenge the powers that be, a king that would deliver them so that once again they would be like in the days of David and Solomon.

They would be the people. That's not the way that Jesus was going to work. Because Jesus, yes, he had come to establish a kingdom, but not a political kingdom.

But it was a spiritual kingdom. And you see, this was a great problem. This is what Jesus had to do. Before the people were to be told, this is the Christ, this is the Messiah, there had to be a changing of their mind.

[8 : 29] And that's not easy. You know, when we're set in a particular way, when our minds are set in a particular way, I know it myself. It's not easy if you have a fixed idea to completely change that idea right round.

It's not an easy thing to do. Because it kind of goes against everything. Oh, you see, that's not the way it is. And so, that's why in particular, the religious authorities, the scribes, the Pharisees, those who were students of the law, they were, yes, they were fixing on the deliverer part.

They were fixing on this person who was going to redeem them. And all these great words from the Old Testament, which were true of Christ, but they were true spiritually.

But they were looking at that physical level and a temporal level. So, this is the thinking that Jesus had to change and say, my kingdom is not of this world.

It's a spiritual thing. It's a spiritual kingdom. And so, that's why Jesus at this point is saying to them, don't tell people yet who I am. They're not ready for it.

[9 : 46] In fact, even the disciples themselves weren't ready for it. That's very obvious. Because although they knew he was the Messiah, Peter says that, you are the Christ, you are the Messiah, you are the Anointed One, you are the one we've been waiting for.

But Peter and the disciples still hadn't understood his message, his mission, his purpose, what it was all about.

So, before the people could know, the disciples had to know the truth. The disciples had to have their minds changed. And so, that is why Jesus is saying to them not to tell.

And then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things, be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed and after three days rise again.

Whoa! You can just see the reaction of the disciples. What? This doesn't make sense. We thought you were the one who was going to...

[10 : 56] Remember the disciples on the road to Emmaus after Jesus had been put to death and risen again? And they were so downcast and Jesus joined with them.

And they're walking along. And they didn't know who this person was initially beside them. And they said, do you not know these things? And then they said, we thought that he was the one who was going to deliver Israel.

We thought it. Again, you see, even then, they hadn't had their minds changed. They hadn't grasped who Jesus... Well, they grasped who he was, but they hadn't grasped his mission.

And so, this is where Peter says to Jesus... He took... It's quite interesting what Peter does. And he said this plainly.

And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. You can almost see Peter. Come here. Get that away. Get that thinking. Get rid of that thinking. Jesus, don't be speaking like that.

[12 : 02] That's awful. And that's why Jesus said to Peter, These very powerful... Get behind me, Satan. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man.

Was it really to Peter he was speaking these words? No. Jesus knew that although the words were Peter, that it was Satan that was actually using Peter as a mouthpiece at this particular time.

And Jesus recognized the power and the deviousness and the sheer maliciousness of Satan at work here. And it's very interesting that at every particular critical point in Jesus' ministry, these critical moments, Satan is there as well.

Here is Jesus, and he's telling his disciples, Right, this is my mission. This is what's going to happen. I'm going to suffer many things, be rejected, I'm going to be killed, and after three days I'm going to rise again.

Now, it's just summarized there, verse 31. It's just a verse. But it says, And he began to teach them that. So that this would have taken quite a while.

[13 : 25] He would have gone in quite a bit in depth, telling them what was going to happen. And it's at this particular point, Satan comes in, and he says, And he tries to get to Jesus.

And Jesus recognizes straight away, This is the voice of Satan. This is the work of Satan. It was the same at the wilderness. Remember, Jesus had just been baptized.

It was the beginning of his public ministry. The Holy Spirit had come down, remember, from heaven. And Jesus had received the Spirit without measure. But straight away, Satan comes.

Forty days, he's in the wilderness, being tempted by the devil. And that's who Satan is. He's a tempter. He's a deceiver.

He is somebody who's, in fact, the actual, the New Testament, in the New Testament, the actual Greek word means that he's an accuser. And you know, that's what he does.

[14 : 30] He does two things. First, he tempts us, and then he accuses us. He'll tempt us to sin. And then he accuses us, alongside the temptation, and he's saying, that's the kind of person you are, even when we don't give in to the temptation.

And remember, temptation does not equal sin. And Satan makes us believe it does. Because when you're tempted to do something, and you resist it, the very fact that you're being tempted in that direction, Satan then will come straight in and say, ah, see what you're wanting to do.

See what you're wanting to say. See the way you're thinking. And even when you're fighting against it, he's trying to make you believe this is from yourself. He is utterly and altogether evil.

So he is, he's the great accuser. And of course, obviously, when we do give in, and when we do yield, he's straight in, accusing. Ah, look at you.

Look at the kind of person you are. And he's so subtle with his temptations. He knows exactly our makeup. He knows our Achilles heel. He knows exactly how to get us, where to get us, when to get us.

[15 : 45] And you know, there are times, just as it was in the time with Jesus, at these critical junctures, Satan is also there with you and with me. You know, if a person is interested in the gospel, is sitting under the word, is being challenged, if there's things going on in their heart, in their life, in their mind, and saying, I need to close in with Christ, and a person is thinking like that, the evil one will be there as well, saying, no, no, no, no, no.

No, don't, don't, don't be too serious about this. Plenty of time. Don't, don't, leave it, you're fine as you are. He will do anything and everything.

Remember, He's a God of this world, who blinds people's minds, lest they see the glorious light of the gospel. And if you're a Christian today, you know what that was like, how He blinded you.

Although you may have been churchy, you may have believed at one level, yet He kept you back. You were, you just, He held you back from actually seeing.

But then, of course, the power of the gospel is such, that that power dispels the force of darkness, and enables you to see. But not only does He try and prevent you coming to faith, but the moment you do come to faith, He's out to get you as well.

[17 : 09] You know, this is one other thing. The number of Christians who have said to me, you know, after they started following, there was a sense of euphoria, a sense of the blessing, the peace, everything.

But the number of Christians have said to me, you know, life was so much easier before I started following. Since I started following, problems at work, problems at home, problems here, problems there.

Wonder why? It is because you're a target for the evil one. We've always got to remember that. That He goes about as a roaring lion, seeking whom He may devour.

Whenever you're doing anything for the Lord, He'll be there. I remember when I went to college, to the Free Church College, the seminary. One of the most awful struggles I had for months was right at the very beginning.

And day and night, and looking back on it now, of course, we're always being tempted and bombarded by the evil one. But I didn't recognize it at the time.

[18 : 17] But day and night, sometimes it was so bad through the night, I just had to get up and go out and walk. I couldn't, I couldn't face the continual bombardment.

The word, like all the time, and the thing was, at that time, we were studying, and a lot of this was so new to me, we were doing apologetics, which is a study of the defense of the Christian faith.

How to defend the Christian faith from all the different attacks, all the different enemies that encroach upon the faith. And one of the things that we had to do was to study those who attack the Christian faith.

And at that particular time, I found that so difficult. Because we were reading and hearing lectures on these great philosophers, who have great minds, who hated the Christian faith, and they were attacking the Christian faith.

And we had to study this in order to learn how to defend the Christian faith. But you know, Satan was using that at that very time. And he'd be saying in the middle of the night, these were great minds.

[19 : 25] Do you think they were all wrong? There's only a small number of you that are following. The vast majority aren't. Can they all be wrong? And so there was this attack, attack, attack, all the time.

Now today it may seem strange and you say, how on earth did you get? But at that time it was so powerful, it was so relentless. Eventually, eventually it went.

And, but this is, this is what he's like. And he'll be at you as well saying, you're not really a Christian. Christian doesn't think like that. Christian doesn't speak like that.

Christian doesn't act like that. Whatever you had back then, it was only an experience. It wasn't the real thing. He'll tell you, he'll be saying all these kind of things to you. All the time he's trying to undermine your faith and to undermine your enjoyment of the, the, the Christian life.

So we find anyway that, uh, uh, Satan has come, uh, to, to Jesus here with all his vehemence and with all his, just the, the, the sheer venom of, of who he is.

[20 : 37] And, Satan is trying to, trying to get Jesus. You see, it's, it's, it's very subtle what he's doing. he's really, it's kind of, same as in the wilderness.

He's saying to, through Peter, no, Jesus, that's not the way. Back in the wilderness, remember what, what Satan was trying to do.

He was saying to Jesus, you bow down to me. He showed him all the kingdoms of the world and said, I will give them all to you if you will but bow down before me.

And you say to yourself, oh, Satan can't do that. Well, remember what the Bible terms him, the God of this world. He has huge power, huge influence.

The only power greater, obviously, is God's power. His power, Satan's power is huge. And it would be incredible if we were able to, if all the screens were pulled back and we could see just the sheer influence that he's had upon people's minds.

[21 : 49] You look at all the great dictators and the fearful people, your Stalins and your Pol Potts and your Hitler. These were people who dominated countries and dominated parts of the world, going for world domination.

I'm sure their souls were sold to Satan. They were in the grip. I wonder how many people in business, I wonder how many people in different areas of life that Satan has had grip on their life.

He's the God of this world and they have sold their soul to Satan. Oh, they're prospering. They've got on. Great. Because he's the God of this world. He's in charge of so much.

I wonder, I wonder just how much is going on. Because the only power that can break his power is the power of God. And so, this is what Satan is doing so subtly.

He's saying to Jesus, you don't need to go that way. You're talking about a cross. You're talking about dying. You're talking about being beaten up and a fearful death.

[22 : 58] You don't need to do it that way. I'll give it all to you. I'll give it the easy way. Just bow down to me. So he's really coming back the same as he was in the wilderness.

This is what he's doing, but this time he's doing it through Peter. And Jesus is aware that there is only one way that this world can be saved.

There is only one mission that is going to work. And that is the work that the Father gave him to do. This is a mission that he has to accomplish. There is no other way.

Now, of course, Peter had no idea that he was at that particular moment a mouthpiece of Satan. So, what I find lovely here is where it says, but turning and seeing his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, get behind me, Satan.

So, what is Jesus doing here? He is putting Satan, he is commanding Satan to get behind him.

[24 : 08] Peter's there and he's commanding Satan to get behind him. So, Jesus is in effect coming and standing between Peter and Satan.

and you know, that's what he does for us as well. That is the most wonderful assurance that you and I have today. Because we live in a scary world.

We live in a world that is dark. A world that is a darkness and there is a growing darkness within it. And we are aware of the powers of darkness.

And it is very easy sometimes to feel overwhelmed by it, but this is our great hope. Is that Jesus stands between us and the forces of darkness. He is our shield, he is our shelter, he is our buckler, he is our fortress.

Before Satan can get at us, Satan would destroy you today if he could. The only reason he can't is because he can't get past Christ.

[25 : 10] Jesus is a hold of you. There is that great picture we often use the illustration in the book of Job. Satan wanted, you know, remember Satan he is complaining before God and he says, the only reason that Job loves you is because you, you, you've watched over and there is these lovely words, you've put a hedge around him and all that he has.

I love that. And that should be our prayer always that the Lord will put a hedge around us and all that we have around our own life, around our family, around our home.

Lord, put a hedge around. Keep me safe. Protect me. Hold me close. Because there are so many enemies around and about.

And that's exactly what Jesus is doing for Peter. He's coming in the way and he's saying to Satan, no, you're not going to get to Peter. Later on, he says, even, although he's saying it to all the disciples, he homes in on Simon, Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to have you that he will sift you as wheat.

Poor, poor Peter was having a tough time. And remember how Satan got hold of Peter and part of the reason was Peter was following Jesus afar off.

[26 : 34] Dangerous place to be afar off because it left room for Satan to worm his way in. This is just before the denial. Watch out.

Watch out, Peter. Watch out. But this is a wonderful thing that Jesus is the one who is there to protect him, to protect us. and even this very day, Satan marks out all so many people and he's got one aim is to take people to hell.

It's not beat about the bush. The Bible makes that very clear. God of this world, he blinds, this shows us his evil. He blinds people's minds lest they see the glorious light of the gospel.

He doesn't want them to see. He wants to take them to hell. What an aim in life. That's his aim. And his aim is to do, it's not that he has any pleasure in taking people there, it's to get, everything is to get at God.

He hates God. Anything about God. Everything about God. And because the creation, the final aspect of the creation when God created man and woman on the sixth day, they were the highest point of the creation.

[27 : 55] And that's why he's attacking, attacking all the time. And the only deliverance that we have is in and through the Lord Jesus Christ.

Your heart, my heart, it's a war zone, it's a battle zone. And you and I know all about it. Well, where are you today? If you're without Jesus Christ, remember that there is only one way of salvation.

And that is in and through the Lord Jesus Christ. Satan will get you to believe, and your own heart will get you to believe, that your own goodness is enough.

It's a big lie. It's a lie we want to believe. My righteousness, I'm as good as, it's an argument that people will use so often.

You will hear so many people, oh, look at the minister, look at the elders, look at, I'm just as good as them. Well, maybe at a human level that might be true. But unless you have Christ, one thing is missing.

[28 : 59] The one thing needful. And if you don't have Christ, then it doesn't matter how good you are. Because the Bible tells us that your goodness is not sufficient. And people say, I don't like to hear that.

Well, let us thank the Lord that we do hear it. It's in God's mercy and His grace that He's telling us that in order that we will look to Jesus and say, well, Lord, save me.

And again, to the Christian, we'd say this, the only way to getting the crown is by the cross. in the profit and loss scales of this world, there are many people who will sell their soul to get on.

What will a person give in exchange for a soul? What will it profit a person if he gains the whole world and loses his own soul? In the divine scales, in the divine measures, one soul is more precious than this whole world put together.

It's quite a thought. And yet so many people, they treat their soul so lightly. But even for the Christian, we've got to remember that it's by the way of the cross that we are to take up the cross and we are to deny ourselves and we are to follow him.

[30 : 18] That is the way. But sometimes, we want the crown without the cross. We want our journey to be as easy as possible.

We may not dare pray it, but basically, our hearts are saying, Lord, give me the most hassle-free journey through this life. Make it plain sailing for me all the time.

Well, the Lord won't. Because it is through the crosses and through the difficulties that he refines us, that he molds us, that he changes things.

There are so many things about ourselves and about our life who would say, oh, I wish this was different or that was different. The Lord says, no, this is how it's going to be. It's going to be personal for you.

This is what I've given you. You know, Paul had a thorn in the flesh. I'm sure Paul was saying, I would be such a, I would be a far better Christian if only you would take that thorn away.

[31 : 24] The Lord says, no, I'm going to leave it. But what you're going to discover is that my grace is sufficient. And we all have our thorns.

There are all things, and you would say, I'm sure you've often said, oh, Lord, help me with this. I wish it wasn't like this, but this is how it is. And God, the God who knows everything, this is what he's using to refine you and to mold you and to make you more Christ-like.

And at the end of the day, you will thank him. When you get to glory, you will say, Lord, you did all things well. Let us pray. Oh, Lord, we pray to bless us.

We pray, Lord, that you will indeed guide us and show us a way to go because we don't know ourselves. We give thanks for your word which says, I will instruct you and teach you in the way that you will go.

I will guide you with mine eye. Lord, bless and pity us. Shine on us with your face. We pray, Lord, for everybody here today. We pray, Lord, for those who need you in all the different ways of life, physically and mentally, and spiritually.

[32 : 36] We pray your healing hand upon those who need your healing. We pray, Lord, your strengthening hand upon those who need strengthening. Your guiding hand upon those who need guidance.

And pray that you will be with us. Take us to our home safely and do us good, cleansing us from our sin. In Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. We'll go back to Psalm 91 and we sing verses 4 to 5, 4 and 5.

A wonderful psalm of God's protection in the face of the darkness and the evil that's around. Psalm 91. Yana■ And shout For is Hakua Tauri

Hakua Tauri Hakua Tauras■ Hakua Tauri Hakua Tauras■nda Thank you.

Thank you.

[35 : 35] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. volume 3 in aid of Bethesda.

[37 : 12] And a warm welcome is extended to all Gaelic psalm singers for the recording of this. And it's in the town hall. Recording commencing at 7.30. And it would be helpful if everybody could be seated at 7.

So if you're able to go on Tuesday, your presence there would be very, very much appreciated. Amen.