



THE DAWNING OF A NEW DAY

Preaching and Teaching Resources

ADRIAN ROGERS





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The Dawning of a New Day

SERMON REFERENCE: Luke 22:31-34; 41-61

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Luke 22 tells the story of one of Jesus' most devoted disciples, Peter, on the darkest night of his life. Peter was known to argue when he should have listened. He boasted when he should have leaned on the Lord. He slept when Jesus asked him to pray. And he fought when he was supposed to love. But Jesus loved Peter, even in his disobedience, and eventually, in his denial. We know this because after the darkest night of his life, Peter saw the dawning of a new day.

The night Jesus was arrested and sentenced to death, Peter's world was unraveling. Jesus was supposed to be Lord, now he is being sentenced to death? How could this be happening?

When recognized as a disciple of Jesus by the angry crowd, Peter fearfully denied knowing Jesus three times; then, a rooster crowed...

Luke 22:61 says, "And the Lord turned and looked upon Peter, and Peter remembered the word of the Lord; how he had said unto him, before the (rooster) crow, thou shalt deny me thrice."

Peter remembered Jesus telling him this would happen: that he would deny Him three times before the rooster crowed.

Peter learned that God is still in control, even when it doesn't seem so. Peter also learned the sympathetic compassion and steadfast commitment Jesus has toward His followers.

When we become children of God, Jesus commits Himself to us. We may stray, but if we are truly saved, God brings us back to Him.

The Bible says that Jesus prays for His believers, even to this day, (John 17:20-23) and is committed to praying for us even when we regress in our faith rather than progress. He convicts us of our sins so that we will not wander for long. And when we return to Him, He is faithful to forgive.

So what did Peter learn on one of the darkest nights of his life? That Jesus is still in control, He has compassion for us, and is committed to praying for us. Just as dawn broke once more for Peter, Jesus will see us through to a new day.

LIFE APPLICATION

Have you been going through a long, dark night, wondering when the dawn will break? Take courage, God is with you! Worship Him in prayer and reading Scripture.



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1) INTRODUCTION

- a) Has there ever been a time in your life when you loved Jesus Christ more than you love Him now?
 - i) If the answer is “yes,” then you need a revival.
 - (1) To cease to be better is to cease to be good.
 - (2) To fail to grow in the Lord is to be backslidden.
 - ii) There are those who, perhaps, do not love the Lord as much as they once did; others are cold and indifferent.
 - iii) To some, Jesus Christ is a bright, living reality; to others, Jesus seems far away and is someone they may think about from time to time.
 - iv) There are those who have prayers continually bubbling in their hearts and are living a life of constant praise; others have allowed little sins to come into their hearts and lives.
 - (1) Do you find yourself watching movies and television programs that you would not have watched before?
 - (2) Do you find yourself being lax in church attendance?
 - (3) Can you go a full day and hardly think of God?
 - (4) Are your prayers brief and hurried?
 - (5) Do you no longer take time to be quiet and holy before God?
 - (a) You need revival.
- b) Luke 22:31-34
 - i) This passage tells the story of a man who had a personal revival.
 - ii) Simon Peter failed and failed miserably, but there was the dawning of a new day for him.
 - (1) There can be for each of us the dawning of a new day within our hearts.
 - (2) God is merciful, God forgives, He restores, and He revives.
 - iii) Simon Peter failed, but God was not through with him.
 - (1) And God is not through with us.
 - (a) No matter how badly we may have failed, God is not finished with us.
 - (2) Failure need not be final.
- c) God wants to revive and restore us, and He wants to put His joy back in our hearts.
- d) Why did Simon Peter fail?
 - i) He was arguing when he should have been listening.
 - (1) Matthew 16:21-23
 - (2) Jesus had spoken to His disciples many times about His coming crucifixion, and Peter wouldn't accept it.
 - (a) Peter would not believe the word of God.
 - (3) We need to guard against watering down the Scripture by putting our own interpretation and spin on it, instead of simply believing what God's Word says.



- ii) He was boasting when he should have been depending.
 - (1) Luke 22:33-34
 - (2) Peter was naturally bold and aggressive; he had confidence and courage.
 - (a) John 21:7
 - (b) Matthew 14:28-29
 - (c) John 18:10
 - (3) Most people fail, not at their point of weakness, but at their point of strength.
 - (4) Peter was depending upon his strength.
 - (5) The Bible contains examples of saints who failed at the point of their strength.
 - (a) Abraham's strength was his faith.
 - (i) He failed at the point of his faith.
 - (ii) Genesis 12:11-13
 - (b) The Bible says that Moses was the meekest man who ever lived; that was his strength.
 - (i) Numbers 12:3
 - (ii) Moses, the meekest man, became a murderer.
 - 1. Exodus 2:11-12
 - (c) David's strength was his integrity.
 - (i) 2 Samuel 11:2-4
 - (ii) At the point of his integrity is where David fell.
 - (6) We need to guard against depending upon our own ability and boasting about our Christian life.
- iii) He was sleeping when he should have been praying.
 - (1) Luke 22:44-46
 - (2) The Lord knows we need rest, but there are times when we sleep or rest too much.
 - (a) There are times when other pleasures come before the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - (b) Are you asleep?
 - (i) Do the things that break the heart of Jesus also break yours?
 - (3) Luke 11:4
 - (a) Jesus taught us to pray not only for our daily bread, but also for our daily protection.
 - (b) We need to put on the armor of God each morning.
- iv) He was fighting when he should have been loving and sharing.
 - (1) Luke 22:33
 - (a) Again, Peter failed at his strongest point.
 - (b) Oswald Chambers said that an unguarded strength is a double weakness.
 - (2) Simon Peter had the wrong enemy.
 - (a) Luke 22:50
 - (i) Simon Peter cut off Malchus' ear.
 - (ii) Ephesians 6:12
 - (b) Malchus was a servant of the high priest; he was a slave who was doing what he was told to do.



- (i) Malchus himself was a victim.
 - (c) The devil likes to get flesh fighting flesh.
 - (3) Simon Peter had the wrong weapon.
 - (a) John 18:11
 - (b) Simon Peter had a sword.
 - (c) Our battle is against the powers of darkness.
 - (i) Only the reviving power of God can overcome the powers of darkness.
 - (d) 2 Corinthians 10:4
 - (i) The weapons of our warfare:
 1. Faith
 2. Prayer
 3. Surrender
 4. Obedience
 5. Revival
 - (ii) The devil cannot stand against these weapons of our warfare.
 - (4) Simon Peter had the wrong energy.
 - (a) Luke 22:44-50
 - (b) Peter had been sleeping instead of praying, and he awakens in the energy of the flesh.
 - (i) In his flesh, he is trying to defend Jesus when Jesus wanted to defend Peter.
 - (c) Peter is full of zeal, but it is misguided zeal.
 - (i) The cause of Christ has been hurt more in the house of His friends than in the house of His enemies.
 - (ii) We need to walk in the Spirit rather than fight in the flesh.
 - (5) Simon Peter had the wrong attitude.
 - (a) James 1:20
 - (b) Simon Peter was angry.
 - (i) We can have a holy indignation and be moved with anger over sin, but we need to be careful not to have misguided, unbridled anger.
 - e) Simon Peter had boasted and was certain that he would not fail, but he did fall.
 - i) 1 Corinthians 10:12
 - ii) One reason we don't pray is because of our boastful spirit.
 - (1) Our prayerlessness is an indication of our pride.
 - (a) We believe we are capable of handling things ourselves without God's help.
 - f) Simon Peter learned three things about Jesus when a new day dawned, the day the rooster crowed.
 - i) There can also be a new day for us.
 - (1) God is a God of mercy.
 - (2) God is a God of revival.
- 2) HE LEARNED THE SOVEREIGN CONTROL OF JESUS (Luke 22:60-61)
- a) While Peter was still speaking, the rooster crowed.



- i) This was a miracle.
 - (1) At the precise moment, just as Jesus had said it would happen, it happened.
 - b) The Lord is still in control; He has complete dominion.
 - i) Psalm 8:6-8
 - ii) Jesus has dominion over the beasts of the field.
 - (1) John 12:14-15
 - (a) The donkey Jesus rode had never been ridden before.
 - iii) Jesus has control over the fish in the sea.
 - (1) Luke 5:1-9
 - (2) Matthew 17:27
 - iv) Jesus has control over the fowl of the air.
 - c) Simon Peter thought that things were getting out of hand.
 - i) His doubt led to discouragement.
 - (1) He had not been listening.
 - (2) He had not been praying.
 - (3) He had not been understanding.
 - (a) Jesus, the Messiah, was arrested and led away; He was beaten and bruised.
 - (i) Why didn't Jesus do something?
 - ii) His discouragement led to denial.
 - d) Though he did not understand why things were happening as they were that day, Peter learned when the rooster crowed that God is still in control.
 - i) No matter what happens in our lives and even when prayers seem to go unanswered, God is still in control.
 - ii) Where God does not rule, He overrules.
 - iii) God is moving us to His purpose.
 - (1) Simon Peter did not understand all that was happening that day, and that was one of the reasons why He denied the Lord Jesus.
- 3) HE LEARNED THE SYMPATHETIC COMPASSION OF JESUS (Luke 22:61)
 - a) Peter learned that Jesus had never stopped loving him.
 - i) Peter denied the Lord.
 - ii) In unspeakable agony on the way to the cross, Jesus took time to give a look of love to Peter, a backslidden disciple.
 - b) God does not change us so He can love us; God loves us so He can change us.
 - i) No matter what you've done, God loves you.
 - ii) God loves you just as you are, but He loves you too much to let you stay that way.
 - c) Luke 22:31-32
 - i) The Lord prayed for Peter, and He never forsook Peter.
 - d) The Lord loves you today.
 - i) Jesus is in control.
 - (1) If it doesn't make sense to you, that doesn't mean that it does not make sense.
 - (2) If we cannot see God working, it doesn't mean that God is not working.



- ii) He loves you; Jesus has a sympathetic compassion toward you.
- 4) HE LEARNED THE STEADFAST COMMITMENT OF JESUS (Luke 22:61)
- a) Peter remembered the Word of the Lord.
 - i) Luke 22:31-32
 - (1) Jesus Christ had made a steadfast commitment to Peter.
 - (a) 2 Timothy 2:13
 - b) Jesus will see us through.
 - i) If we are truly saved, He will never let us go.
 - c) Luke 22:31
 - i) The word “desired” in this passage literally means that Satan asked for permission.
 - (1) Satan can do nothing outside the will of God.
 - (2) Satan is always on a leash.
 - ii) Satan wanted to harm Job, but God set boundaries.
 - (1) Job 1:12
 - (2) Job 2:6
 - iii) Satan wanted to sift Simon Peter like wheat.
 - (1) The name “Peter” means “rock.”
 - (2) The name “Simon” means “that which is unstable, shifty.”
 - (3) In this passage in Luke, the Lord does not call him “the rock” because Peter the rock is turning to sand.
 - iv) Wheat is sifted to get the impurities out.
 - (1) Satan wants to use those impurities against us; he wants to use them to accuse us.
 - (2) Jesus allows sifting so that He can cleanse us; He wants us to be pure.
 - d) When we go through trouble, we need to understand the difference between satanic accusation and Holy Spirit conviction.
 - i) Satan will point out the sin in our lives to accuse us.
 - (1) The result of this accusation is despondency and fear.
 - ii) The result of conviction is repentance, cleansing and victory.
 - iii) Do not let the devil condemn you when Jesus Christ wants to cleanse you by convicting you.
 - e) The Lord Jesus prayed for Simon Peter.
 - i) He was not finished with Peter.
 - ii) There is a Savior in the glory today praying for us.
 - (1) He wants those of us who are saved to have revival.
 - iii) Hebrews 7:25
- 5) CONCLUSION
- a) If, like Simon Peter, you have failed, God is a God of fresh beginnings.
 - b) When the rooster crowed, a new day was dawning for Simon Peter.
 - i) There can be a new day dawning for you.
 - ii) No matter all of the heartaches and tears you’ve faced, Jesus is still in control.



- iii) No matter how you may have failed, He still has compassion.
- iv) No matter your disobedience, His commitment is still toward you; and He will see you through.
- c) The decision is up to us whether we want revival or to go on being sifted.
 - i) Ask the Lord to revive you today.
 - (1) To forgive any indifference, carelessness, boastfulness and prayerlessness in your life.
- d) If you do not know Jesus Christ as Lord, you can be saved today.
- e) Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
- f) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
 - i) Romans 3:23
 - ii) Romans 10:9-10
 - iii) Romans 10:13
 - iv) Acts 16:31
 - v) John 3:16



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Would you find Luke chapter 22 in the Bible? I want to ask you a personal question. Answer it honestly. Has there ever been a time in your life when you loved Jesus Christ more than you love Him now? Ever a time in your life when you loved Jesus Christ more than you love Him now? If so, you need a revival.

To cease to be better is to cease to be good. To fail to grow in our Lord and Savior means that, truly, we're backslidden. Some, perhaps, love the Lord not as much as they did. Others are even cold and indifferent. How many of you have Jesus Christ in your heart as a bright, living reality? Or is Jesus Christ somewhere beyond the clouds, someone that you may think about from time to time? How many have prayer continually bubbling up in your heart, living lives of constant praise, saying over and over again, "What a mighty God You are! Lord Jesus, I love You, I praise You, I bless You?" How many of you have allowed little sins to come into your heart and life? You find yourself watching things in movies and television that you would have been horrified before. You find yourself being lax in the attendance in the service of God. You can go a whole day and hardly think of God. Your prayers are brief, hurried. You do not take time to be quiet and holy before God. Is that you? You need revival. Our churches need revival.

I want us to look here in Luke chapter 22 verse 31 to 34. This is the story of a man who had a personal revival. "And 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 am ready to go with Thee, both into prison, and to death.' And He said, 'I tell thee, Peter, that the cock shall not crow this day before thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest Me.'"

Here was a man who failed, and he failed miserably, but for Peter there was the dawning of a new day. And I want there to be in my heart and in your heart the dawning of a new day. I want us to learn that God is merciful and God forgives and God restores and God revives.

Now let me ask you a question; if you had a pastor who cursed and swore in front of a teenager girl, what would you do? If you had a pastor that openly, blatantly denied Jesus Christ, what would you think? Many of us would say, "Well, I'm through with him." Well, Peter did that, but God wasn't through with Simon Peter. And thank God, He is not through with you. And no matter where you are on the spiritual thermometer, no matter how badly you may have failed, listen to me, church, God is not finished with you. I'll say it again for emphasis. God is not finished with you. Failure need not be final. God wants to revive and restore you and put the joy of Jesus back in your heart.

Now I want us to see some things about Simon Peter here, how Simon Peter got into this condition, because what happened is this; that Jesus said, "Simon, I'm going to the cross." And Peter began to boast, and he said, "Lord, I'm willing to go with You, both to prison and to death." And Jesus said, "No, Peter, before the cock crows this morning, you will deny Me three times." Ha, ha, Peter



thought, "That's something I will never, no never do." But he did. And let me tell you why.

I want you to think about these things. First of all, Peter was arguing when he should have been listening. You see, Jesus had spoken to the disciples over and over again about the coming crucifixion, about His death. And Peter wouldn't accept it. Peter would not believe the Word of God, even as it fell from the lips of the Lord Jesus Christ. You can read over there in Matthew chapter 16 verses 21 through 23 where the Bible says that Jesus began to speak to them about His death. And Simon Peter said, "No! That will never be." And Jesus had to say to him, "Get thee behind Me, Satan, for thou art an offense unto Me." Peter was arguing when he should have been listening. Do you find yourself sometimes parading the Word of God before the judgment bar of your mind? And looking at the Scripture, and rather than simply believing the Scripture, are you somehow putting your own interpretation, your own little spin on it and water it down?

Not only was Peter arguing when he should have been listening; he was boasting when he should have been depending. Now notice in Luke chapter 22 and verse 33 and 34, "And he said unto Him, 'Lord, I am ready to go with Thee, both into prison, and to death.' And He said, 'I tell thee, Peter, that the cock shall not crow this day before thou shalt thrice deny Me.'"

Here's Peter; Peter is naturally bold and aggressive. As you look at Peter in the Bible, you can tell that that's the way Peter was. And Peter had confidence. And Peter had courage. It was Peter, over in John 21 and verse 7, who jumped out of the boat when Jesus was there on the shore after the resurrection. You find in Matthew chapter 14 verses 28 and 29 that it was Peter who got out of the boat to walk on water. And it was Peter in John 18:10, who this day drew a sword and went against a man named Malchus with a sword. But now, listen to me; Peter was boasting when he should have been depending.

You see, most people fail not at their point of weakness, but at their point of strength. Here was a man depending upon his strength. "Lord, I will go with You to prison and to death." You know, you study the Bible and you'll find out that those saints who failed generally failed not at the point of their weakness, but at the point of their strength.

What was the strength of Abraham? His faith. And where did he fail? At the point of faith. Look in Genesis 12 verses 11 through 13 when he lied about Sarah and did some of those other things. Amazing.

What was the strength of Moses? The Bible says in Numbers 12 verse 3, Moses was the meekest man who ever lived. That was his strength. But what was his failure? Moses, the meekest man that ever lived, became a murderer. Exodus chapter 2 verses 11 and 12.

What was the strength of David? It was his integrity. And yet that is where David fell, at the point of his integrity, and committed adultery with Bathsheba. Read about that in Second Samuel chapter 11 verses 2 to 4.

I wonder if there's some today; you're Bible students; you're faithful church attenders; you're tithers. You're depending upon your ability, and you have begun to boast in your Christian life, began to look around at others and say, "Thank God, I'm not like them."

Simon Peter was arguing when he should have been listening. He was boasting when he should have been depending. And, therefore, he was sleeping when he should have been praying. Look, if



you will, in Luke chapter 22 verse 44 through 46, “And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly,” that’s speaking of Jesus, “and His sweat,” that is, the sweat of Jesus, “was, as it were, great drops of blood falling down to the ground. And when He rose up from prayer, and was come to His disciples,” now listen, “He found them sleeping for sorrow. And He said unto them, ‘Why sleep ye? Rise and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.’” Peter was sleeping. He should have been praying. Now God knows we need sleep, but there’s a time when sleep is inordinate. There are times in the morning when we don’t get the bed off our backs in time to have a quiet time with the Lord. There are times when other pleasures come before the Lord Jesus Christ. And here is Peter asleep while Jesus is in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Are you asleep? Do the things that break the heart of Jesus break yours? Can you say, “The cross before me, the world behind me,” or can you just simply yawn in the face of God? Jesus taught us to pray every morning, not only for daily bread, but for daily protection. Luke 11 verse 4, “And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.” That’s what we’re to pray for. How many of you put on the armor of God every morning and say, “Dear God, in the name of Jesus, protect me and keep me?”

Peter was arguing when he should have been listening. He was boasting when he should have been depending. He was, he was sleeping when he should have been praying. And he was fighting rather than loving and sharing. Look if you will in Luke 22 verse 33. Peter said, “Lord, I’m ready to go with Thee, both to prison and to death.” But I want to remind you that Peter failed at his strongest point. Oswald Chambers said, “An unguarded strength is a double weakness.”

Now let’s think about how he was fighting. First of all, Simon Peter had the wrong enemy. Look if you will in Luke 22 at verse 50, “And one of them smote the servant of the high priest and cut off his, and cut off his ear.” That one was Simon Peter. Now Simon Peter was a good fisherman, but he wasn’t much of a swordfighter. And Simon Peter did not mean to cut that man’s ear off; he meant to cut off his head. But Simon Peter had the wrong enemy. You see, the Bible says in Ephesians 6:12 that, “We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers and spiritual wickedness in high places.” You see, this man Malchus, who was the servant of the high priest, he was a slave. He was doing what he was told to do, what he ought to do, what he was made to do. He himself was a victim.

So many times the devil loves to get flesh fighting flesh. We fight not against flesh and blood. But here was Simon Peter. He was fighting. He had the wrong enemy. He had the wrong weapon. He had a sword. And Jesus had said in John 18 verse 11, “Put your sword up. Put your sword back in the sheath.” Friend, our battle is against the powers of darkness. There’s not a bullet nor a bomb. There is no arsenal known to man that can overcome the powers of darkness. Only the reviving power of God. Do you believe that? I hope you believe that. He had the wrong weapon. The Bible says in Second Corinthians 10 verse 4 that, “The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God, to the pulling down of strongholds.” What are our weapons? Faith, prayer, surrender, obedience, revival; the devil cannot stand against these things.

And then he had the wrong energy. Now Peter had been asleep, and he’s wakened up out of his sleep. And there he sees the enemy there, and he goes forth to fight. He pulls his sword and begins to



fight. He's not been praying. He awakens now in the energy of the flesh. And in his flesh he's trying to defend Jesus when Jesus wanted to defend him. Simon Peter is what we would call a religious fanatic. He is full of zeal, but misguided zeal. And the cause of Jesus Christ has been hurt more in the house of His friends than in the house of His enemies. God keep you from becoming a religious fanatic, a zealot, going around to fight in the energy of your flesh, rather than walking in the Spirit.

And he had the wrong attitude, the wrong attitude. He was angry. But the Bible says in James chapter 1 verse 20 that, "The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God." Now, indeed, you can have a holy indignation, and you can be moved with anger over sin, but be very, very careful that you do not have misguided, unbridled anger. Now Peter was sure that he would not fail. He had boasted. But he did fall. The Bible says in First Corinthians chapter 10 verse 12, "Wherefore, let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

Now have any of these things been in your life? Have you been boasting when you ought to be depending? Have you been sleeping when you ought to be praying? Do you know why we don't pray? Because of our boastful spirit. Now if today, listen, if today you knew that you could absolutely not make it without the power of God in your life, I will guarantee you, you would have begun today in prayer. But if you don't pray, your prayerlessness is not the worst part of it. Your prayerlessness is the indication of the pride that says, "I'm quite capable to handle this day by myself." And so you whisper a little prayer and off you go, and then spiritually fall flat on your face.

Now three things that Peter learned about Jesus that day, when a new day dawned, as a rooster crowed. And what I want you to learn is, there can be a new day for you. God is a God of mercy. God is a God of revival. God took Simon Peter and gave him revival. As I prayed and thought about the message, I said, "Lord, we're emphasizing personal revival. Show me someone in the Bible that had personal revival that can apply to us today." And this passage came to my mind. Here are three things that Simon Peter learned. May God write them upon your heart. May God cause them to reverberate in your soul. May God etch them upon your consciousness. What did Peter learn that day?

Number one; Peter learned the sovereign control of Jesus. Well, look if you will in Luke 22 verse 60 and 61, "And Peter saith, 'Man, I know what, not what thou sayest.'" That is, a person had been accusing Simon Peter of being a follower of Jesus. Now, remember they'd arrested Jesus and carried Him away to crucify Him. And somebody said, "Why, there's one of them. There's a Galilean. There's one of His disciples." Peter says, "Look, I don't know what you're talking about." And then look at this, "And immediately, while he spake, the cock crew." Boys and girls, that means the rooster crowed. Three times; this was the third time; and while he is speaking, this rooster begins to crow. Now, friend, that was a miracle. You think of all of the roosters in Jerusalem that night, and not a one of them crowed until the right time. And then one of them crowed at that exact moment. Friend, that's a miracle. You know, a rooster thinks the sun comes up because he crows. Sort of an alarm clock with feathers on. But just at that precise moment, exactly, precisely, as Jesus said it would happen, it happened. And what did Simon Peter think at that time? The Lord is still in control. He still has complete dominion.

Psalms chapter 8 verses 6 through 8, speaking of man and the perfect man, the Lord Jesus, "Thou



madest Him to have dominion over the works of Thy hands; and hast put all things under His feet," now listen to this, "all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field, the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas." Did Jesus have dominion over those? Did Jesus have dominion over the beasts of the field? You better believe He did when He rode a wild Syrian donkey into Jerusalem on that Palm Sunday. John chapter 12 verses 14 and 15. You try riding one that's never been ridden before. Jesus did. Did Jesus have control over the fish of the sea? You better believe it. In Luke 5 verses 1 through 9, He told the fish to get away from Simon Peter, and so forth. They fished all night. Then He said, "Now, fish, come, get in the nets," and they got in the net. Jesus, when He had to pay His taxes, said to Peter in Matthew chapter 17 verse 27, "Go down. Cast the hook into the sea. Get a fish. Open its mouth. There'll be a coin in it." Jesus had control over the fish of the sea and over the fowls of the air. At this exact, precise moment, the rooster crowed.

Simon Peter thought things were getting out of hand. He was discouraged. And what caused his discouragement was doubt. He had not been listening. He'd not been praying. He'd not been understanding, and things were unraveling. Here was Jesus, arrested. Here was Jesus, led away. Here was Jesus, beaten and abused. This was the Messiah. How could He be the Lord? Why doesn't He do something? And doubt led to discouragement, and discouragement led to denial.

There're some today. You've had some serious doubts. You prayed when your little girl was sick, and your little girl didn't get well; your little girl died. You asked God for a job, and you've not yet received a job. You said, "O God, bring back my wayward child," and that wayward child doesn't come back. You said, "Lord, mend my broken home," and that broken home is not mended. And you say to yourself, "It is not working out. This is not the way it's supposed to be." And that doubt leads to discouragement. I have seen people, I'm thinking of a particular lady right now who went through sorrow. She was one of the sweetest Christian women I've known. But she went through sorrow, something she could not understand, and she dropped out completely from this church. Thank God she came back. But what happened is this; there's doubt that leads to discouragement, and discouragement leads to denial. And what Peter needed to understand was though he could not understand why things were happening as they were that day, why he could not understand why Jesus was being abused and mistreated, he learned when the rooster crowed that God is still in control. Now I want to tell you something. You listen to me. I don't care what has happened in your life, how much sorrow you face, how many seemingly unanswered prayers that you have, God is still in control. He is still in control. Now you say, "Well, it doesn't seem like it."

I was on a ship once and I was walking south and north at the same time. You say, "It can't be done." It was. The ship was headed north, and I was walking from the front to the back of the ship. I was walking south and the ship was going north. And friend, where did I end up, in the south? No, in the north! You see, look; where God does not rule, He overrules. And God is moving us to His purpose. Now Simon Peter could not understand all that was happening there that day. And that was one of the reasons he denied the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now Satan had come and wanted to sift Simon like wheat. I want you to notice the second point here. Not only did Peter learn the sovereign control of Jesus, and so had we better do it, but Peter



learned the sympathetic, the sympathetic compassion of Jesus. Peter learned that Jesus had never stopped loving him. He denied the Lord. Look, if you will, in Luke 22 verse 61, "And the Lord turned and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the words of the Lord, how He had said unto him, 'Before the cock crow, thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest Me.'" Jesus, in unspeakable agony on the way to the cross, took time to give a look of injured love to a backslidden disciple. Jesus had never stopped loving Simon Peter. There was this sympathy of the Lord Jesus Christ.

If you've heard me preach very long, many times you've heard me say often that God does not change us so He can love us. God loves us so He can change us. God loves you. I don't care what you've done. You've not crossed the deadline. Maybe you've cursed and sworn and denied the Lord Jesus Christ and turned your back on the whole thing. You wonder even why you're here this morning. But I am telling you, friend, on the authority of the Word of God, that God loves you. But now listen to me. He loves you just as you are, but He loves you too much to let you stay that way.

So, Jesus said to Peter, "Now, Peter, Satan has desired you, that he may sift you as wheat, but I have prayed for you, that your faith fail not; and when you're converted, strengthen your brethren." The Lord kept loving and He kept praying, and the Lord never forsook Peter. And, friend, the Lord loves you today. Listen, get this thought in your mind; Jesus is in control. If it doesn't make sense to you, doesn't mean it doesn't make sense. And if you can't see God working, it doesn't mean that God is not working. Number two; He loves you. He has a sympathetic compassion to you. And no matter what you've done, He loves you. He loves you. He loves you. But now, remember, He loves you as you are, but He loves you too much to let you stay that way.

Now here's the third and final thing I want you to listen, learn with me this morning. Peter learned the steadfast commitment of Jesus, the steadfast commitment of Jesus. Look in Luke 22 verse 61, "And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter," now underscore this, "and Peter remembered; Peter remembered," I have that underscored, "Peter remembered the Word of the Lord, how He said unto him, 'Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny Me thrice.'"

What was it that Peter remembered? It says he, "Remembered the Word of the Lord." Well, what was it he remembered? Look, if you will, go back to, to Luke 22 verse 31 and 32, "And 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.'" Jesus Christ had made a steadfast commitment to Simon Peter. You know what the Bible says in Second Timothy chapter 2 verse 13? "If we believe not, yet He abideth faithful; He cannot deny Himself."

Now, friend, I want you to see His control. I want you to see His compassion. And I want you to see His commitment. He is going to see you through. If you're saved, if you're a child of God, I mean truly born again, He will never, no never, no never, ever, ever let you go. Now how much chastisement you're going to take, that's up to you, but you belong to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, you see, Jesus said to Peter, "Peter, Satan has desired you, that he may sift you as wheat." That word desire literally means he has asked permission. You see, Satan can do nothing outside the will of God; that means nothing that God does not allow. Satan is always on a leash. Satan wanted to harm Job, but God said in Job 1:12, "There's only so much you can do, Satan." Now here's Satan.



He's saying, "Let me sift Simon Peter. I want to sift him like wheat." The word Peter means rock. The word Simon means, "That which is unstable, shifty." And Jesus is using that word now. He's no longer calling him the rock, because the rock is turning to sand. And He's saying, "Simon, Satan has desired you. He's asked permission to sift you as wheat."

One of the greatest sermons I've ever heard, Ron Dunn preached right here. And Ron Dunn, in his own wonderful way, said that Satan heard Peter boasting, saying, "Lord, I'll go with You to prison and to death." And Satan said, "That braggart. I'd like to sift him." And Jesus says, "Sounds like a good idea to me." Jesus agreed.

Why do you sift wheat? To get the impurities out; the sticks and the stones. Why does Satan want to do that? Satan wants to get those sticks and those stones, those sins in our lives so he can accuse us. Why does Jesus allow it? So He can cleanse us. He wants those sticks and those stones out of our lives. He wants us to be pure. And so the Lord allowed that. And, friend, I'm going to tell you, you can refuse revival if you want, but God is going to sift you. I'm talking about His steadfast commitment. That does not mean that you have an easy road. It means, to the contrary, that sometimes, with great tribulation, God is going to have to sift you and bring you to the place that you need to be. Now remember, Satan does this that he might accuse you; Jesus, that He might cleanse you. When you go through trouble, you need to understand this. And you need to understand the difference between satanic accusation and Holy Spirit conviction.

Satan will find sin in your life; sticks and stones, to point them out and accuse you with them. And what is the result of accusation? Accusation is despondency and fear and moroseness. What is the result of conviction? Repentance, cleansing, and victory. Don't let the devil condemn you when Jesus Christ wants to cleanse you by convicting you.

Now, folks, Jesus prayed for Simon Peter. He was not finished with Simon Peter. He said, "Peter, Satan has desired, that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, Peter, that your faith fail not." Isn't that a wonderful thing for those of us who are saved? "The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose, I will never, no never desert to its foes. That soul, though all hell shall endeavor to shake. I will never, no never, no never forsake."

There is a Savior today in the glory praying for you. He wants you to have revival. And the Bible says in Hebrews 7 verse 25, "He ever lives to make intercession for you." And if, like Simon Peter, you've failed; maybe not as dramatically, but you know that you've failed, God is a God of fresh beginnings. When that rooster crowed, a new day was dawning for Simon Peter. And there can be a new day dawning for you today, and you can see, and I trust you will, no matter all of the heartaches and tears, He's still in control. And no matter how you've failed, He still has compassion. And no matter your disobedience, His commitment is still to you. He will see you through. Now it's really up to you, friend, whether you want revival or you want to go on being sifted.

Would you bow your heads in prayer? Heads are bowed and eyes are closed. Would you begin to pray for those around about you who may not know the Lord Jesus Christ? And if you want to be saved today, I want to tell you that if you'll put your faith where God has put your sins, on the Lord Jesus Christ, He will save you. Furthermore, He will keep you. Pray this, "Dear God, I am a sinner." Pray



it, pray it and mean it. “God, I am a sinner, my sin deserves judgment. I’m bound for hell. But I want to be saved. Jesus, You died to save me and promised to save me if I would trust You, and I do trust You right now, like a child. I lay my pride in the dust. I receive You as my personal Lord and Savior. Come into my heart; forgive my sin, save me, Lord Jesus.” Did you ask Him? Then thank Him. “Thank You for saving me. I receive it by faith like a child and that settles it. You’re now my Lord, my Savior, my God, and my friend. And Lord Jesus, thank You for saving me. I don’t ask for a feeling, I stand on Your Word. Give me the courage to make it public. In Your name I pray, Amen.”



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