

Daily Devotional, March 13, 2021

“Simon Peter”, (Mark 3:16, NKJV)

“Simon, to whom He gave the name Peter” (Mark 3:16)

We have two lines of application to consider today. **Peter the man of the flesh**, and **Peter the man of the spirit**.

First, **Peter the man of the flesh**. This is Peter when he is weak, in a state of sin, and responding according to the old (unredeemed) nature.

1. **“And the Lord said, ‘Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren.’ But He said to Him, ‘Lord, I am ready to go with You, both to prison and to death.’ Then He said, ‘I tell you, Peter, the rooster shall not crow this day before you will deny three times that you know Me.’”** (Luke 22:31-34). Just like everything God predicts, it happened just that way (Luke 22:54-62). Despite the best of intentions, Simon Peter still fell short. Perhaps you have pledged to follow and serve God faithfully no matter what, but have given in to temptation or fear in an area of your life and have fallen short. Jesus Christ prayed for Peter, and if you are a Christian you also have Him as your Advocate (1 John 2:1). Do the footwork and return to God, relying upon His power and not your own.
2. **“Simon Peter said to them, ‘I am going fishing’...they caught nothing”** (John 21:3). Peter was supposed to be out fishing for men, having seen and been commissioned by the Resurrected Lord (John 20:21). However, he was down and discouraged. There was no true happiness in his life when he was apart from God’s plan for him. The fact that he caught nothing on his own illustrates the fruitlessness of doing anything without Christ (John 15:5). The ever graceful Son of God, however, provides a miracle to remind Peter of the days when he first fell in love with Jesus. Peter is given another chance to pick himself up and follow Christ (John 21:15-19). Many Christians find their love for God waxing cold; perhaps this describes you today. Let me tell you that our God is the God of the second chance.

Second, **Peter the man of the spirit**. This is Peter when he is in communion with God and therefore receptive to spiritual truth divinely revealed.

1. **“But Simon Peter answered Him, ‘Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God’”** (John 6:68-69). Peter realized that there is no hope in any other. He was absolutely certain of that truth, and he had no problem saying so, even as many others who had been disciples of Jesus walked away (John 6:66-67).

2. “He said to them, ‘But who do you say that I am? Simon Peter answered and said, ‘You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God.’ Jesus answered and said to him, ‘Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven’” (Matthew 16:15-19). The question posed to the disciples that day is one that all men must answer, for one’s eternal home (heaven or hell) is determined by the answer. Peter answers it according to divine revelation. We too can answer it according to the divine revelation given in the Bible. Peter did not naturally accept this truth but he accepted it supernaturally. When we look at another Scripture, light is shed upon why Simon was given the name Peter by Jesus. We read that the church has “been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone” (Ephesians 2:20). As Christ’s delegates, the apostles and prophets (Peter being preeminent among them) were to exercise authority over the church until the New Testament canon was complete, at which point there would be no further need for apostles and prophets. The rock (Greek: *petra*) upon which the church is built is not Peter, but the Christ of whom he began to preach boldly at Pentecost (1 Corinthians 3:11; Acts 2:14-40).

Although Peter had learned many things from experience, and became a fearless Christian soldier, he was always one step away from a fall (Acts 4:18-20). Peter even had to be rebuked by the Apostle Paul because he favored Jews over Gentiles for fear of men (Galatians 2:9-21). As we looked at Peter’s life, I hope you took an inventory of your own life, and are prepared to make a change through God’s power. I urge you, friend, to be eager in pursuit of spiritual things, and allow Jesus Christ to change you from a man or woman of the flesh into a man or woman of the spirit.