

Peter – Adversity Producing Humility

Peter, like all of us had learned to pretend. He had learned to behave in ways that made him more acceptable to his peers. His old nature and OM belief / behavior system had been in place so long, Peter was not even aware of it himself. God used overwhelming adversity to reveal Peter's weakness to prepare him for his mission for Christ.

Mt 26:31-35 – Pretense – Peter is in denial about his weakness

- 31 – All of you will fall away – Zech 13:7 – strike the shepherd & sheep will scatter
- 33 – Even if everyone else falls away, I will never fall away
- 34 – Before the rooster crows you will deny me 3X – arneomai – renounce, disown, reject
- 35 – Even if I have to die, I will not deny you – all the disciples said the same

- Peter is in denial about his upcoming denials – can't imagine doing that
- Jesus speaks very directly and specifically but Peter refuses to hear
- Peter is pretending – posing as a man w/o fear – a man of conviction/courage
- Peter does not know he is pretending – he is as sincere as he knows how to be
- From early age he has adopted overt behaviors designed to create an appearance of whatever characteristic he believes will bring him praise & regard from others.
- False self – system of behaviors developed in order to fit in or be accepted
- God used overwhelming adversity to break through his OM pretense so that Peter can see himself as he really is – weak, helpless, fearful, prideful, and boastful.

Lk 22:54-62 – Pain – Peter's denials reveal his weakness

- 54 – Jesus arrested – taken to High Priest – Peter follows from afar
- 55 – Peter sits around the fire among the servants – tries to blend in
- 56-57 – 1st denial – I do not know Him woman
- 58 – 2nd denial – Mister, I am not one of them
- 59-60 – 3d denials – Mister, I don't know what you are talking about – curse – Peter swears that if he is not telling the truth may divine retribution fall on his head – immediately the rooster crowed.
- 61 – Lord turns & looks at Peter – emblepo – look straight in the face – Peter remembered what the Lord had predicted
- 62 – He went outside and wept bitterly – harsh, intense weeping from his gut

- Jn 18:10 – Peter cut off the right ear of Malchus – willing to fight & die in the courtyard, the cousin of Malchus recognized him
- Peter followed from afar – fear in had emerged and taken over his soul
- Pretender – Peter stayed close only if he could pretend and be safe – we learn to pretend to be like everyone else, to blend in to keep ourselves safe
- When faced with exposure, Peter lies and even uses a curse to be convincing
- What expression do you believe was in the Lord's eyes when He looked at Peter?
- This adversarial chain of events collapsed Peter's OM pretense and exposed his weakness and fear so that Peter could not help but see it.
- When he saw Himself as God already knew he was, he was overwhelmed with grief, bitterness & humiliation – wept from the depths of his soul

Jn 21:1-3 – Preoccupied with failure - Peter’s depression

- 1 – After these things – death, burial, resurrection, appearance in the upper room
- 2 – Disciples together
- 3 – Peter decides to go fishing – not unusual for a fisherman – was this a pleasure trip, did they need food, or was Peter considering returning to his business?
 - The tone of Peter’s remarks indicate he was discouraged – looking for distraction
 - Peter preoccupied with failure – believed he was disqualified to represent the Lord
 - Even after the resurrection and the Lord’s appearance, Peter is discouraged
 - Jesus came to him to encourage him and clarify his mission

Jn 21:15-17 – Prepared to Listen – Peter’s humility

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| 15 – Do you love me? | Feed my sheep! |
| 16 – Do you love me? | Feed my sheep! |
| 17 – Do you love me? | Feed my sheep! |

- Peter’s failure had revealed his pretense & foolish human agenda – Mt 16:22-23 – Peter rebukes Jesus about going to the cross – “get behind me satan”; Mt 17:5 – this is my loved Son in whom I am pleased – Listen to Him!!!
- Peter’s failure had made it clear that he did not know, was in no position to tell Jesus anything, but needed to listen to the Beloved Son of God.
- Peter’s failure had revealed the extent of his weakness and had ruled out his human ability as the means of fulfilling God’s plan.
- Peter’s failure had revealed the foolishness of his human agenda and ruled out his personal opinions as something to consider or follow.
- God allowing & orchestrating these overwhelming circumstances was an awesome blessing – yielded humility and a willingness to hear God’s plan for his life.
- Jesus knowing Peter was finally ready to hear arrived at the perfect time with the perfect message to move Peter to the next phase of his journey.

(Deut 8:2) And you shall remember all the way which the LORD your God has led you in the wilderness these forty years, that He might humble you, testing you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not.