

74. Jesus Told Peter that He Would Deny Jesus

In our last topic, we saw that Jesus celebrated the Passover with His disciples. We see that as they were observing the Passover, Jesus also showed them the importance of serving one another in love. We also want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to serve one another in love by giving them an example to follow. In this topic, we are going to see that Jesus also took time that night to teach Peter a very important lesson about trying to serve the Lord in his own strength.

Jesus had shown the disciples the importance of serving one another and then told them that they would be blessed as they served one another. Then Jesus went on to say in Luke 22:28-30, “‘But you are those who have continued with Me in My trials. And I bestow upon you a kingdom, just as My Father bestowed *one* upon Me, that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.’” Here, we see that Jesus went on to tell the disciples about the reward that they would receive for their faithful service to Him.

The word translated “bestow” and “bestowed” means *to make a covenant or to arrange*. Here, we see that Jesus made a promise or a covenant with the disciples that the earthly kingdom promised in the Old Testament would be established although that would not happen immediately. Just before Jesus returned to heaven Acts 1:6-7 says, “‘Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, ‘Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?’ And He said to them, ‘It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority.’” Jesus said that the Father had promised Him this earthly kingdom, and here, Jesus promised the disciples that they would be in that kingdom.

Later, John learned more about the time of that kingdom which is still future and will come just before the final judgments. Revelation 20:4 says, “‘And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then *I saw* the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received *his* mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.’” In the first six verses of Revelation 20, we see it mentions six times that the length of this earthly kingdom will be one thousand years.

Jesus told the disciples that they would eat and drink at His table in that kingdom. David had illustrated what it meant to eat at the table of a king when he told Mephibosheth in 2 Samuel 9:7, “‘So David said to him, ‘Do not fear, for I will surely show you kindness for Jonathan your father’s sake, and will restore to you all the land of Saul your grandfather; and you shall eat bread at my table continually.’” Those who ate at the table of the king were those whom the king honored. In addition, Jesus also told the disciples that in the kingdom they would sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

Jesus went on to warn Peter about the danger of depending on his own strength. Luke 22:31-34 says, “‘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.’” In these verses, we see that Christ chose to use the name Simon twice, even though Jesus was the One who had changed his name from Simon to Peter. Jesus knew that Peter would depend on his own strength when he was tested later that night.

Here, we see that Satan had asked specifically for permission to sift Peter and the other disciples as wheat. The word translated “sift” means *to shake in a sieve or to try to test a person so strongly that the person would reject their faith in Christ*. Many years earlier, Satan had spoken to God about Job in Job 1:10-11 and said, “‘Have You not made a hedge around him, around his household, and around all that he has on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. But now, stretch out Your hand and touch all that he has, and he will surely curse You to Your face!’” Satan had seen that Job did not reject his faith. However, Satan wanted to try and see if he could get Peter to reject his faith.

Jesus said He had already prayed for Peter that his faith would not fail. Peter would deny that night that he knew Jesus, but that did not mean his faith would fail. Instead, it would mean that he felt like a failure. Here, we see two key things that Satan wants to do. First, he would love to overthrow the faith of a person. It would be illustrated again that night that Satan cannot overthrow true faith. Jesus said in John 10:27-28, “‘My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.’” Christ made it clear that genuine faith cannot be overthrown.

However, Satan also has a second goal. Even if he cannot overthrow the faith of a person, he wants to make a Christian feel like such a failure that the person feels that the Lord can no longer use that person. Jesus also told Peter that he would deny Him three times. Peter certainly felt like such a failure when he did deny Jesus three times later that night. In fact, Peter felt like such a failure that we see in John 21 that he decided to return to fishing. However, Jesus made it clear that even when a person fails, his faith has not failed. Jesus knew that He was going to restore Peter and that Peter would turn back to Him and show true love and obedience. As a result, Jesus told him that when he returned, Jesus had a ministry for him to strengthen the other brethren.

John 21:15-17 says, “‘So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, ‘Simon, *son* of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?’ He said to Him, ‘Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.’ He said to him, ‘Feed My lambs.’ He said to him again a second time, ‘Simon, *son* of Jonah, do you love Me?’ He said to Him, ‘Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.’ He said to him, ‘Tend My sheep.’ He said to him the third time, ‘Simon, *son* of Jonah, do you love Me?’ Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, ‘Do you love Me?’ And he said to Him, ‘Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Feed My sheep.’” That morning, Jesus asked Peter if he loved Him more than he loved the fish. Peter made it clear that he loved Jesus more than the fish. As a result, Jesus told him to feed and tend the lambs and sheep. In fact, Jesus even gave him the opportunity to preach on the Day of Pentecost just a few weeks later when three thousand repented, believed, and became followers of Jesus in Acts 2.

Luke 22:35-38 says, “‘And He said to them, ‘When I sent you without money bag, knapsack, and

sandals, did you lack anything?’ So they said, ‘Nothing.’ Then He said to them, ‘But now, he who has a money bag, let him take *it*, and likewise a knapsack; and he who has no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one. For I say to you that this which is written must still be accomplished in Me: “*And He was numbered with the transgressors.*” For the things concerning Me have an end.’ So they said, ‘Lord, look, here *are* two swords.’ And He said to them, ‘It is enough.’” The last part of Isaiah 53:12 says, “And He was numbered with the transgressors, and He bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.” This was the reason why Jesus said that a sword was needed in order to fulfill the prophecy of Isaiah.

That very night Jesus would be a part of a group that would use a sword to try and destroy. John 18:10-11 says, “Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest’s servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant’s name was Malchus. So Jesus said to Peter, ““Put your sword into the sheath. Shall I not drink the cup which My Father has given Me?”” Jesus knew that Peter would try to defend Him in Peter’s own strength before he would deny Jesus. Luke 22:50-51 adds, “And one of them struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his right ear. But Jesus answered and said, ‘Permit even this.’ And He touched his ear and healed him.” Peter could have been charged with attempted murder but Jesus removed the evidence by healing the ear.

Christ did a second thing in these verses. He reminded the disciples how he had provided for them when He sent them out two-by-two. Jesus asked the disciples if they lacked anything when He sent them. When Jesus sent out the twelve and later the seventy, He knew that they needed to learn to trust Him to supply their needs. That is one of the key lessons that every Christian needs to learn as he begins to serve the Lord. A Christian that has never learned that the Lord can supply his needs will often be fearful and focus on human plans instead of learning to trust the Lord. Philippians 4:6-7 says, “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” Those who do not learn to trust are often driven by the fear of people or things instead of learning to be led by the Lord.

At the same time, Christ also let the disciples know that it was all right to take the things they needed with them as they traveled. This would indicate what they had learned about trust would give them great boldness as they also learned to depend on the Holy Spirit beginning with the Day of Pentecost. These are two lessons that we also want to help our physical and spiritual children learn. We want to help them learn to trust the Lord to supply their needs and also help them learn to yield to the Holy Spirit moment by moment so that they are able to serve the Lord with boldness.