



Presenting Peter Who is this man called Peter?

Wednesday Night Crew Summer Series

Presenting PETER: A study in Mark and the Letters of Peter

Come Join Pastor Orleen and the Wednesday Night Crew this Summer beginning 6/9th

Who is this man whom Jesus Loved&Corrected&Taught&Trusted & Rebuked & Gave the Leadership of His Church to?

WEEK #1: Power in a name: Simon Peter. Social, Economic, Family Culture. What was it like to live life in Peter's neighborhood? What did this Family Culture ADD to the nascent, embryonic, incipient Church?

WEEK #2: Peter in the Gospels – The Confession “LORD, I am a sinful man!” & Walking with Jesus – Confessing Him as Messiah

WEEK 3: The Passover, The Prophecy & The Reinstatement

The Road to the Passover

Mark 11

1-11: Triumphal Entry

When they approached Jerusalem, at Bethphage and Bethany near the Mount of Olives, He sent two of His disciples ² and told them, “Go into the village ahead of you. As soon as you enter it, you will find a young donkey tied there, on which no one has ever sat. Untie it and bring it here. ³ If anyone says to you, ‘Why are you doing this?’ say, ‘The Lord needs it and will send it back here right away.’”

⁴ So they went and found a young donkey outside in the street, tied by a door. They untied it, ⁵ and some of those standing there said to them, “What are you doing, untying the donkey?” ⁶ They answered them just as Jesus had said, so they let them go. ⁷ Then they brought the donkey to Jesus and threw their robes on it, and He sat on it.

⁸ Many people spread their robes on the road, and others spread leafy branches cut from the fields.^[a] ⁹ Then those who went ahead and those who followed kept shouting:

Hosanna!

He who comes in the name of the Lord is the blessed One! ¹⁰ The coming kingdom of our father David is blessed!

Hosanna in the highest heaven! ¹¹ And He went into Jerusalem and into the temple complex. After looking around at everything, **since it was already late, He went out to Bethany with the Twelve.**

The Fig Tree:

Mk 11:12-14, 20-26

The Cursing of the Fig Tree

¹² *The next day when they came out from Bethany, He was hungry. ¹³ After seeing in the distance a fig tree with leaves, He went to find out if there was anything on it. When He came to it, He found nothing but leaves, because it was not the season for figs. ¹⁴ He said to it, “May no one ever eat fruit from you again!” And His disciples heard it.*

Cleansing the Temple Complex

¹⁵ They came to Jerusalem, and He went into the temple complex and began to throw out those buying and selling in the temple. He overturned the money changers' tables and the chairs of those selling doves, ¹⁶ and would not permit anyone to carry goods through the temple complex.

¹⁷ Then He began to teach them: “Is it not written, My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations?^[a] But you have made it a den of thieves!”^[a] ¹⁸ Then the chief priests and the scribes heard it and started looking for a way to destroy Him. For they were afraid of Him, because the whole crowd was astonished by His teaching.

¹⁹ And whenever evening came, they would go out of the city.

The Barren Fig Tree Is Withered

²⁰ *Early in the morning, as they were passing by, they saw the fig tree withered from the roots up. ²¹ Then Peter remembered and said to Him, “Rabbi, look! The fig tree that You cursed is withered.”*

²² *Jesus replied to them, “Have faith in God. ²³ I assure you: If anyone says to this mountain, ‘Be lifted up and thrown into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says will happen, it will be done for him. ²⁴ Therefore I tell you, all the things you pray and ask for—believe that you have received them, and you will have them. ²⁵ And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven will also*



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forgive you your wrongdoing. [26 But if you don't forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your wrongdoing.]

- Jesus is so intentional. WHY?
- Was this what happens when you do not feed Jesus?
- Was this an example of how to pray, to believe, to receive?
- Was this mainly for Peter?

Timeline:

- Curse the Fig Tree for not having fruit out of season.
- Go, cleanse the Temple.
- Return and see the Tree dead.

The prophet Micah's lament over the Judean temple state in the eighth century B.C. almost serves as a template for Jesus' curse: "there is no first-ripe fig for which I hunger. The faithful have disappeared from the land, and there is no one left who is upright" (Mic 7:1-2).

An object lesson of what is happening and will complete itself with the destruction of Jerusalem and the 2nd Temple complex.

- What does this connection teach Peter?

1 Peter 2:5, 9-10

"You, yourselves, as living stones, are being built into a spiritual house for a holy priesthood to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

*But you are a chosen race, [generation or nation]
a royal priesthood,
a holy nation, a people for His possession,
so that you may proclaim the praises [mighty deeds]
of the One who called you out of darkness
into His marvelous light.
10 Once you were not a people,
but now you are God's people;
you had not received mercy,
but now you have received mercy.*

- the Jerusalem temple, a place that was supposed to be "a house of prayer for all nations" but had been deformed into "a den of robbers" (Mk 11:17 citing Is 56:7 and Jer 7:11)
- has now been superseded by a new community of faith in which believing prayer accomplishes great things (Mk 11:23-25; cf. 1 Pet 1:17; 4:7; 5:7).

Olivet Discourse (FROM LAST WEEK) Wednesday of Passion Week?

Mount of Olives **Mk 13:3-4** **Signs of the End of the Age**

³ While He was sitting on the Mount of Olives across from the temple complex, Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked Him privately, ⁴ "Tell us, when will these things happen? And what will be the sign when all these things are about to take place?"

Jesus' teaching on HOW to lead contrast to the highly authoritarian leadership of the Pharisees. Peter touches it in 1 Peter 5:1-11.



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The Passover

Mark 14:12-16 (Luke 22:8-13)

Preparation for Passover – The Journey to the Upper Room

¹² On the first day of Unleavened Bread, when they sacrifice the Passover lamb, His disciples asked Him, “Where do You want us to go and prepare the Passover so You may eat it?”

¹³ So He sent two of His disciples and told them, “Go into the city, and a man carrying a water jug will meet you. Follow him.¹⁴ Wherever he enters, tell the owner of the house, ‘The Teacher says, “Where is the guest room for Me to eat the Passover with My disciples?’”¹⁵ He will show you a large room upstairs, furnished and ready. Make the preparations for us there.”¹⁶ So the disciples went out, entered the city, and found it just as He had told them, and they prepared the Passover.

Peter and John are assigned to the strange process of procuring a room to celebrate this Passover. Why such secrecy? JUDAS

- None of the other apostles knows the location until they arrive later with Jesus.
- Secrecy = Jesus to spend time with his apostles [Final instruction/preparation for what is to follow.]
- Luke = Judas had already begun “to look for an opportunity to betray him to them when no crowd was present” (Lk 22:6).
- Judas knows the location where they would all sleep that night, Gethsemane (Jn 18:2). After he leaves the upper room (Jn 13:21-30), he goes to the authorities and tells them where they can arrest Jesus when only his disciples are present.

Extra Study: John 13:31-17 – Upper Room Discourse (What Jesus wanted to say after Judas left)

Preparation for The Passover – Jesus Washes His Disciples Feet

John 13:1-20

¹³ Before the Passover Festival, Jesus knew that His hour had come to depart from this world to the Father. Having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.

² Now by the time of supper, the Devil had already put it into the heart of Judas, Simon Iscariot’s son, to betray Him. ³ Jesus knew that the Father had given everything into His hands, that He had come from God, and that He was going back to God. ⁴ So He got up from supper, laid aside His robe, took a towel, and tied it around Himself. ⁵ Next, He poured water into a basin and began to wash His disciples’ feet and to dry them with the towel tied around Him.

⁶ He came to Simon Peter, who asked Him, “Lord, are You going to wash my feet?”

⁷ Jesus answered him, “What I’m doing you don’t understand now, but afterward you will know.”

⁸ “You will never wash my feet—ever!” Peter said.

Jesus replied, “If I don’t wash you, you have no part with Me.”

⁹ Simon Peter said to Him, “Lord, not only my feet, but also my hands and my head.”

¹⁰ “One who has bathed,” Jesus told him, “doesn’t need to wash anything except his feet, but he is completely clean. You are clean, but not all of you.”¹¹ For He knew who would betray Him. This is why He said, “You are not all clean.”



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The Meaning of Footwashing

¹² When Jesus had washed their feet and put on His robe, He reclined again and said to them, “Do you know what I have done for you? ¹³ You call Me Teacher and Lord. This is well said, for I am. ¹⁴ So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. ¹⁵ For I have given you an example that you also should do just as I have done for you.

¹⁶ “I assure you: A slave is not greater than his master, and a messenger is not greater than the one who sent him. ¹⁷ If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them. ¹⁸ I’m not speaking about all of you; I know those I have chosen. But the Scripture must be fulfilled: The one who eats My bread has raised his heel against Me.

¹⁹ “I am telling you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe that I am He. ²⁰ I assure you: Whoever receives anyone I send receives Me, and the one who receives Me receives Him who sent Me.”

Judas’s Betrayal Predicted

²¹ When Jesus had said this, He was troubled in His spirit and testified, “I assure you: One of you will betray Me!”

²² The disciples started looking at one another—uncertain which one He was speaking about. ²³ One of His disciples, the one Jesus loved, was reclining close beside Jesus. ²⁴ Simon Peter motioned to him to find out who it was He was talking about. ²⁵ So he leaned back against Jesus and asked Him, “Lord, who is it?”

²⁶ Jesus replied, “He’s the one I give the piece of bread to after I have dipped it.” When He had dipped the bread, He gave it to Judas, Simon Iscariot’s son. ²⁷ After Judas ate the piece of bread, Satan entered him. Therefore, Jesus told him, “What you’re doing, do quickly.”

²⁸ None of those reclining at the table knew why He told him this. ²⁹ Since Judas kept the money-bag, some thought that Jesus was telling him, “Buy what we need for the festival,” or that he should give something to the poor. ³⁰ After receiving the piece of bread, he went out immediately. And it was night.

- Peter demurs: “Lord, are you going to wash my feet?” (Jn 13:6).1
- Once informed that he will understand what it means later (Jn 13:7), he adamantly refuses: “You will never wash my feet” (Jn 13:8).18
- Peter’s distorted concept of the Messiah interferes with his understanding of Jesus’ mission.
- Is it demeaning for Jesus the Messiah to assume the role of a servant? (Rich Young Ruler)
- Jesus’ action speaks of two realities: **Identification with Him and imitation of Him.**
- To be the recipient of undeserved grace and mercy is the essence of being a member of the new covenant community.
- Humility is the hallmark of membership and the pattern for mutual relations among family members. “For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you” (Jn 13:15).
- Self-giving love authenticates those who belong to Jesus: “By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another” (Jn 13:35).

What did this teach Peter?



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1 Peter 3:8 *Now finally, all of you should be like-minded and sympathetic, should love believers, and be compassionate and humble,*

1 Peter 4:8-10 *Above all, maintain an intense love for each other, since love covers a multitude of sins. ⁹ Be hospitable to one another without complaining. ¹⁰ Based on the gift each one has received, use it to serve others, as good managers of the varied grace of God.*

1 Peter 5:1-6 *Therefore, as a fellow elder and witness to the sufferings of the Messiah and also a participant in the glory about to be revealed, I exhort the elders among you: ² Shepherd God's flock among you, not overseeing out of compulsion but freely, according to God's will; not for the money but eagerly; ³ not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. ⁴ And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.*

⁵ In the same way, you younger men, be subject to the elders. And all of you clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble.

⁶ Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, so that He may exalt you at the proper time

The Prophecy (A New Command & An Unwanted Prophecy)

A New Command

John 13:31-35

³¹ When he had gone out, Jesus said, "Now the Son of Man is glorified, and God is glorified in Him. ³² If God is glorified in Him, God will also glorify Him in Himself and will glorify Him at once.

³³ "Children, I am with you a little while longer. You will look for Me, and just as I told the Jews, 'Where I am going you cannot come,' so now I tell you.

³⁴ "I give you a new command: Love one another. Just as I have loved you, you must also love one another. ³⁵ By this all people will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

An Unwanted Prophecy: Peter's Denials Predicted

³⁶ "Lord," Simon Peter said to Him, "where are You going?"

Jesus answered, "Where I am going you cannot follow Me now, but you will follow later."

³⁷ "Lord," Peter asked, "why can't I follow You now? I will lay down my life for You!"

³⁸ Jesus replied, "Will you lay down your life for Me? I assure you: A rooster will not crow until you have denied Me three times.

Mark 14:27-31 Peter's Denial Predicted

²⁷ Then Jesus said to them, "All of you will run away, because it is written: I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered. ²⁸ But after I have been resurrected, I will go ahead of you to Galilee."

²⁹ Peter told Him, "Even if everyone runs away, I will certainly not!" ³⁰ "I assure you," Jesus said to him, "today, this very night, before the rooster crows twice, you will deny Me three times!" ³¹ But he kept insisting, "If I have to die with You, I will never deny You!" And they all said the same thing.

- Such crazy talk!
- Is Peter's reply in part because he feels the weight of his leadership?
I need to respond for all of us?
- Or is he being grandiose? "Lord, why can I not follow you now? I will lay down my life for you" (Jn 13:37).



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- Obviously, he could never imagine that would happen. He incorrectly measured himself.
- All four Gospels narrate Peter's denial.
- Luke = Satan requested permission to test Peter's faithfulness, recalling the book of Job (Job 1:6-12; 2:1-7).
- Jesus prays that Peter's faith will not fail and then, knowing full well he will momentarily stumble, predicts Peter's full restoration to leadership (Lk 22:31-34).
- The Synoptics all narrate Peter's vociferous denial that he would ever deny knowing the Lord (Mk 14:29; Mt 26:33; Lk 22:33).
- In just a few short hours, Peter's emphatic resolve crumbled.

What does Peter's example teach me:

Keep quiet. Ask questions. Think.

The Reinstatement

John 21

Jesus' Third Appearance to the Disciples (TELL THIS PART OF THE STORY)

21 After this, Jesus revealed Himself again to His disciples by the Sea of Tiberias. He revealed Himself in this way:

2 Simon Peter, Thomas (called "Twin"), Nathanael from Cana of Galilee, Zebedee's sons, and two others of His disciples were together.

3 "I'm going fishing," Simon Peter said to them.

"We're coming with you," they told him. They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.

4 When daybreak came, Jesus stood on the shore. However, the disciples did not know it was Jesus.

5 "Men," [children] Jesus called to them, "you don't have any fish, do you?"

"No," they answered.

6 "Cast the net on the right side of the boat," He told them, "and you'll find some." So they did,^[e] and they were unable to haul it in because of the large number of fish. ⁷ Therefore the disciple, the one Jesus loved, said to Peter, "It is the Lord!"

When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he tied his outer garment around him^[d] (for he was stripped) and plunged into the sea. ⁸ But since they were not far from land (about 100 yards^[e] away), the other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish. ⁹ When they got out on land, they saw a charcoal fire there, with fish lying on it, and bread.

¹⁰ "Bring some of the fish you've just caught," Jesus told them. ¹¹ So Simon Peter got up and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish—153 of them. Even though there were so many, the net was not torn.

¹² "Come and have breakfast," Jesus told them. None of the disciples dared ask Him, "Who are You?" because they knew it was the Lord. ¹³ Jesus came, took the bread, and gave it to them. He did the same with the fish.

¹⁴ This was now the third time Jesus appeared to the disciples after He was raised from the dead.



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Jesus' Appearance and Commission to Simon

- Back in Galilee, **along the lake where his initial call took place** (Jn 21).
- Seven disciples (Peter, Thomas, Nathanael, James, John and two unnamed disciples) are together at the Sea of Tiberias (Jn 21:1).
- Most likely they are at Capernaum, where Peter and the sons of Zebedee lived. Perhaps Andrew is one of the unnamed disciples (Jn 1:40-41, 44; 6:8; 12:22).
- Peter suggests they all go fishing.

[Mark and Matthew make it clear that soon after his resurrection, Jesus instructed the apostles to meet him in Galilee (Mk 16:7; Mt 28:7, 10).]

- After completing the Festival of Unleavened Bread in Jerusalem, they return to Galilee in anticipation of meeting up with Jesus. This, according to Matthew, is precisely what happened (Mt 28:16, 17).
- What is more natural for these men than going back out on the lake and doing what they have done since their youth?
- Furthermore, there may have been some pressing financial needs in their families that a good catch could alleviate. The note that they did fish all night with no luck. They really tried.
- Jesus uses the phrase “children” meaning what?
- It appears they did not recognize Jesus right away.
- Did they get the ‘familiarity’ of the request from when they first encountered Jesus on the shore? “Let down your nets”? (Lk 5:1-11)
- Memories connect: John recognizes Jesus.
- Peter immediately reacts by wanting to meet Jesus face to face, dives in and swims to shore.
- The others row the boat in, dragging the net behind.
- When they all get ashore, Jesus has a fish breakfast, cooked over coals, already prepared for them.
Jesus “took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish” (Jn 21:13).
Memories are jogged = the miraculous feeding of 5,000 with five loaves and two fishes (Jn 6:1-14).



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READ FROM HERE ON

Jesus' Threefold Restoration of Peter

¹⁵ *When they had eaten breakfast, Jesus asked Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these?" [Do you love me more than these other men do?]*

"Yes, Lord," he said to Him, "You know that I love You."

"Feed My lambs," He told him.

¹⁶ *A second time He asked him, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me?"*

"Yes, Lord," he said to Him, "You know that I love You."

"Shepherd My sheep," He told him.

¹⁷ *He asked him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me?"*

Peter was grieved that He asked him the third time, "Do you love Me?" He said, "Lord, You know everything! You know that I love You."

*"Feed My sheep," Jesus said. ¹⁸ "I assure you: When you were young, you would tie your belt and walk wherever you wanted. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands and someone else will tie you and carry you where you don't want to go." ¹⁹ He said this to signify by what kind of death he would glorify God. **After saying this, He told him, "Follow Me!"***

Correcting a False Report

²⁰ *So Peter turned around and saw the disciple Jesus loved following them. That disciple was the one who had leaned back against Jesus at the supper and asked, "Lord, who is the one that's going to betray You?" ²¹ When Peter saw him, he said to Jesus, "Lord—what about him?"*

²² *"If I want him to remain until I come," Jesus answered, "what is that to you? As for you, follow Me."*

²³ *So this report^[2] spread to the brothers^[1] that this disciple would not die. Yet Jesus did not tell him that he would not die, but, "If I want him to remain until I come, what is that to you?"*

Epilogue²⁴ *This is the disciple who testifies to these things and who wrote them down. We know that his testimony is true.*

²⁵ *And there are also many other things that Jesus did, which, if they were written one by one, I suppose not even the world itself could contain the books that would be written.*

FOR ALL THE DISCIPLES:

- A cementing process on provision:

"Do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear . . . your heavenly Father knows that you have need of all these things. But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well" (Mt 6:25, 32-33).

FOR PETER:

- Jesus asks Peter, three times, if he loves him.
The Three-peat = intentional, **gently** but **painfully** reminding Peter of his threefold denial.
- This time Peter **does not** swear or take an oath; his only recourse is to appeal to Jesus' extraordinary understanding of the human heart:
"Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you" (Jn 21:17; cf. 1:48; 2:24-25).
- Each time Peter reaffirms his love for Jesus but using the phrase PHILEO not AGAPAO
In the Greek two different words for love are used.
In asking the first two questions Jesus used *agapao*, the word used in the New Testament to describe God's love for us as expressed in John 3:16.
In asking the last question Jesus used *phileo*, a **weaker term denoting fondness or friendship rather than total commitment.**

[WHAT? Jesus meets Peter where he is at.]



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- Jesus still commissions Peter to:

“Feed my lambs” (Jn 21:15),

A very practical way of demonstrating love for Christ is by feeding the young ones in His flock. It is interesting to note that the conversation had changed from fishing to shepherding. The former speaks of the works of evangelism; while the latter suggests teaching and pastoral care.

“Tend my sheep” (Jn 21:16)

This time **He said to him, “Tend My sheep.”** There are lambs and sheep in Christ’s flock, and they need the loving care of one who loves the Shepherd.

“Feed my sheep” (Jn 21:17).

[Shepherd imagery = Pastor my people. Speaks reinstatement of leadership]

This time, Peter appealed to the fact that Jesus was God and therefore knew **all things**.

He said **the third time, “You know that I am fond of You.”** And for the last time, he was told that he could demonstrate this by feeding Christ’s **sheep**. In this passage, the underlying lesson is that love for Christ is the only acceptable motive for serving Him

- Peter’s uses the same metaphor to remind the elders in the house churches of Asia Minor of their primary responsibility:
“I exhort the elders among you to tend the flock of God that is in your charge” (1 Pet 5:1b-2a).
- Though he lacked the courage the first time he faced this prospect, he will not fail a second time.

The Cost of Reinstatement

- **John 13:37** Peter’s earlier claim before his denial: *“Lord . . . I will lay down my life for you”*

Was Peter just repeating what he heard Jesus say earlier in **John 10:11**?

“the good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep”

- **John 21:18-19** **WHY** did Jesus tell Peter how he would die?

“I assure you: When you were young, you would tie your belt and walk wherever you wanted. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands and someone else will tie you and carry you where you don’t want to go.” ¹⁹ He said this to signify by what kind of death he would glorify God.

- Jesus purposefully brought Peter to this point

“I know that my death will come soon, as indeed our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me. And I will make every effort so that after my departure you may be able at any time to recall these things” **2 Pet 1:14-15**

Jesus completed the Reinstatement process with those two words: Follow Me.

In these verses, Peter’s restoration is publicly acknowledged by the Lord.

MacDonald, W. (1995). *Believer’s Bible Commentary: Old and New Testaments*



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Peter then inquires about the destiny of the beloved disciple. Jesus' response is terse and enigmatic: "If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you? Follow me!" (Jn 21:21-22). An editorial comment implies that a misunderstanding of this saying was already widespread: Jesus did not affirm that the beloved disciple would live until Jesus' glorious return. The point of the saying is that the time of a disciple's death lies entirely in Jesus' hands and prying into such matters should not be a concern. What matters is being a faithful witness and resting in the Lord of life and death. Peter got the point: "Let those suffering in accordance with God's will entrust themselves to a faithful Creator, while continuing to do good" (1 Pet 4:19).

Jesus predicts Peter's end (vv. 18, 19). Jesus told Peter,

Most assuredly I say to you, when you were younger, you girded yourself and walked where you wished; but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands and another will gird you and carry you where you do not wish (v. 18).

John then explained that Jesus was "signifying by what death" Peter would glorify God. Having said this, Jesus told Peter, "Follow Me" (v. 19).

A strong and early tradition tells us that Peter indeed did follow Jesus and stretch out his arms. In his old age, around A.D. 65, Peter was crucified in Rome. This same tradition tells us that Peter asked to be crucified upside down, feeling unworthy to die the same death as His dearly loved Lord.

Peter's inappropriate question (John 21:20–25). Peter had been humbled but not changed. He was still the impulsive and direct person he had always been. And when Peter observed John listening to the conversation, Peter blurted out, "But Lord, what about this man?" Peter had learned something about his own calling and his future. Now he wanted to know what Jesus planned for John!

Jesus' response was a rebuke. "If I will that he remain till I come, what is that to you? You follow me." These words of Jesus are words that every believer must take to heart. Jesus is Lord. We are to respond to Him as *our* Lord, and seek earnestly to follow Him. We are to search for and discern Christ's will for us. But God's will for others is their business, not ours! We are to encourage others to follow Jesus by seeking His will for them. But we are not to play God in another's life, or seek to make them responsible to us rather than to the Lord.¹

Peter in the upper room. Reflecting Peter's leadership role among the Twelve, Jesus assigns Peter and John the task of preparing a place in the city to observe the Passover meal (Lk 22:8-13).¹⁵ This detail is important for understanding Jesus' later arrest.¹⁶ Peter and John do not know the place where the supper is to be held until after they meet an anonymous man carrying a water jar just inside the city. They are instructed to follow this person to the home of the unnamed host for the supper and there make preparations (Lk 22:9-13). None of the other apostles knows the location until they arrive later with Jesus. This secrecy allows Jesus to spend time with his apostles, instructing and preparing them for what is to follow without fear of arrest or interruption. Luke tells us that Judas had already begun "to look for an opportunity to betray him to them when no crowd was present" (Lk 22:6). What Judas does know, however, is the location where they would all sleep that night, namely, the Garden of Gethsemane (Jn 18:2). After Judas leaves the upper room (Jn 13:21-30), he goes to the authorities and tells them where they can arrest Jesus when only his disciples are present. John's Gospel significantly augments the Synoptic accounts of the events leading up to the arrest. Especially meaningful for generations of Christians is the so-called Upper Room Discourse of John 13–17. Two episodes in this section feature the apostle Peter. The first is the famous foot-washing incident. In a deeply moving, symbolic action, Jesus assumes the role of a servant and begins washing the feet of each apostle. But when it is Peter's turn, Peter demurs: "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" (Jn 13:6).¹⁷ On being informed that he will understand what it means later (Jn 13:7), he adamantly refuses: "You will never wash my feet" (Jn 13:8).¹⁸ **Once again, Peter's distorted concept of the Messiah interferes with his understanding of Jesus' mission.** For Peter, it is demeaning for Jesus the Messiah to assume the role of a servant; after all, he is the king of Israel! If there is to be any foot washing, let the apostles wash those of the Master, not vice versa. Jesus' gentle but firm response puts in sharp relief the symbolic meaning of the gesture and its theological significance. Jesus' action speaks of two realities: identification with him and imitation of him. To be the recipient of undeserved grace and mercy is the essence of being a member of the new covenant community. Accordingly, humility is the hallmark of membership and the pattern for mutual relations among family members. "For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you" (Jn 13:15). Self-giving love authenticates those who belong to Jesus: "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (Jn 13:35). Peter did eventually get the point, as a thoughtful reading of his first letter eloquently testifies. In the letter, the voice of one who experienced self-giving love in action appeals to the reader to replicate the pattern (1 Pet 3:8; 4:8-10; 5:1-6).

¹ Richards, L., Pegoda, D., & Gross, P. (2001). *Every teaching of Jesus in the Bible* (pp. 268–269). Nashville: T. Nelson.



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A second moment of high drama involving Peter occurs in the upper room. After the shocking disclosure that one of them would betray Jesus, Simon Peter signaled to “the one whom Jesus loved” and who “was reclining next to him” (Jn 13:23) to ask Jesus who the betrayer was.¹⁹ One may be fairly certain what would have happened had Jesus plainly told Peter who it was (see Jn 18:10). Judas’ sudden departure did not arouse suspicion because he was the treasurer and some thought Jesus instructed him either to buy provisions for the feast or make a donation to the poor (Jn 13:29-30). Another unsettling disclosure follows. Jesus informs the apostles that he is leaving them. Simon Peter speaks for all the apostles: “Where are you going?” (Jn 13:36). When told he cannot follow Jesus now but will do so later, Peter inquires: “Lord, why can I not follow you now? I will lay down my life for you” (Jn 13:37). Then the bombshell: “Will you lay down your life for me? Very truly, I tell you, before the cock crows, you will have denied me three times” (Jn 13:38). All four Gospels narrate Peter’s denial. Luke, however, adds unique material by informing us that Satan requested permission to test Peter’s faithfulness, recalling the book of Job (Job 1:6-12; 2:1-7). Jesus prays that Peter’s faith will not fail and then, knowing full well he will momentarily stumble, predicts Peter’s full restoration to leadership (Lk 22:31-34). The Synoptics all narrate Peter’s vociferous denial that he would ever deny knowing the Lord (Mk 14:29; Mt 26:33; Lk 22:33). In just a few short hours, Peter’s emphatic resolve crumbled.

NOTES:

1 Peter 5:1-11 HCSB

About the Elders

⁵ Therefore, as a fellow elder and witness to the sufferings of the Messiah and also a participant in the glory about to be revealed, I exhort the elders among you: ² Shepherd God’s flock among you, not overseeing^[a] out of compulsion but freely, according to God’s will;^[b] not for the money but eagerly; ³ not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. ⁴ And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.

⁵ In the same way, you younger men, be subject to the elders. And all of you clothe yourselves with^[c] humility toward one another, because God resists the proud

but gives grace to the humble.^[d]

⁶ Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, so that He may exalt you at the proper time,^[e] ⁷ casting all your care on Him, because He cares about you.

Conclusion

⁸ Be serious! Be alert! Your adversary the Devil is prowling around like a roaring lion, looking for anyone he can devour. ⁹ Resist him and be firm in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are being experienced by your fellow believers throughout the world.

¹⁰ Now the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ Jesus, will personally^[f] restore, establish, strengthen, and support you after you have suffered a little.^[g] ¹¹ The dominion^[h] belongs to Him forever.^[i] Amen.

The Life And Witness Of Peter by Larry R. Helyer

NOT USE Peter and the Temple Tax

Matthew 17:24-27 HCSB

When they came to Capernaum, those who collected the double-drachma tax approached Peter and said, “Doesn’t your Teacher pay the double-drachma tax?” “Yes”, he said. When he went into the house, Jesus spoke to him first, “What do you think, Simon? Who do earthly kings collect tariffs or taxes from? From their sons or from strangers?” “From strangers,” he said. “Then the sons are free,” Jesus told him. “But, so we don’t offend them, go to the sea, cast in a fishhook, and take the first fish that you catch. When you open its mouth, you’ll find a coin. Take it and give it to the them for Me and you.”

Matthew alone inserts a curious episode concerning the temple tax (Mt 17:24-27).⁴ This tax, though voluntary, was expected of all Jewish males above twenty years of age, whether living in Palestine or the Diaspora, and was levied in the Jewish month of Adar,



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corresponding to March in our calendar (Neh 10:32-33; J.W. 6.281; m. Šeqal. 1:3-4). Matthew thus narrates an episode occurring about a month before the Passover (cf. Mt 17:22). The temple tax was intended to maintain the ritual and sacrificial needs of the Jerusalem temple. Collectors of the half-shekel tax (equivalent of a day's wage and levied on an annual basis) inquire of Peter whether his teacher pays the tax, a detail assuming Peter's role as a leader within the group.⁵ Peter affirms that he does and goes inside the house to inform Jesus about the levy. Jesus asks Simon, "From whom do kings of the earth take toll and tribute? From their children or from others?" Peter's answer, based on his experience in the Galilean fishing industry, is straightforward: "From others." Jesus' response is carefully nuanced. On the one hand, he implies that Peter and the rest of the disciples, because they are members of the kingdom of heaven ("children"), are not obligated to pay the temple tax. As becomes clear in the Gospel accounts, especially John's Gospel, the Jesus movement transcends the ancient traditions and institutions of Judaism, including that magnificent edifice that embodies and symbolizes the central affirmations of the ancestral faith. Jesus' answer thus constitutes an indirect indictment of the current religious authorities in Jerusalem, inasmuch as they fail to acknowledge his message about the kingdom. On the other hand, Jesus decides that his Jewish followers should, for now, pay the tax and avoid unnecessary conflict with the powers that be. The principle of avoiding unnecessary resistance to the gospel message becomes a primary missionary strategy among the early Christians. The apostle Paul, in particular, insists on this point in several of his letters (1 Cor 9), and Peter clearly echoes it in his first epistle as well (1 Pet 2:13-17; 3:16-17).

Peter and the Rich Young Ruler

In the context of Jesus' approaching ascent to Jerusalem for the Passover,⁶ a man of some means comes up and asks him, "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" (Mk 10:17). Luke says he was a ruler (Lk 18:18), and Matthew adds that he was young (Mt 19:22). Jesus challenges him to sell his possessions, Peter and the Rich Young Ruler In the context of Jesus' approaching ascent to Jerusalem for the Passover,⁶ a man of some means comes up and asks him, "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" (Mk 10:17). Luke says he was a ruler (Lk 18:18), and Matthew adds that he was young (Mt 19:22). Jesus challenges him to sell his possessions, give the money to the poor and become a disciple. The man reluctantly declines the invitation and leaves (Mk 10:21-22). Jesus observes, "How hard it will be for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God" (Mk 10:23), a statement running counter to the view that material abundance was a sign of divine blessing and approval on one's life.⁷ The disciples are stunned and ask, "Then who can be saved?" (Mk 10:26), to which Jesus replies, "For mortals it is impossible, but not for God; for God all things are possible" (Mk 10:27). At this point, Peter enters the narrative (Mk 10:28; Mt 19:27; Lk 18:28). Obviously, wealth is not an obstacle since he has already made considerable financial sacrifice to follow Jesus. But does Peter still feel threatened by the high demands Jesus makes for securing eternal life? Is he anxious about whether he qualifies? Or does his remark convey "perhaps a touch of smugness"?⁸ It is hard to be sure. What Jesus does is assure him and his fellow disciples that their sacrifices are worth it; indeed, they will be matched by rewards beyond compare (Mk 10:28-30). Included in the list of future blessings, however, is the unexpected addition of "persecutions" (Mk 10:30). As we will see, the paradox that joy and blessing can co-exist with suffering is a major theme in Peter's first letter (1 Pet 1:6, 8; 2:9; 4:13; 5:10).

LOGOS:

The problem with possessions, as a hindrance to total trust, is now spelt out (10:17-31). The first section (17-27) focuses on financial wealth. After that it extends (28-31) to everything that enriches life, with loving relationships as a particular emphasis (29). There is a plausible unity to this section, though the three passages 17-22, 23-27 and 28-31 could exist independently, and verse 31 occurs in other settings too.

The story of the man who came to Jesus (17-22) is described in all three synoptic gospels. Mark says he was *a man* (17) with *great wealth* (22). Luke says he was a 'ruler' (Lk. 18:18) and 'a man of great wealth' (Lk. 18:23). Matthew adds that he was a 'young man' (Mt. 19:22). Putting all three together we get the popular traditional designation of him as 'the rich young ruler', and see the value of having more than one gospel account of Jesus' ministry. As is usually the case, Mark's account is more vivid and succinct, with brisk and pointed questions and answers.

The man shows a keenness and vigour of search which surpasses anything so far in the gospel. He runs (few people ran under the hot sun) and kneels (17). For his reference to Jesus as teacher, see the exposition of 1:21-22. He wants eternal life. This way of describing the spiritual goal is more typical of John's gospel than of the synoptics. Here it probably means 'the life of the coming kingdom of God'. Evidently he had kept the law scrupulously, but did not feel that he had yet found the quality of spiritual life that satisfied (19-20). Is it significant that a rich man's (22) construction of the search is to ask what *he can do* to get it? (17).

Verse 18 has puzzled commentators to this day! Matthew obviously had difficulty with it, too, and offers the softest form available, 'Why do you ask me about what is good?' (Mt. 19:17). Mark's account is sharper. '*Why do you call me good? No-one is good—except God alone*' (18). He might be correcting the man for being too obsequious. Or he may be saying something much



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deeper. ‘Do you realize the meaning of ascribing to me what belongs to God only? Do you understand how near the truth you are?’ Jesus knows. Mark knows. By raising the question of the rich man’s knowledge Mark is also asking his reader to decide.

That this is not a game of words becomes plain in what follows. Mark says that *Jesus looked at him and loved him* (21). There is something attractive about his earnestness in keeping the law, and his humble determination to find a conclusion to his search. But the way is not to be his usual success story—‘What can I do to cross this barrier?’ Jesus invites him to do something contrary to the previous direction of his whole life. ‘*Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me*’ (21). If he is to find the childlike way of discipleship set out in verses 13–16, then he must first loosen the grip of that in which he trusted now, namely his wealth. Without that step, he was not even keeping the Ten Commandments (Ex. 20:3–4). For this man it had to be a straight choice—riches or the kingdom. His reaction showed how accurately Jesus had understood him. He wouldn’t give up his wealth, so instead of following Jesus, he went away (22).

Jesus’ reflection on this incident is provided in verses 23–27. How difficult it is to hold on to riches and enter the kingdom, like trying to get a huge camel through a needle’s eye! (23–25). In a society like theirs the disciples find the idea of the kingdom excluding the rich inconceivable, forgetting how often in Israel’s history it was ‘the poor in the land’ who had remained faithful (see Ps. 37 as an example). But if those who know how to succeed in life cannot make it, then who can? (26). The answer is crushingly simple; only God can save (27). That is why the childlike are saved, since they put their trust wholly in him. And it is why the rich often are not, since they are possessed by their possessions, as this young man was (22). But the last word is not gloomy. There is an optimism of grace. God can do what humans cannot.

This particular challenge of grace is applied to the disciples again in verses 28–31. Peter, as ever, offers an explosive, if somewhat boastful contribution (28). To some readers of Mark’s gospel were the costs of discipleship seeming too great? Or were some teaching that discipleship was a triumphalist road? Either way, Peter’s words and Jesus’ reply put the matter in perspective then and now.

Jesus makes no attempt to disguise any of the cost (29). He even reinforces it with a sobering reminder during the optimistic part of his statement—‘*and with them, persecutions*’ (30). But whatever it costs to be a disciple in terms of the self-denial of verse 29 is far outweighed by the gain of belonging to the family of God’s kingdom and all that it involves (30), with the experience of eternal life (for which the rich young man had asked, 17) now and forever.

In that setting, life will be full of surprises (31). One might have seen it as obvious that children could not be part of the kingdom vision. But they are (13–14). It would be clear that a devout law-keeping rich young man who so much wanted to enter the kingdom of God would do so. But he did not (22). It would seem self-evident that the powerful rich, as a group, would be needed. But they are not (23–25). Anyone can see that disciples of Jesus, giving up everything, possess nothing. But they are immensely rich in every area of life (29–30). Truly, the meek do inherit the earth! (Mt. 5:5). By the same token, of course, the Twelve must not begin to elevate themselves as superior disciples through having literally left all behind. ‘*Many who are first will be last, and the last first*’ (31).

a. *Child-like trust and giving everything up*

This whole passage allows for considerable misunderstanding. For example, the commending of the little children (13–17) makes only the single point of childlike trust as the dominant factor in their lives. It does not commend simplistic attitudes like rejection of learning, prohibition of planning, neglect of natural and God-given abilities and high profile activity. It certainly warns against trusting any of these, but not against using them.

The rich young man approaches the same issue from the other end. He could not let go of his wealth, as Jesus guessed and the story makes clear (22). Yet Jesus did not always call rich people to give everything away. (See Lk. 14:25–33, where ‘giving up everything’ is used in the same context as ‘hating’ father, mother, wife, *etc.*) The emphasis is upon commitment to Christ being the prior commitment, before all else. It begins with the discovery that we find salvation (eternal life, a place in the kingdom of God) only by trusting God and not anything we have or can do.

b. *Commitment cannot be forced*

There is a curious juxtaposition of ideas in verses 21 and 22. Jesus loved the young man, yet made no attempt to dissuade him from walking sadly away when he could not or would not take up Jesus’ challenge. Jesus makes no further attempt to persuade him. The conditions had been set: the young man must make up his mind. Our evangelism does well to copy this pattern from our Lord. He neither hectors nor pesters people into the kingdom, nor lowers the levels of commitment required.

c. *Poor and rich*

This passage does not support the contention that the poor are somehow naturally spiritual or people of faith. Nor does it say that the rich are automatically materialistic or sinful. It says that in the matter of salvation those with wealth, and presumably the power that goes with it, are more inclined to trust those things than to give themselves primarily in faith to God. Yet there are many rich saints who are not controlled by their money and who serve their Lord outstandingly. The poor do not automatically believe, and are under many pressures to be more materialistic and greedy than the rich. Yet it cannot be a coincidence that in many places today it is amongst the poor that revival is breaking out and deep new insights into the Christian faith are being discovered. To



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speak of God's 'bias to the poor' as some do, is properly to recognize that it is not God's will in his world for the minority to have most and the majority to have least. For that situation rich Christians, which includes most of us in the West, will be called to account, and we should be doing more about it now than we do.²

Peter and Passion Week

All four Gospels focus on the last week of Jesus' ministry on earth, the final visit to Jerusalem for the Passover. In keeping with Greco-Roman biography, the Gospels put great emphasis on the events surrounding the death of the leading character. They break new ground, however, in that the passion of Jesus is much more than the tragic death of a noteworthy person; it proclaims the bedrock events, the death, burial and resurrection of Christ (cf. 1 Cor 15:1-8), that constitute the good news of salvation.⁹ Curse on a fig tree. On the day after Jesus' entry into Jerusalem, which was fraught with messianic overtones (cf. Zech 9:9-10), Peter witnessed Jesus' curse on a fig tree (Mk 11:12-14) followed, the next day, by his observation and report of its dramatic fulfillment: the tree was "withered away to its roots" (Mk 11:20-24). At first glance, Jesus' curse seems out of character. Why would he curse a fig tree especially when, as Mark tells us, "it was not the season for figs" (Mk 11:13)?¹⁰ Furthermore, Mark seems to imply in the sequel that the key issue is one of faith, in which disciples should boldly request the seemingly impossible (moving mountains into the sea) because God will grant "whatever you ask for in prayer" (Mk 11:24). Two factors help us make sense of this episode. **First, Mark uses a technique called intercalation or the "sandwich story."**¹¹ The cursing of the fig tree (Mk 11:12-14; cf. Mt 21:18-19) and its fulfillment (Mk 11:20-21) frame Jesus' visit to the temple and his driving out the money changers and the sellers of sacrificial animals in the temple precincts (Mk 11:15-19). Most likely, then, the episode of the fig tree bears some direct relationship to what happened on the Temple Mount.

Second, the episode conforms to the long-established prophetic tradition of the symbolic action or acted parable whereby a message is conveyed by performing an action that dramatically visualizes the content. Classic examples include Jeremiah's linen belt (Jer 13 NIV), earthenware jug (Jer 19) and yoke of straps and bars (Jer 27).¹² In similar fashion, the fig tree probably functions as a symbol (cf. Deut 8:8; 1 Kings 4:25; Jer 8:13; 24; Hos 9:10; Mic 4:4).

By cursing the fig tree, Jesus dramatically foretells the fate befalling **the Second Commonwealth and its crown jewel, the Second Temple**. In fact, the prophet Micah's lament over the Judean temple state in the eighth century B.C. almost serves as a template for Jesus' curse: "there is no first-ripe fig for which I hunger. The faithful have disappeared from the land, and there is no one left who is upright" (Mic 7:1-2). Furthermore, Luke includes in his Gospel a parable about a fig tree that implies what Jesus' curse in Mark vividly portrays ("cut it down," Lk 13:6-9). Peter and the early Jerusalem church, following the teaching of Jesus, come to understand that they are the remnant of Israel and give their allegiance to the great descendant of David who is the "righteous Branch" (Jer 23:5-6; 33:15), the "shoot . . . from the stump of Jesse" (Is 11:1), the one who "shall branch out in his place, and . . . build the temple of the LORD" (Zech 6:12). As we will see in 1 Peter, Peter holds that believers in Jesus now constitute "a spiritual house" and "holy priesthood" (1 Pet 2:5). For Peter, the Jerusalem temple, a place that was supposed to be "a house of prayer for all nations" but had been deformed into "a den of robbers" (Mk 11:17 citing Is 56:7 and Jer 7:11) has now been superseded by a new community of faith in which believing prayer accomplishes great things (Mk 11:23-25; cf. 1 Pet 1:17; 4:7; 5:7). Jesus' curse on the fig tree and the subsequent **Olivet Discourse**, to which we next turn, were transformational in the apostle Peter's understanding of God's new people (see 1 Pet 2:9-10). Instruction on the Mount of Olives. Probably on **Wednesday of Passion Week**, Peter, in company with Andrew, James and John, receive private instruction concerning the consummation of the kingdom of God. This teaching is generally designated as the Olivet Discourse, and its occurrence in the triple tradition signals its importance (Mk 13; Mt 24; Lk 21). **On his way back to his host's home in Bethany**, Jesus pauses on the summit of Olivet. He sits down and gazes westward across the Kidron to view the splendid panorama. Before him lay Jerusalem the Golden,

² English, D. (1992). *The message of Mark: the mystery of faith* (pp. 176-179). Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.



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crowned with one of the wonders of the ancient world, the Second Temple. Its glistening, polished marble walls and columns with gilded gold adornment was truly a visual delight.¹³ The rabbis extolled its virtues: “He who has not seen the temple of Herod, has never seen a beautiful building” (b. Sukkah 51b). The four apostles, however, are subdued and stunned. Moments before, as they were making their way out of the temple complex, an unnamed disciple calls Jesus’ attention to the splendor of the buildings. Jesus’ reply is unexpected: “Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone will be left here upon another; all will be thrown down” (Mk 13:2). Now the four privately inquire, “Tell us, when will this be, and what will be the sign that all these things are about to be accomplished?” (Mk 13:4). Jesus responds with his famous discourse outlining the course of this age and his triumphant return in glory.¹⁴ Though differing on specifics, scholars generally agree on the following salient points: Jerusalem is doomed, the Second Temple will be destroyed, and the messianic community will experience violent persecution. A majority of evangelical scholars also hold that the discourse forecasts the eschatological consummation: cosmic upheaval and distress, the unexpected but glorious return of the Son of Man and a gathering of the elect. Not surprisingly, Peter, in both his letters, discusses this core affirmation of Christianity: Jesus Christ will return in glory (1 Pet 1:5, 7, 11, 13; 4:5, 7, 13, 17; 5:4, 10; 2 Pet 1:16, 19; 2:9; 3:1-13), a truth enshrined in the Apostles’ Creed, “From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.” Not without interest is the likely source of this creed in the ancient Roman church.

Peter in the upper room. Reflecting Peter’s leadership role among the Twelve, Jesus assigns Peter and John the task of preparing a place in the city to observe the Passover meal (Lk 22:8-13).¹⁵ This detail is important for understanding Jesus’ later arrest.¹⁶ Peter and John do not know the place where the supper is to be held until after they meet an anonymous man carrying a water jar just inside the city. They are instructed to follow this person to the home of the unnamed host for the supper and there make preparations (Lk 22:9-13). None of the other apostles knows the location until they arrive later with Jesus. This secrecy allows Jesus to spend time with his apostles, instructing and preparing them for what is to follow without fear of arrest or interruption. Luke tells us that Judas had already begun “to look for an opportunity to betray him to them when no crowd was present” (Lk 22:6). What Judas does know, however, is the location where they would all sleep that night, namely, the Garden of Gethsemane (Jn



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18:2). After Judas leaves the upper room (Jn 13:21-30), he goes to the authorities and tells them where they can arrest Jesus when only his disciples are present. John's Gospel significantly augments the Synoptic accounts of the events leading up to the arrest. Especially meaningful for generations of Christians is the so-called Upper Room Discourse of John 13–17. Two episodes in this section feature the apostle Peter. The first is the famous foot-washing incident. In a deeply moving, symbolic action, Jesus assumes the role of a servant and begins washing the feet of each apostle. But when it is Peter's turn, Peter demurs: "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" (Jn 13:6).¹⁷ On being informed that he will understand what it means later (Jn 13:7), he adamantly refuses: "You will never wash my feet" (Jn 13:8).¹⁸ Once again, Peter's distorted concept of the Messiah interferes with his understanding of Jesus' mission. For Peter, it is demeaning for Jesus the Messiah to assume the role of a servant; after all, he is the king of Israel! If there is to be any foot washing, let the apostles wash those of the Master, not vice versa. Jesus' gentle but firm response puts in sharp relief the symbolic meaning of the gesture and its theological significance. Jesus' action speaks of two realities: identification with him and imitation of him. To be the recipient of undeserved grace and mercy is the essence of being a member of the new covenant community. Accordingly, humility is the hallmark of membership and the pattern for mutual relations among family members. "For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you" (Jn 13:15). Self-giving love authenticates those who belong to Jesus: "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (Jn 13:35). Peter did eventually get the point, as a thoughtful reading of his first letter eloquently testifies. In the letter, the voice of one who experienced self-giving love in action appeals to the reader to replicate the pattern (1 Pet 3:8; 4:8-10; 5:1-6). A second moment of high drama involving Peter occurs in the upper room. After the shocking disclosure that one of them would betray Jesus, Simon Peter signaled to "the one whom Jesus loved" and who "was reclining next to him" (Jn 13:23) to ask Jesus who the betrayer was.¹⁹ One may be fairly certain what would have happened had Jesus plainly told Peter who it was (see Jn 18:10). Judas' sudden departure did not arouse suspicion because he was the treasurer and some thought Jesus instructed him either to buy provisions for the feast or make a donation to the poor (Jn 13:29-30). Another unsettling disclosure follows. Jesus informs the apostles that he is leaving them. Simon Peter speaks for all the apostles: "Where are you going?" (Jn 13:36). When told he cannot follow Jesus now but will do so later, Peter inquires: "Lord, why can I not follow you now? I will lay down my life for you" (Jn 13:37). Then the bombshell: "Will you lay down your life for me? Very truly, I tell you, before the cock crows, you will have denied me three times" (Jn 13:38). All four Gospels narrate Peter's denial. Luke, however, adds unique material by informing us that Satan requested permission to test Peter's faithfulness, recalling the book of Job (Job 1:6-12; 2:1-7). Jesus prays that Peter's faith will not fail and then, knowing full well he will momentarily stumble, predicts Peter's full restoration to leadership (Lk 22:31-34). The Synoptics all narrate Peter's vociferous denial that he would ever deny knowing the Lord (Mk 14:29; Mt 26:33; Lk 22:33). In just a few short hours, Peter's emphatic resolve crumbled.

Peter in the Garden of Gethsemane.

During the last week of Jesus' earthly ministry, he daily taught the people and engaged in discourse and debate with the religious leaders. Things were clearly heading for a showdown. During the days leading up to the Passover sacrifice and meal, Jesus stayed with the family of Mary, Martha and Lazarus in the village of Bethany. Bethany is on the eastern slopes of Olivet, out of view from Jerusalem to the west. The religious leaders determined to arrest Jesus and put him to death. However, they had a problem: Jesus was very popular among the thousands of Galilean pilgrims who now flooded the city. Rather than risk a riot by publicly arresting Jesus, they tried to arrest him secretly. Since Jewish tradition specified that Passover night be spent within the environs of greater Jerusalem, and Bethany was beyond these limits, Jesus selects another place to sleep that night.²⁰ The Garden of Gethsemane, just across the Kidron Valley, at the foot of Mount Olivet, had a dense olive grove and cave, providing a safe house within proximity to the Temple Mount. According to the Gospel of John, "Jesus often met there with his disciples" (Jn 18:2). After leaving the upper room, Judas reveals the location of this hideout to the authorities. He not only leads them to the spot but also identifies Jesus for them in the darkness of night by his infamous kiss (Mk 14:44-46). Peter's role in the ensuing events is less than stellar (Mk 14:32-50). Soon after Jesus arrives at the garden with his disciples, he requests the presence of the inner three and withdraws with them for prayer. In deep, inner turmoil, Jesus then withdraws from the three and requests that they watch with him in prayer (Mk 14:33-34). For their part, exhausted and unaware of imminent danger, they fall asleep. In Mark's Gospel, when Jesus returns and finds them asleep, he singles out Peter and reproves him: "Simon, are you asleep? Could you not keep awake one hour? Keep awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Mk 14:37-38). Jesus withdraws once again for prayer. This sequence happens two more times (Mk 14:40-42), anticipating Peter's impending threefold denial. In keeping with Mark's less than exemplary depiction of the



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disciples, he informs his readers: “their eyes were heavy; and they did not know what to say to him” (Mk 14:40). I think we hear an echo of Peter’s failure to stay awake in his admonition to Christians in Asia Minor: “Therefore prepare your minds for action; discipline yourselves. . . . Be serious and discipline yourselves for the sake of your prayers. . . . Discipline yourselves, keep alert” (1 Pet 1:13; 4:7; 5:8). Once Peter realizes what is happening, he springs into action. Wielding a sword—there were only two swords among the entire group and, not surprisingly, he has one of them (Lk 22:38)—Peter lops off the right ear of one of the high priest’s servants, a man named Malchus (Jn 18:10). But instead of a melee breaking out, the Master squelches all resistance by a stern rebuke (“No more of this!” [Lk 22:51; cf. Mt 26:52]). According to John’s Gospel, the rebuke was directed at Peter: “Put your sword back into its sheath. Am I not to drink the cup that the Father has given me?” (Jn 18:11). In keeping with what we have already seen, Peter has no idea what that cup entails. A suffering Messiah is not on his radar. Then, remarkably, Jesus proceeds to heal the ear of Malchus (Lk 22:51). Once the apostles realize Jesus is not going to resist, they escape into the night. This episode becomes paradigmatic (serving as a model) for Peter’s later understanding of how Christians should react to betrayal, persecution and opposition. What a different approach permeates Peter’s parenthesis (exhortation) in his letter to believers under fire than the one he himself displayed in the Garden of Gethsemane (1 Pet 2:21-23; 3:13-17; 4:1, 12-19). Peter in the courtyard of the high priest. Peter and an unnamed disciple, whom I take to be John, double back and follow Jesus and his captors from afar to the home of the high priest (Mk 14:54; Jn 18:15-16). Throughout the early morning hours, however, as the reality of what is happening sinks in, Peter experiences a meltdown while sitting around a fire with the servants of the high priest. He vehemently denies even knowing Jesus. Luke poignantly portrays what happens after the third, decisive denial: “The Lord turned and looked at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said to him, ‘Before the cock crows today, you will deny me three times.’ And he went out and wept bitterly” (Lk 22:61-62).²¹ Peter’s denial can never be taken back. It happened, and he had to live with the painful memory. But rather than letting his failure cripple him spiritually and emotionally, he used it as a means of building up the flock of God (cf. Paul in 1 Tim 1:12-16). He becomes a living illustration of forgiveness and a second chance. He possesses a degree of compassion and understanding for wavering believers that others, sometimes rather self-righteously, are incapable of showing. We hear a tenderness in Peter’s first epistle that springs out of a bitterly disappointing failure in his own life (1 Pet 5:1-11). Jesus’ prayer for Peter was wonderfully answered: “I have prayed for you that your own faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned back, strengthen your brothers” (Lk 22:32). These words prepare Peter for the missionary role he performs in volume two of Dr. Luke’s account of Christian beginnings.²² Believers in Rome and “the exiles of the Dispersion” (1 Pet 1:1) were greatly encouraged and comforted by the story of the big fisherman’s failure and subsequent forgiveness. Jesus appears to Simon on the first day of the week. We do not know where Peter went after his denial (Lk 22:62). He is not mentioned as being present at the cross, in contrast to “the beloved disciple” (Jn 19:26-27). Though perhaps he was among the “great number of people” who followed Jesus to the cross, more likely, he stayed away, especially in light of his overwhelming sense of failure at having denied the Lord.²³ All four Gospels tell us that the women who discovered the empty tomb on the first day of the week and heard the angelic announcement about Jesus’ resurrection ran and informed “the eleven and . . . all the rest” (Mk 16:1-8 [the shorter ending of Mark]; Mt 28:8; Lk 24:9; Jn 20:2). Peter was among this group and, in company with “the other disciple” (Jn 20:3), ran to the tomb to see for himself (Lk 24:12; Jn 20:3-10). It may be that the home of John Mark’s mother served as a meeting place for the apostles. This may also have been the residence having a guest room, an upper room, in which the Last Supper was observed and served as a regular meeting place (Acts 1:6, 13-14).²⁴ More important, however, is the early tradition that Jesus appeared to Peter and that this appearance was the first to an apostle (1 Cor 15:5). The gospel tradition is also quite clear that Jesus first appeared to women disciples, Mary Magdalene being the first believer to see the risen Lord (Mk 16:9 [the longer ending of Mark]; Mt 28:8; Jn 20:14-18). It has often been observed how remarkable this fact is given the generally low credibility accorded women as witnesses in Second Temple Judaism.²⁵ This datum argues for the historicity of the resurrection accounts in that one would hardly suppose the disciples



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invented the story.²⁶ The fact that the Lord appeared to Peter before any of the rest of the apostles seems to have a twofold significance: it makes clear that Peter was truly forgiven for his denial (“But go, tell his disciples and Peter” [Mk 16:7]; “The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!” [Lk 24:34, italics added]), and it anticipates his future role as leader of the Jesus movement in which he will “feed my sheep” (Jn 21:15-19). A mystery surrounds Jesus’ appearance to Peter; we have no narrative account of the circumstances. According to Luke’s Gospel, on the first day of the week, Jesus joins two disciples, one named Cleopas (Lk 24:18), on the road to Emmaus and spends a considerable part of the afternoon with them (Lk 24:29). After recognizing Jesus, they hasten back to Jerusalem to inform the disciples. On their arrival, however, the disciples who remained in Jerusalem confirm this report with their own joyous announcement: “The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!” (Lk 24:34). But if Jesus was at Emmaus, how could he have appeared to Simon? Surely, the anonymous disciple was not Simon, or Luke would have said so. Raymond Brown conjectures that this is a “stray item of kerygmatic proclamation that Luke has fitted awkwardly into his condensed Gospel sequence.”²⁷ But given that several morning hours were available for such an encounter, I hardly see how this counts as a problem. Jesus’ appearance to Simon was probably not long after his appearance to Mary Magdalene in the garden (Jn 20:11-18). In Jerusalem, the sun rises before 6:00 a.m. in the month of Nisan, and the women set out for the tomb before sunrise (Jn 20:1; Mk 16:2).²⁸ The distance from the upper room to the holy sepulchre is only about half a mile.²⁹ If we allow time for them to walk to the site and then return (hurriedly) to the disciples with their news and have Peter and John run to the tomb and then return, this could all have transpired before 8:00 a.m. This would allow for a period of several hours before Jesus appears at Emmaus (Lk 24:29). Since Jesus is now in his glorified state, distance is no longer a problem!

Jesus’ Appearance and Commission to Simon

The final Gospel episode about Simon occurs back in Galilee, along the lake where his initial call took place (Jn 21). In this respect, his story comes full circle. But as it turns out, this is the beginning of a new phase—in his life as well as that of the Jesus movement. So, what happened on that momentous occasion? Seven disciples (Peter, Thomas, Nathanael, James, John and two unnamed disciples) are together at the Sea of Tiberias (Jn 21:1). Most likely they are at Capernaum, where Peter and the sons of Zebedee lived. Perhaps Andrew is one of the unnamed disciples (Jn 1:40-41, 44; 6:8; 12:22). Peter suggests they all go fishing. What should we make of this? Many preachers and commentators chastise Peter and the others for slipping back into their old ways and forgetting their commission to preach the gospel. But this goes beyond what can fairly be inferred. Mark and Matthew make it clear that soon after his resurrection, Jesus instructed the apostles to meet him in Galilee (Mk 16:7; Mt 28:7, 10). After completing the Festival of Unleavened Bread in Jerusalem, they return to Galilee in anticipation of meeting up with Jesus. This, according to Matthew, is precisely what happened (Mt 28:16, 17). It seems reasonable to assume that before the entire group assembled, there was some down time. What is more natural for these men than going back out on the lake and doing what they have done since their youth? Furthermore, there may have been some pressing financial needs in their families that a good catch could alleviate. As it turns out, they haul in a windfall, assisting them in the transition to full-time ministry.³⁰ At first, however, the fish are not biting. In fact, the entire night nets nothing. As morning light dawns, Jesus suddenly appears along the beach and calls out to the weary fishermen: “Children, you have no fish, have you?” To their dejected report, Jesus orders them to let down their nets on the right side of the boat. When they do so, their nets suddenly ensnare a huge school of fish, including 153 large ones to be exact (Jn 21:11).³¹ Memories are activated; the story has come full circle (cf. Lk 5:1-11); the “disciple whom Jesus loved” told Peter, “It is the Lord!” (Jn 21:7).³² Peter, who had been working naked, put on his loincloth and swam to shore. The others row the boat in, dragging the net behind. When they all get ashore, Jesus has a fish breakfast, cooked over coals, already prepared for them. Jesus “took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish” (Jn 21:13). Once again, memories are jogged and the disciples remember the miraculous feeding of the multitudes with five loaves and two fishes (Jn 6:1-14). If there were any lingering doubts about how they will manage in the future, this



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incident vividly reinforces Jesus' earlier assurance: "Do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear . . . your heavenly Father knows that you have need of all these things. But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well" (Mt 6:25, 32-33). What next follows is the climactic moment of the episode. Jesus asks Peter, three times, if he loves him.³³ The thrice-repeated question is not incidental; it is intentional, gently but painfully reminding Peter of his threefold denial. This time Peter does not swear or take an oath; his only recourse is to appeal to Jesus' extraordinary understanding of the human heart: "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you" (Jn 21:17; cf. 1:48; 2:24-25). Each time Peter reaffirms his love for Jesus, Jesus counters by commissioning him: "Feed my lambs" (Jn 21:15), "Tend my sheep" (Jn 21:16), and "Feed my sheep" (Jn 21:17).³⁴ The imagery of shepherd and sheep points to Peter's primary role as pastor of the emerging church. This is a deeply moving moment for Peter. He is forgiven and re-instated as leader. The Master has full confidence in him, and the ensuing history of the early church confirms that confidence was not misplaced. It is no accident that Peter's first epistle employs the same metaphor to remind the elders in the house churches of Asia Minor of their primary responsibility: "I exhort the elders among you to tend the flock of God that is in your charge" (1 Pet 5:1b-2a). There is another aspect of being a shepherd. In the words of Jesus, "the good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep" (Jn 10:11). The last recorded conversation in John's Gospel is somber but inspiring: Peter will eventually follow Jesus in death by crucifixion (Jn 21:18-19). This fulfills Peter's earlier, vehement claim: "Lord . . . I will lay down my life for you" (Jn 13:37; cf. Lk 23:33). Jesus' revelation powerfully shapes Peter's consciousness. He knows in advance that he will imitate his Lord through death on a cross. "I know that my death will come soon, as indeed our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me. And I will make every effort so that after my departure you may be able at any time to recall these things" (2 Pet 1:14-15). Though he lacked the courage the first time he faced this prospect, he will not fail a second time. In the upper room, Peter had asked Jesus, "Lord, where are you going?" To this question, Jesus replied, "Where I am going, you cannot follow me now; but you will follow afterward" (Jn 13:36, italics added).³⁵ No wonder the shadow of the cross falls across Peter's theology. Peter then inquires about the destiny of the beloved disciple. Jesus' response is terse and enigmatic: "If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you? Follow me!" (Jn 21:21-22). An editorial comment implies that a misunderstanding of this saying was already widespread: Jesus did not affirm that the beloved disciple would live until Jesus' glorious return. The point of the saying is that the time of a disciple's death lies entirely in Jesus' hands and prying into such matters should not be a concern. What matters is being a faithful witness and resting in the Lord of life and death. Peter got the point: "Let those suffering in accordance with God's will entrust themselves to a faithful Creator, while continuing to do good" (1 Pet 4:19). This concludes my sketch of Peter's life as reconstructed from the Gospels. The next phase of Peter's life witnesses an extraordinary growth and expansion of the Jesus movement. In fact, under Peter's pastoral oversight, it begins to transform into a universal faith called Christianity.

It is obvious that the three questions parallel Peter's three denials of Jesus the night of the Crucifixion. Yet the repetition seems even more significant when we note that in the Greek two different words for love are used. In asking the first two questions Jesus used *agapao*, the word used in the New Testament to describe God's love for us as expressed in John 3:16. In asking the last question Jesus used *phileo*, a weaker term denoting fondness or friendship rather than total commitment.

2. Peter answered each question, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love you" (John 21:15-17). Significantly, in answering each question Peter used the word *phileo* rather than the much stronger *agapao*. The significance of this choice has been much debated by commentators. Yet two things seem to stand out.

First, Peter is no longer the over-confident man who was so sure that he would never fail his Lord. Peter *had* failed Him, and the experience had shattered Peter's self-assurance. Peter now



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simply could not claim to be able to love Jesus in the total, selfless and committed way that *agapao* requires. Peter did love Christ and professed that love, but he used the weaker word.

Second, when Jesus asked Peter the third time, “Do you love Me?”, Christ shifted to Peter’s term, *phileo*. Jesus accepted what Peter was able to offer at that moment in time, just as Jesus accepts what we are able to give. Later Peter’s life showed that he did love Jesus in the total, selfless sense of *agapao*. Just as our lives will show an increasing commitment to Christ as we grow in Him.

3. After asking each of the three “Do you love Me?” questions and hearing Peter’s answer, Jesus charged Peter with a mission. Peter was to “Feed my lambs” (v. 15), “Tend My sheep” (v. 16), and “Feed my sheep” (v. 17).

Peter’s failure had not disqualified him from leadership. Despite Peter’s failure, Jesus had enough confidence in Peter to trust young believers to his care.

This is an encouraging thing for us to remember, for like Peter we also too often fail our Lord. Such failures reflect our human frailty. Yet if we love Jesus, God will work in our lives and make us fruitful in His service.

Jesus predicts Peter’s end (vv. 18, 19). Jesus told Peter,

Most assuredly I say to you, when you were younger, you girded yourself and walked where you wished; but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands and another will gird you and carry you where you do not wish (v. 18).

John then explained that Jesus was “signifying by what death” Peter would glorify God. Having said this, Jesus told Peter, “Follow Me” (v. 19).

A strong and early tradition tells us that Peter indeed did follow Jesus and stretch out his arms. In his old age, around A.D. 65, Peter was crucified in Rome. This same tradition tells us that Peter asked to be crucified upside down, feeling unworthy to die the same death as His dearly loved Lord.

Peter’s inappropriate question (John 21:20–25). Peter had been humbled but not changed. He was still the impulsive and direct person he had always been. And when Peter observed John listening to the conversation, Peter blurted out, “But Lord, what about this man?” Peter had learned something about his own calling and his future. Now he wanted to know what Jesus planned for John!

Jesus’ response was a rebuke. “If I will that he remain till I come, what is that to you? You follow me.” These words of Jesus are words that every believer must take to heart. Jesus is Lord. We are to respond to Him as *our* Lord, and seek earnestly to follow Him. We are to search for and discern Christ’s will for us. But God’s will for others is their business, not ours! We are to encourage others to follow Jesus by seeking His will for them. But we are not to play God in another’s life, or seek to make them responsible to us rather than to the Lord.³

In these verses, Peter’s restoration is publicly acknowledged by the Lord.

It has often been pointed out that two different words for **love** are used in these verses. We might paraphrase verse 15 as follows: “**Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these**

³ Richards, L., Pegoda, D., & Gross, P. (2001). *Every teaching of Jesus in the Bible* (pp. 268–269). Nashville: T. Nelson.



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other disciples love Me?” **He said to Him, “Yes, Lord, you know that I am fond of You.”** Peter would no longer boast that he would never forsake the Lord, even if all the other disciples did. He had learned his lesson.

“Feed My lambs,” Jesus said. A very practical way of demonstrating love for Christ is by feeding the young ones in His flock. It is interesting to note that the conversation had changed from fishing to shepherding. The former speaks of the works of evangelism; while the latter suggests teaching and pastoral care.

21:16 For the **second time**, the Lord asked Peter if he loved Him. Peter replied the second time, with genuine distrust of himself, **“You know that I am fond of You.”** This time **He said to him, “Tend My sheep.”** There are lambs and sheep in Christ’s flock, and they need the loving care of one who loves the Shepherd.

21:17 Just as Peter had denied the Lord thrice, so he was given three opportunities to confess Him.

This time, Peter appealed to the fact that Jesus was God and therefore knew **all things**. He said **the third time, “You know that I am fond of You.”** And for the last time, he was told that he could demonstrate this by feeding Christ’s **sheep**. In this passage, the underlying lesson is that love for Christ is the only acceptable motive for serving Him.⁴

EXTRA:

PETER AND RICH YOUNG RULER

Jesus is walking to Jerusalem for His final Passover.

[Luke says the man was a ruler (Lk 18:18), and Matthew adds that the man was young (Mt 19:22).]

Mark 10:17-31

Part 1:

*As He was setting out on a journey, a man ran up, knelt down before Him, and asked Him, “Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” **Why do you call Me good?” Jesus asked him. “No one is good but One – God. You know the commandments:***

Do not murder;

Do not commit adultery;

Do not steal;

Do not bear false witness;

Do not defraud;

Honor your father and mother.

He said to Him, “Teacher, I have kept all these from my youth.”

Then, looking at hi, Jesus love him and said to him, “You lack one thing: Go, sell all you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow Me.” But he was stunned at this demand, and he went away grieving, because he had many possessions.”

- The man shows a keenness and vigor of search which surpasses anything so far in the gospel. He runs (few people ran under the hot sun) and kneels (17).

⁴ MacDonald, W. (1995). *Believer’s Bible Commentary: Old and New Testaments*. (A. Farstad, Ed.) (p. 1571). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.



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- Teacher (The young ruler honored the authority in which Jesus conducted Himself and in how He spoke.). Mark wants to emphasize this.
- Mark wishes us to know that Jesus constantly filled people with a mixture of wonder, awe and fear at what he said and did (1:27; 2:12; 4:41; 5:15, 20, 33, 36, 42; 6:50, 51; 9:6, 15, 32; 10:24, 32 (twice); 11:18; 12:17; 15:5, 44; 16:5 ff., 8).
- Note how Jesus states with such authority verse 27 & the declaration of 29-31
²⁷ Looking at them, Jesus said, "With men it is impossible, but not with God, because all things are possible with God."
- Evidently, he had kept the law scrupulously, but did not feel that he had yet found the quality of spiritual life that satisfied (19–20).
- Note that a rich man's (22) construction of the search is to ask what **he can do** to get it.(17).⁵

Why do you call Me good?" Jesus asked him. "No one is good but One – God.

- Matthew obviously had difficulty with it, too, and offers the softest form available, 'Why do you ask me about what is good?' (Mt. 19:17).
- Mark's account is sharper. '*Why do you call me good? No-one is good—except God alone*' (18).
- Jesus might be correcting the man for being too obsequious/fawning.
- Or... 'Do you realize the meaning of ascribing to me what belongs to God only? Do you understand how near the truth you are?' Jesus knows. Mark knows. **By raising the question of the rich man's knowledge, Mark is also asking his reader to decide.**
- *Jesus looked at him and loved him* (21).
He invites him to do something contrary to the previous direction of his whole life: '*Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me*' (21).
- If he is to find the **childlike way** of discipleship set out in verses 13–16, then he must first loosen the grip of that in which he trusted now, namely his wealth.

Exodus 20:3-4

Do not have other gods besides Me.

⁴ Do not make an idol for yourself, whether in the shape of anything in the heavens above or on the earth below or in the waters under the earth.

- Jesus does not try and hide the cost: *Commitment cannot be forced*
- Jesus loved the young man, yet made no attempt to dissuade him from walking away.

Do possessions hinder, hamper, obstruct, complicate trust?

- The first section (17–27) focuses on financial wealth.
- After that it extends (28–31) to everything that enriches life, with loving relationships as a particular emphasis (29).

Part 2:

⁵ English, D. (1992). *The message of Mark: the mystery of faith* (p. 53). Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.



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(23) Jesus, looked around and said to His disciples, “How hard it is for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!” But the disciples were astonished at His words. Again, Jesus said to them, “Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God.” So they were even more astonished, saying to one another, “Then who can be saved?”

*(27) Looking at them, Jesus said, “With men it is impossible, but not with God, because all things are possible with God.” Peter began to tell Him, “Look, we have left everything and followed You.” “I assure you,” Jesus said, **“there is no one who has left house, brothers or sisters, mother or father, children, or fields because of Me and the gospel, who will not receive 100 times more, now at this time – houses, brothers, sister, mothers and children and fields with persecutions – and eternal life in the age to come. But many who are first will be last, and the last first.***

Riches VS Kingdom

Only God can save...your devotion is good and being wealthy means nothing, neither earn your salvation. Childlike Faith.

- Redefining their cultural values. What makes you so valuable that God will.....
- What does this teach Peter?

Mark 10:13-16 Blessing the Children

¹³ Some people were bringing little children to Him so He might touch them, but His disciples rebuked them. ¹⁴ When Jesus saw it, He was indignant and said to them, “Let the little children come to Me. Don’t stop them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. ¹⁵ I assure you: Whoever does not welcome the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.” ¹⁶ After taking them in His arms, He laid His hands on them and blessed them.

- Um, apparently the lesson of the Rich Young Ruler had not set in yet.
- Was it happenstance that this conversation happened on the way to the final Passover?
- This teaching runs counter to the view that material abundance was a sign of divine blessing and approval on one’s life. a.k.a. Prosperity gospel message.
- The oddity of the blessings here on earth including persecutions (VS30)
- What does this teach Peter?

[Joy and blessing can co-exist with suffering is a major theme in Peter’s first letter]

1 Peter 1:6

You rejoice in this, though now for a short time you have had to struggle in various trials

1:8

You love Him, though you have not seen Him. And though not seeing Him now, you believe in Him and rejoice with inexpressible and glorious joy,

2:9

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for His possession, so that you may proclaim the praises of the One who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.

4:13



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Instead, rejoice as you share in the sufferings of the Messiah, so that you may also rejoice with great joy at the revelation of His glory.

5:10

Now the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ Jesus, will personally restore, establish, strengthen, and support you after you have suffered a little.