

**The Gospel of the New Beginning**  
**Peter's Life of New Beginnings**  
**Mark 14:66-72**  
**Lessons Peter Forgot that**  
**We Must Not Forget**

The Gospel by Mark ends with a reminder of what Jesus left us to do for him here on earth.

His parting request is known as the Great Commission; and it appears here in the Gospel by Mark 16: 15, let's start there this morning.

Simply stated Jesus says, "Go everywhere and preach the Gospel to everyone!"

The Gospel is all about salvation; salvation through Christ's redemption, substitutionary sacrifice, and forgiveness; and this salvation is also described as a new birth, or being born again—and that means an incredible new beginning. So the Gospel gives to all who come to Christ, a new beginning. That is...

### **GOD'S GREAT GOSPEL OF LOVE**

We are to go into all the world a proclaim a God so loving the world lost in sin, that He gave His Son to die for sinners. The Gospel is about God commending His love towards us in that while we were sinning—Christ died for us. So God loves lost sinners enough to offer His Son to die in their place.

And that love is not only how God looked upon us when we were lost, it is also how He continues to look at us after we are saved; as believers His same love offers to us all a new beginning, over and over in Christ.

On the pages of the Gospel by Mark, we hear the voice of Peter. Church History is almost unanimous in the affirmation that Mark sat next to the aged Peter and captured his words as the Holy Spirit breathed out through him this flawless portrait of Jesus Christ.

One of the greatest examples of God's grace, loving us even when we sin and fail Him is found in Peter's life.

We have already learned how God gave Mark a second chance; but Peter is an even greater witness to the new beginnings that Christ offers, because...

## PETER DENIED JESUS

One of the amazing aspects of Peter's life is his recovery by God's grace from one of the most public failures, and one of the deepest personal embarrassments of all time.

Peter is forever on record for denying that he even knew Jesus not once, not twice—but three times.

Peter's testimony gives us an entire theology of forgiveness and restoration—which is what I call the Gospel of the New Beginning; and the Gospel by Mark is the record of the impact of Christ's Gospel of the New Beginning.

Peter is a great hero for any believer who has ever failed—and that should include all of us here this morning!

Peter is the premier example in God's Word about hope; hope for a new start, hope for complete forgiveness, hope in the God of the second chance.

Please look with me at Peter's DENIALS OF Jesus in Mark 14:66-72. Stand with me as we read God's Word.

*Mark 14:66-72 Now as Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant girls of the high priest came. 67 And when she saw Peter warming himself, she looked at him and said, "You also were with Jesus of Nazareth." 68 But he **denied it**, saying, "I neither know nor understand what you are saying." And he went out on the porch, and a rooster crowed. 69 And the servant girl saw him again, and began to say to those who stood by, "This is one of them." 70 But **he denied it again**. And a little later those who stood by said to Peter again, "Surely you are one of them; for you are a Galilean, and your speech shows it." 71 **Then he began to curse and swear, "I do not know this Man of whom you speak!"** 72 A second time the rooster crowed. Then Peter called to mind the word that Jesus had said to him, "Before the rooster crows twice, you will deny Me three times." **And when he thought about it, he wept.***

Pray

For most of us a failure that big, an event that public, would be the end. It was a scandal of epic proportions and it must have echoes around Jerusalem. Peter, the lead

representative of Christ was a washout and a quitter. He melted in the face of only the threat of servant girls.

That is why Peter is the best person possible to show us the immensity of the life changing power Jesus demonstrates in the Gospel by Mark. Peter is tracing for us the Gospel of the new beginning—from personal experience. His life is declaring that he knows what he is talking about. This is not theoretical, it is real. Peter knew it and wants us to know it too.

Next to Jesus Christ, the most mentioned and well known New Testament person is Peter. But Peter, when found by Jesus on the shores of Galilee, had all the marks of a bully. This was part of ...

## **PETER'S ROUGH START**

When Jesus calls Peter along the shores of the Sea of Galilee in Mark 1:16-20, Peter could easily be observed as loud, brash, direct, and hard to intimidate. He was probably strong and big. As a businessman he was very good at what he did, and appeared successful. Those around him looked upon him as a natural leader who drew people's loyalty. But from Christ's perspective this man he chose was also selfish, unclean, outspoken and stubborn; all that combined to make a bully.

But Jesus changed Peter. As we read the chapters that capture Christ's ministry with the disciples we see that once Jesus began to teach Peter, and whenever Peter was in Christ's Presence, *he was different*. Jesus transformed his life, and as a result, Peter was to go out proclaiming that life transforming message.

Just think of what Peter learned by being with Christ for those three years.

Peter had walked with Jesus everyday, continuously exposed to the wonders of God in a human body. Imagine being with Jesus who never lost His temper, was always righteously indignant over things that took glory from God; who never cared about Himself, but instead gave Himself to everybody else; who was totally consumed with helping others, even to the point of fatigue; who loved everyone impartially; who possessed such power that He could raise the dead, heal any sickness, give sight to the blind, and hearing to the deaf.

That was Peter's personal training by Jesus.

But sometimes in weakness, forgetting about Christ's Presence, Peter would go back to what he was like before. Those moments are also in the Gospel record. When Peter was given awesome spiritual responsibility, all that strong personality added to his big influence over others as a leader—produced a very dangerous combination.

After three years of personal one-on-one training in Christ's presence, after all the absolute confirmations of Christ's power—Peter, the leader of the Twelve **denies that he ever even knew Jesus**. He becomes a complete failure. As we read earlier, after Gethsemane an unprepared Peter faces temptation and fails. That night becomes...

## **PETER'S DARKEST HOUR**

It is so wonderful to see what Jesus taught Peter in the darkest hour of his life. And if there are ever dark clouds in the days of our lives—we can remember like Peter remembered and like Peter have HOPE for a new beginning!

Peter's denials came after one of the most precious evenings anyone could have spent with Jesus. That is often when all of us face temptations, after great events in our lives. Often we are not even aware that we are so dangerously close to disaster. That is what was going on with Peter. Here was what happened on that incredible night.

First, to have had Jesus Himself wash your feet must have been beyond words. Peter felt so unworthy as he looked down at Christ, girded in the towel of a slave washing his feet. As Peter sat there not knowing what to do and blurting out, "You shall never wash my feet" and then immediately after with a smitten heart saying, "Wash all of me!" Peter looked into the eyes of Jesus filled with love, forgiveness and sorrow (John 13:1-30).

After this riveting experience, and the quick departure of Judas, Peter was able to witness the Last Supper. Jesus added a whole new dimension to the Passover meal; Jesus holding the bread and cup and pointing to His coming sacrifice must have been a profoundly life impacting memory.

After all that heart warning and soul stirring worship, Jesus teaches them about Heaven (14:1-11), then teaches them about prayer (14:12-14), then promises the coming Holy Spirit (14:15-30); and then we find in John 14:31 that they left the Upper Room.

*John 14:31 "But that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father gave Me commandment, so I do. Arise, let us go from here.*

Mark records that as they started on the walk after Passover, they were singing Psalms (Mark 14:26). That night was beyond description. Think of leaving a communion service with Jesus the Lord of Glory, leading the disciples in song!

Now the Eleven walk with Jesus in the late night darkness illumined by the full moon of Passover, to the Garden of Gethsemane. Along the way Jesus gives His final training sessions known to us as John 15-17, these words were Christ's legacy, His final earthly gift of teaching them before the crucifixion. It is Luke that picks up the fullest account of what happens next. Let's start in Luke 22:39.

*Luke 22:39 Coming out, He went to the Mount of Olives, as He was accustomed,*

*and His disciples also followed Him.*

Jesus and His disciples walk to a familiar place, Gethsemane, Christ's quiet place of prayer. They arrive at the place Jesus had found to be His place—the place of refuge and the place of strength as He ministered under such pressure.

It should challenge us to pray when we see that at the most trying of times—Jesus increased His prayer times.

Instead of pressures driving Jesus away from prayer pressures only drove Him even closer to His Father through prayer.

And that need for prayer is what drew Jesus to a place called...

## **GETHSEMANE**

Gethsemane was probably part of a small, walled garden that may have belonged to a wealthy follower of Christ's. To this spot Jesus often resorted. It was most likely near a place where olives were pressed, much like the Cave of Gethsemane that many scholars believe to be an olive pressing operation from the time of Christ.

And from Gethsemane Jesus was led after his arrest, to the home of Caiaphas<sup>1</sup>.

Look at verse 54. It is here that we see what happens when Christ's warnings are not heeded. Peter in his two Epistles states that his goal was to remind God's people, and stir up their memories. We do not constantly need new truths as much as we need to remember to consistently practice the old truths we have already learned.

That is what we need to be reminded of; they are...

## **LESSONS PETER FORGOT**

Luke carefully records the events in the courtyard of Caiaphas' house. It was there that Peter waited for word about Jesus. It was also there in that place that Peter forgot what he had been taught by Jesus. He forgot the old truths, he failed to practice them, and he failed miserably. Instead of not entering temptation, Peter was tempted and gave in and betrayed Christ three times before the cock crowed.

But the record of what happened to Peter is part of the profit of Scriptures. From Peter's failure we can observe and glean doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness.

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<sup>1</sup> Price, Randall, *The Stones Cry Out*. Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House Publishers, 1997, pp. 305-308. One of the most prominent figures in all the Gospel accounts that describe Jesus final week of conflict in the Holy City is the high priest Caiaphas. Caiaphas, who served as the leader of the Sanhedrin from A.D. 18-36, is known in the Gospel accounts as the one who prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation (John 18:14).

These are lessons we can learn from Peter about how we all need to heed and apply God's Word this morning.

Peter first forgot the lesson that...

## 1. JESUS KNOWS WHAT IS GOING TO HAPPEN IN EACH DAY OF MY LIFE.

*Luke 22: 31-34 And the Lord said, "Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat. 32 "But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren." 33 But he said to Him, "Lord, I am ready to go with You, both to prison and to death." 34 Then He said, "I tell you, Peter, the rooster shall not crow this day before you will deny three times that you know Me."*

If Peter would have just believed the Lord he would not have denied the Lord. But Jesus knew ahead of time Peter's lack of faith and his old ways of self-confidence so He warns him.

When we read the Bible we should read it like we believed that Jesus knows what is going to happen in each day of my life. When He says temptations will come, but He will always make a way of escape—we must believe Him and escape.

When He says that Satan prowls around and devours those who don't resist the Devil—we must believe Him and resist (I Peter 5:8-9). Since Jesus knows every day, and every need of our lives we must look upon His Word as what we can't live without (Matthew 4:4).

So Jesus knows what is going to happen in every day of my life.

Peter secondly failed because he forgot that...

## 2. JESUS WANTS US TO WATCH AND PRAY.

*Luke 22: 40-46 When He came to the place, He said to them, "**Pray that you may not enter into temptation.**" 41 And He was withdrawn from them about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and prayed, 42 saying, "Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done." 43 Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him. 44 And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground. 45 When He rose up from prayer, and had come to His disciples, He found them sleeping from sorrow. 46 Then He said to them, "Why do you sleep? **Rise and pray, lest you enter into temptation.**"*

Sadly, it was in a garden of olive trees that Jesus prayed, and in a place like the

nearby cave most likely is where Christ's disciples slept.

Mark records an even clearer call by Christ in Mark 14:38

*"Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."*

But instead of staying up with Jesus, watching and praying with Him, they were tired and had had such a incredible time at the feast, the wonders of the foot washing, the mystery of the communion service, and then those sorrowful fears from Christ's words about His death, and then that long walk singing and hearing Him teach—they were ready to sleep and forget all their problems.

Temptations often come when we are not watching, when we are not on guard. So the story continues, Christ is arrested and Peter isn't careful. He forgot that Jesus had warned him clearly about not "entering into temptation". Jesus said don't go towards temptations, don't enter places where you are tempted to do wrong.

So Jesus wants us to watch and pray.

Peter disobeyed and didn't remember that...

### 3. JESUS HAS WARNED US TO FLEE TEMPTATIONS.

*Luke 22:54-61 Having arrested Him, they led Him and brought Him into the high priest's house. But **Peter followed at a distance**.<sup>55</sup> Now when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the courtyard and sat down together, **Peter sat among them**.<sup>56</sup> And a certain servant girl, seeing him as he sat by the fire, looked intently at him and said, "This man was also with Him."<sup>57</sup> But he denied Him, saying, "Woman, I do not know Him."<sup>58</sup> And **after a little while** another saw him and said, "You also are of them." But Peter said, "Man, I am not!"<sup>59</sup> **Then after about an hour had passed**, another confidently affirmed, saying, "Surely this fellow also was with Him, for he is a Galilean."*

God has always told us what to do with temptations—FLEE! There is no person strong enough to trifle and only sample sin by playing with temptation. Beware, heed, and flee!

*2 Timothy 2:22 **Flee also** youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.*

*Psalm 1:1-3 Blessed is the man Who **walks not** in the counsel of the ungodly, **Nor stands** in the path of sinners, **Nor sits** in the seat of the scornful; 2 **But his delight is** [what he walks with, stands with, and sits with] *in the law of the Lord, And in His law he meditates day and night.* 3 *He shall be like a tree Planted by the**

*rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper.*

*1 Corinthians 10:13 No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but **God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.***

So Jesus knows what will happen each day of our lives, He asks us to watch and pray, and He has warned us to flee temptations and not stay around and try to overcome them on our own.