

Bible Text: Luke 22:61
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...chapter 22 and as you turn there I just want to encourage those ladies in the congregation who are engaging in the meal provision ministry. I say that is a great ministry. If that is not a ministry you have taken part in I encourage you to do so as you take time to make that dinner not only for your own family, but for a family, a needy family in the congregation. God will bless you and remember that every glass of cold water offered in the Savior's name is a work of grace even done unto him. So keep that in mind and do seek to help out those who are in need at this special time.

Luke's gospel chapter 22. We will begin our reading this morning at verse number 54 and we will read to the end of verse number 62.

Then took they him, and led him, and brought him into the high priest's house. And Peter followed afar off. And when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the hall, and were set down together, Peter sat down among them. But a certain maid beheld him as he sat by the fire, and earnestly looked upon him, and said, This man was also with him.

And he denied him, saying, Woman, I know him not.

And after a little while another saw him, and said, Thou art also of them.

And Peter said, Man, I am not.

And about the space of one hour after another confidently affirmed, saying, Of a truth this fellow also was with him: for he is a Galilaean.

And Peter said, Man, I know not what thou sayest. And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew. And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And Peter went out, and wept bitterly.¹

¹ Luke 22:54-62.

Amen.

May God bless the reading of his Word this morning.

With our Bibles open at Luke chapter 22 let's pray and ask for the help of the Lord for the preaching of his Word.

Our Father, we do thank thee for the worship service that we have had the privilege of sitting in. We thank thee, Lord, for the assembling together of the saints. We praise thee for that heavenly aspect that we have here even on earth. We know, Lord, that as we sing the praises of the Lamb that is worthy to receive all praise, we are doing that which we will do for all eternity when we sit in the presence of the King of kings and the Lord of lords. And, our Father, we rejoice that thou hast given us this day in the week to come together to sing the praise of the Lord and to sit at his feet. We ask this morning that each one of us will have the heart of Mary who without any distraction sat at the Lord's feet and heard his every word. We ask, oh God, that not only would we be found sitting at thy feet, that we will become submissive to thy Word and that which we hear. We ask this morning, Lord, that all of us will not be—as it would be so easy for us to be—hearers of the Word and not doers. But we pray that the Spirit of God will work in our souls deeply, profoundly and make us a people who truly live even by the profession of faith that we make. Oh God, we need thee this morning to speak a word in season to our hearts. We cannot escape or we cannot go 14 days without hearing from thee, Lord. We need to hear from thee every sabbath day. And so, therefore, we plead with thee in the name of thy blessed Son. Speak to the body of Christ this morning in a blessed way. Lord, let us see thee. Let us understand afresh all that is included in thy saving work. And we pray that in the midst of this meeting today that the Spirit of God will come in a mighty way and take up the simple Word of truth and apply it to every heart with great power and with great vigor and, oh Lord, that we might leave here this morning as a people who have met with our God. We thank thee, Lord, for thy mercy thus far and we pray now for the preaching and the hearing of the Word of God. [?] give us stilled and settled hearts. Lord, help us again to understand what this truth means in our day and age and help us, Lord, to remove the principles that are contained in this book and to make application of them in our day so that this Word lives and that we live... leave this place as a people who recognize that this book, though it be many years in age, is yet living and it is as applicable today as it was in the day in which it was written. So bless our time together this morning we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

Scarcely is there a sadder account in all of Scripture than the apostle Peter's denial of his Lord. Peter fell terribly. Not only did he deny his master, but he did it repeatedly. He did it with oaths and he denied him in his presence even while his master was being smitten and falsely charged.

He denied him though he was himself an apostle. He denied him though he declared just a short time before that if all men should forsake him yet he himself would never be offended.

It is a sad, sad account here of the apostle Peter. And yet, you know, the fall of Peter teaches us so many things. We learn here how that small and gradual sins are the steps by which men may go down into great sins. Like Solomon, Peter's fall was slow and it was gradual. Like a cancer, it backsliding often begins slowly and it advances imperceptibly. A little sin here, a little attitude there, a little relaxing of the standards perhaps, a little self justifying, a little commission, a little omission where we have the blessed steps of Paul here before us outlined we are helped to see that backsliding begins just in small and gradual measures. And we must, therefore, take great note of how he fell so that we do not do the same things ourselves.

The first step, you know, here was proud confidence. He says that if every man would deny Christ, yet I will never do it, Lord.

Friends, we know that to have such an attitude is a perfect display that we have no understanding of the complete depravity of man's nature. We all are very susceptible and no more so than when we think that we ourselves will never fall.

The second step was a neglect of prayer. Do you remember? His master had told him to pray lest he should enter into temptation. And yet Peter gave way to drowsiness and was found fast asleep. Again, that would be the second step to full backsliding. We begin to... we are not seeing our need. We do... we don't pray then that the Lord would give us the help that we need.

The third step was his vacillating indecision.

You remember when the enemies of Christ first came Peter fought and he cut the ear off of the servant Malchus. And then after that he ran away. Then he turned again and finally it says he followed afar off. So back and forth this man went. He was a man of indecision and you will see that that is another mark of a man who has turned his back upon the Lord.

The fourth step was mingling with bad company. He went there into the high priest's house and he sat among the servants by the fire and he tried to conceal his religion and he was in the presence of that which was of great evil.

The fifth and the last step, indeed the natural consequence of the preceding four, was that he was overwhelmed with fear when suddenly he was charged as being one of Christ's disciples. The snare was around his neck and at this point he could not escape. He plunged deeper into error than ever.

On three occasions he denied his blessed master three times. The denial was only the disease coming to a head.

Friends, what do we learn? We learn that the Christian who keeps his heart in little

things shall be kept from great falls. And so it behooves us all then to take notice exactly how what we are doing each day of the week.

The second lesson you learn here is how very far a believer may backslide. The whole circumstance of Peter's case must be weighed. He was a chosen apostle of Christ. He had just enjoyed or he had enjoyed greater spiritual privilege than most men in the world.

Look carefully and you will notice that he had just received the Lord's Supper. Not only that, but he had just heard, perhaps, one of the most wonderful sermons ever preached recorded John 14 to 16 from the lips of the eternal Word himself. He had been just been warned of his own danger of denial. And yet it was this man that rightly, outrightly denied the Lord.

And, friends, what lesson can we learn from that? We learn that the best and the highest saint is a poor weak creature even at the best of times.

There is a third lesson to learn from this passage and it is the infinite mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ. You see when Peter denied his master a cock crew. Peter must have heard the crowing otherwise he would not have communicated the fact to the other gospel writers. Though he heard it, though he heard it, he was an example, he is an example of those who have ears, but they do not hear.

Indeed, one might have expected that the warning would have touched his conscience. Surely he had just been warned. And having heard the cock the first time you might have imagined him to have taken note. But he hears nothing and he goes on hardened in his conscience.

Now when the cock crowed a second time after he had committed three denials it might not have awakened him from sleep if a higher instrumentality had not been used, namely a look from the Lord Jesus Christ himself.

You know, the mercy of the Lord was demonstrated by two outward means. You have the crowing here of the rooster and you have a look from the Lord.

Now, these two outward means illustrate well the rare combination of the common place instrument and the divine worker that God employs in awakening men from their spiritual slumber.

Let's face it. That old rooster may have crowed all day with absolutely none effect except that crow was accompanied by the Lord's blessed look.

I read of Mr. Spurgeon. He exhorted a preacher on one occasion. He said, "Crow away, poor bird. If Jesus looks while you are crowing, thou wilt not crow in vain."

But Peter's heart will break.

Therefore my crowing every Sunday will only be as effective if the Lord will turn your eyes to see the gaze from the Lord Jesus Christ himself.

Friends, if you look at this passage you recognize that a look from Christ will change a man forever.

Will you look with me at verse number 60?

And Peter said, Man, I know not what thou sayest. And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew. And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And Peter went out, and wept bitterly.²

Friends, it is hard for us today to understand all that was included in that look. But I say to you that there was the deepest meaning, more than we will ever be able to understand. I was a sermon without a word that Peter will never forget.

I want to leave with you this morning a message entitled simply, "Christ's Look." And my prayer is that the crowing of the preacher this morning may be accompanied by the glance of the living Christ himself.

And two very simple thoughts to leave with you. I want you to notice first of all what this look said. Look carefully again.

"And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter."³

This is the only of the four gospel narratives that contain this piece of information.

When the Lord looked upon Peter that look spoke of many different things. I want you to notice, first of all, that that look spoke of Christ's knowledge. You see, it is readily agreed by most that it is highly unlikely Jesus was close enough to Peter where he actually heard his denial. Remember Peter was said to have been following the Lord as this point afar off.

Jesus was led away, it is supposed, to the upper or the raised end of the great hall. If anyone of Peter's three denials took place within that building it was unlikely that they would be heard because of the great distance. The distance would likely have been so great that word would not have been heard neither would have a look been caught.

It seems more likely that this took place as Christ is led from that great hall through the porch, past the fire and into the archway on this road to further suffering. And as he passes by Peter he glances over and what does that look convey to Peter?

² Luke 22:60-62.

³ Luke 22:61.

“Peter, I heard them all. I heard all your denials. I heard the oaths and I heard your passion.”

You know, it is no wonder that after the resurrection when Jesus came to Peter and he said, “Peter, do you love me?”

Peter said, “Lord, you know, I love you.”

And then again he said, “Peter, do you love me?”

And a third time, “Peter, do you love me?”

And Peter becomes distressed. And what is his exclamation?

“Lord, thou knowest all things.”

And surely as he explains that very thing he is brought back to the day when the Lord Jesus looked into his eyes as one who revealed to him his ability to see all things.

It is no wonder, then, when he stood up in the middle of the apostles after the resurrection and the ascension being the mouth piece of his prayers. His prayer began like this. “Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men...”

I say that look that Peter received had a profound effect upon his soul. That look to Peter of Christ’s ability to know, or spoke of Christ’s ability to know not only his denial, but, indeed, his knowledge of all things.

Now, many times over in the New Testament we are told, John two and 25, “And [the Lord] needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man.”⁴

Do you remember the very first time the Lord met Peter? There his brother brings him and he is introduced to the Messiah for the first time and what does he say?

He brought him to Jesus and when Jesus beheld him he said, “Thou art Simon the Son of Jonah.” I imagine from the first time Peter met Jesus he was impressed with his ability to know before he was told anything. Likewise to another disciple Jesus demonstrated this omniscience.

I remember, “Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee.”⁵

Friends, let us be reminded this morning as we contemplate Christ’s look toward Peter, that was the same ability and, indeed, the same clarity he sees and he knows us all. And

⁴ John 2:25.

⁵ John 1:48.

as Christ looked upon Peter on that occasion, still today he looks from the judgment seat where he does not stand in this instance as a criminal, but he sits as the supreme and omniscient arbiter of our faiths and the judge of all of our actions. And he beholds us, each of us moment by moment. As we go to work he beholds us. As we are in our homes, he beholds us. He beholds at times as he did with Peter our cowardice and our faithlessness. He sees our inconsistencies, those inconsistencies that, in essence, deny the Lord even the Lord that bought us.

Friends, it is an awful thought. It is the reason why men put it out of their minds. That is thought that Hagar had. "Thou God seest me."⁶

Saint and sinner, this morning Jesus Christ sees you. He sees all your denial. He sees all of your hypocrisy. He sees your inconsistency, your folly, your deceit. Indeed, "All things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do."⁷

We think of Jesus looking at Peter on that occasion and reminding him of his ability to know all things. And so let us be mindful of the same thing ourselves.

Let me tell you. When Peter saw that look his soul was flooded with this feeling. The Lord knows exactly what I have just said. And he knows exactly what I have just done.

And if by faith you will get a sight of Christ this morning, you, too, will be conscious that everything you have done in this past week Jesus Christ has an eye to see.

Let me tell you. This is a dark reality that thou God seest me. But I want to let you know that it also has a very bright side. It is true that God has seen your sin and all the aggravations of it. But it is also true that he sees your ruin. And he sees your misery and your sadness and he has compassion for you in it. He sees your sin that he may remove it and make you clean in his sight. And so as the Lord looks upon Peter well might we have imagined him to have taken his life on that occasion, yet the Lord looks because his desire is to save that man from this sin.

And so, child of God, as the Lord and as he gazes upon you this morning and you have become conscious of your sin and it becomes a desperate thing to you, mind yourself all the time that Jesus Christ his main purpose is that he might save his people from their sins.

And so this look tells us, then, first of all, of Christ's knowledge.

I want you to notice this look tells us also something of Christ's condescension.

It might not have been so surprising if the Scripture had recorded the Lord looking upon one of the other disciples, maybe someone else who was gathered in the hall on this occasion. But that it records he looked upon Peter is a most profound fact. The very man

⁶ Genesis 16:13.

⁷ Hebrews 4:13.

from whom we would naturally have turned our faces because of his wretched conduct, this was the man that Jesus Christ looked upon.

How comforting is that for the man or woman who feels themselves never akin to the devil? How condescending for that one who feels less than the least of all saints? How reassuring is this for that one who cries often like Paul, “Oh wretched man that I am”?

It is to such a man that Jesus Christ will look in mercy. It is to that one who can do no more than say, “Lord, have mercy upon me the sinner.”

You see, he whom the heavens adore, before whose sight the whole universe has stretched out as a map, yet passes by all the glories of heaven that he may fix his tender gaze upon a wandering sheep and bring him back in mercy to the fold again. Now what condescension, then, we might understand from the look that Jesus gave to Peter.

I want you to notice furthermore, this look spoke of knowledge. It spoke of condescension, but it also speaks of Christ’s wisdom.

You see, the text says, “And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter.”⁸

On other occasions the Lord had turned and spoken to Peter. Remember the time he was called?

“And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.”⁹

And then on another occasion it was not his voice, but his hand as Peter began to sink into the depths as the Lord would teach him to walk upon the water.

It says, “Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?”¹⁰

But this time the Lord doesn’t use his voice, neither does he use his hand, but the Lord turned and he looked upon Peter. And as we consider that we have to recognize how wisely the Lord chooses the means whereby he will express his affection and still work our good.

Imagine if you he had spoken to Peter. Peter would likely have been assailed by the crowd. The Lord, he employed the most prudent, the most comprehensive and the most useful method of speaking to the heart of his of his erring follower.

And, friends, thank God our Lord never needlessly exposes the faults of his people. And sometimes a word is necessary and other times it is just a simple comprehension of his eyes looking upon us. That is all we need.

⁸ Luke 22:61.

⁹ Matthew 4:19.

¹⁰ Matthew 14:31.

At our church in Toronto I grew up and as a Sunday school superintendent that is still there, Dr. Ruth Slade. And she was a... she is a very composed lady to have 150 children in the Sunday school at any time, many of them coming from the neighboring towns and homes. Some of these children not the best behaved. She never lost her composure. The only thing she had to do was to give them the look and in her eye was everything. And on a few occasions we were the recipients of that look.

I can think of one occasion in the back of the junior choir that I was doing not what I was supposed to be doing with another lad. We were fooling around. She could have stopped the entire proceeding and embarrassed us and said, "Behave yourself."

But, my friends, all we needed from her was just one catch of that look and everything was accomplished.

And the way the Lord Jesus Christ deals with his people. He is tender and gentle and he never needlessly exposes our faults. He just looks.

And I wonder as we say this morning does the Lord Jesus look upon you? Are you conscious this morning that he could expose you for what you are? Do you recognize that my he has every reason to cause all your sins to be brought out of the filthy cupboard? And yet this morning will you catch his eye and recognize that it is a look from Christ will be essential or be suitable to let you see how wise and how gracious he is.

I want you to notice this look said something else for it spoke of Christ's pain.

Peter had not thought that he was hurting his master by his denials. He only thought of saving himself. Never was he aware that each denial was but another pang to the pains of his Lord whom he had loved through his whole denial.

No, mysterious as it is, yet how we have to recognize if our obedience pleases the glorified Christ then our disobedience will cause Jesus Christ even in his glorified nature some amount of grief. When we sin against him, when we forget him, when we pray his love with indifference, I believe we bring further pain upon him. We know that in his earthly ministry there was no bitterer pang inflicted upon him than the one the psalmist prophesied.

Remember of Judas he said, "He ate bread with me and he has lifted his heel against me."

Friends, nothing is more painful than the betrayal of an enemy? No, the betrayal of a close friend. And if that be troublesome to our insensitive, sin corrupted natures, how much more than sensitive is our Lord as the sinless Son of God?

Christ's knowledge of Peter's denials brought pain to his heart.

Child of God, are you aware that your sin causes grief not only to the third person of the trinity, that which we looked at last week, grieving the Spirit, but that your sin also causes grief to the second person of the holy trinity.

I want you to notice not only does this look speak of Christ's pain, but then perhaps more than anything else, it speaks of Christ's love.

Sometimes we marvel when we hear of a man who through great long suffering forgives another man who has transgressed over and over again. And then we admire the love of a mother who cannot forget but she continues to be compassionate toward the son of her womb even if he is a complete reprobate. And then we wonder at the love of the father who goes out after the prodigal son who has left the home.

But, you know, these are all less than the love that beamed from the eye of Christ as it fell upon the denier. The Lord turned and looked upon Peter.

J C Ryle said, "The love of Christ toward his people is a deep well which has no bottom. Never measure it by comparison with any kind of love of man or woman. There is about it a mine of compassion and patience and readiness to forgive sin at whose riches we have but a faint conception."

You see, the look of Christ to Peter in this instance is a reminder to us that the love of Christ cannot be frozen into indifference. It cannot be stirred into the heat of anger. It cannot be provoked to withdrawal. When it is repelled it returns. When it is sinned against it forgives. When it is denied it meekly beams on. It hopeth all things. It beareth all things. And so when Jesus Christ looks upon Peter we are reminded as Isaiah said, "For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the LORD that hath mercy on thee."¹¹

Friends, think what Christ was enduring as he spared that look toward Peter. At that very moment he was being falsely accused and slandered. And if ever there was a time where we might have expected the Lord to have been consumed with his own cares and sorrows, it was here. And yet what he should have been consumed with sorrows he is thinking about poor Peter. And his heart is going after out towards this unworthy disciple.

Friends, thank God Jesus always has an eye for his people. Whether it be in his shame or in his glory, Jesus always has an eye for his people, those for whom he has shed his blood. Though now he reigns in glory, he still looks steadily upon his own and his delight is in them. Thank God his care is over them.

I want you to notice something further here this morning. For this look of Christ toward Peter speaks also of Christ's power.

¹¹ Isaiah 54:10.

This look worked wonders. Notice the next verse.

“And Peter went out, and wept bitterly.”¹²

Friends, I say to you that nothing can penetrate the human soul like a look from the Lord Jesus Christ. Love is the great heart breaker. Unchangeable love is the divine hammer which breaks the rock in pieces. And though a man should have sinned himself into hardness of heart, you know, mighty love can melt that heart in an instant.

See, a man may preach to a peter for 50 years with the most powerful pleading and yet that man may remain unmoved and indifferent. Many a man has enjoyed a good sermon and is less than entirely moved in heart.

Friends, what do we learn here? We learn that the Lord can do more with one look than a preacher can do with any sermon no matter how powerful. One look from Christ will accomplish more than a good book of 150 pages. One look from Christ will accomplish more than the heaviest stroke affliction can bring.

Friends, if there was power about him when he was bound by his accusers, what is his power now that he is able to save to the uttermost them that come to God by him seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them?

You know, the whole process here may not have occupied more than a second of time, one look. And yet in an instant an endless work was done in Peter’s heart. How soon can Jesus change the heart? How quickly can he inflame your soul with love for him again? How quickly will you be saved, your soul eternally kept? If you will but look upon him this morning even as your only hope of salvation, then will you feel those blessed eyes beholding you this morning in your sinful, unsaved condition. Backslider, will you feel those eyes looking down upon you this morning? We may pray together, “Lord, work a miracle with the eye this morning.”

Oh, that by faith you will look into the eyes of Peter’s Lord and see his knowledge, his condescension, his wisdom, his pain, his love and even his power.

These are a few thoughts concerning we imagine that this look said, but I want you to notice secondly this morning, then, what this look did.

What did this look do? Well, notice carefully here.

And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And Peter went out, and wept bitterly.¹³

¹² Luke 22:62.

¹³ Luke 22:61-62.

The first thing that a look from Christ did here was that it took away the veil that hid Peter's sin from himself. He went out and he wept bitterly. You see, he did not think he was doing anything wrong when he denied. He had not thought about anything but saving his own skin. Had he reflected for a moment upon what he was doing, he likely would have done as we often do and found excuses for why he was doing what he was doing.

Then when Christ looked upon him in an instant, in a flash he saw the ugliness of the deed that he himself had done. And, friends, so often you and I are like Peter because we go on in sin and we would continue to go on in sin. If it wasn't for the mercy of God to give us just a glimpse of his eye looking upon us, my friend, when we see as Peter saw we express the Word of Jeremiah. It is an evil and a bitter thing that thou hast forsaken the Lord. It hurt him deeply.

But I want you to notice how his sin was aggravated by so many things. You see, his sin was aggravated now by the appearance of the face of the Son of Man. What a sight it must have been for Peter. By torchlight in the flickering flame of the fire in the court Peter saw a vision which he would never fade from his mind. This was he who had called him, you remember, to be the fisher of men. And this was he who had cast... told him to cast the net over the boat where he caught that great draught of fishes. This was he who had made Peter to walk on the water. This was he whom Peter had been with and had seen upon the Mount of Transfiguration.

Peter look at Jesus now. Already his whole countenance was a vision of grief. Never had Peter seen the Lord's face look like it looked now.

And, friends, when Peter looked into the eyes of his Lord, his heart was broken into a thousand pieces. It was grief that he should have been so false to such a friend.

Child of God, backslider, you are sinning today against your best friend. There is none has been so good to you, so kind to you, so blessed to you, so forgiving and long suffering. And yet as you look at those eyes, even as the blood would strain down from the bloody sweat the night before, friend, are you not humbled to think as David had to admit, "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned."¹⁴

Friends, do we understand that sin is against God, that every misdemeanor is an offense against the living Christ.

They say Peter's sin was aggravated by the appearance of his Lord. I want you to think further that his sin was aggravated further because of his privilege. I imagine that even as he looked into the eyes of Jesus in an instant he was overcome with, perhaps a multitude of thoughts. Maybe he remembered the first time he had laid his eyes upon Christ. Maybe he remembered all of the confidences that the Lord had given to him. Did he remember his wife's mother and the healing that the Lord had given to her? How he

¹⁴ Psalm 51:4.

himself had been cared for and educated, how he had been honored and distinguished? And all of those things flood his mind as he looks now into the eyes of the loving Christ.

Friends, do we not have those things today that we are mindful of as we think of our privilege? Think of how the Lord has blessed you. Think of how he has blessed your home. Think of all the mercies that he has poured out upon your family, how he has provided for your every need.

I say today we need to look as Peter did to the eyes of Christ because the moment we do the veil that hides our sin from us will be taken from us.

You see, it is sin that blinds our consciences.

One man described it like this. He said, “You cannot hear the shouts of men on the bank warning you of the danger when you are in the middle of the rapids.” And so our sin deafens us to the still small voice of conscience. Thank God that nothing so awakens the conscience like the eyes of Christ.

Imagine had Jesus Christ been with Peter the whole way through the ordeal. I imagine that the denial would never have happened. Likewise, we must all take our thoughts and our actions and our words into the presence of Christ and immediately his presence will constantly awaken and enlighten our understanding. And if we will live then in the constant gaze we will be better prepared to recognize the ugliness of our sin.

What was Peter’s problem? The problem is described. It says he followed afar off.

Say, child of God, are you following the Lord afar off? If you are walking at a distance from the Lord don’t be surprised when you begin to entertain things into your life that if you had the eyes of Christ consciously upon you you would see it as the most ugliest hideous thing.

Friends, we need to keep those eyes upon us and cultivate the reality of it even as we live our life and speak our every word and conduct our every action.

I want you not only to take the veil away from Peter, but it melted the deniers heart into sorrow.

“Peter went out, and he wept bitterly.”¹⁵

The word “bitterly” literally is “audibly and bitterly.” And so like this is the inseparable companion of true repentance. Here lies the distinction between repentance unto salvation and unavailing remorse.

Many a man has been awakened to see his sin and yet he has never sorrowed over it. Peter demonstrates in his passage what Paul called godly sorrow. There is nothing that

¹⁵ Luke22:62.

brings godly sorrow so surely as a glimpse of Christ's love. And there is nothing that reveals that love so certainly as that look. You see, you may hammer a man's heart with the law. You may hammer his heart with principle. You may hammer his heart with moral duty and the rest of it and you may get him to feel that he is a poor creature. But unless the sunshine of Christ's love shines down upon him, there will be no melting and if there is no melting there will be no permanent victory over sin.

A man like David must be broken down into that penitential mood before he will secure victory over sin.

Friend, do you grieve over your sin this morning? The most effective way to get the victory over sin is to see sin as Christ would have you see it and concentrate then his eye upon you and his presence around you.

Doing that you will see and when you see your sin, your heart will be broken.

I want you to notice that the look did something else. It changed his lifestyle.

“And Peter went out, and wept bitterly.”¹⁶

Only a small piece of information, but what does it tell us? It tells us that he had to leave his present company. How could he stay in that company having seen the eyes of the Lord? The look of Christ severed Peter from that crowd. He didn't linger nor should you. Jesus Christ will look upon you today. Is it the case that you are sitting and conversing and befriending those who are a positive damaging influence on your life?

Like Lot, get out of Sodom and don't turn back or you will end up like Lot's wife, destroyed by your love for the world.

The look from Christ made Peter shun the place that he had fallen. Outside when men fall and they get back up and yet they never amend their ways. The Bible says when a wise man sees the evil he hides himself from it. If you will take fire into your bosom repeatedly you are going to be burned.

A look from Christ will cause a man to change his lifestyle.

I want you to notice something else here and that is this look from Jesus gave Peter great relief. See, mere remorse will make a man miserable. Remember Judas Iscariot. Remorse does not lead a man to God, but it leads a man to despair. Judas sorrowed so much what did he do? He went out and he hung himself.

And yet Peter went out and he wept bitterly.

¹⁶ Ibid.

What made one the victim of remorse and the other a glad child of repentance. How is it that one was stiffened into despair that had no tears and the other was saved because he could weep?

The answer is simply this. Judas saw his sin in the light of an awakened conscience. But Peter saw his sin in the loving look of a pardoning Lord.

Friends, that is how you and I must see our sin. If we would see our sin only in awakened conscience we will despair every day. But if today you will see all the pile of your miserable sin in the light of the loving Lord who has come to pardon you from that sin, will you be sure that the same longsuffering patient love is looking down upon you. Then the Lord will do for you as he did for Peter. He will melt your heart into a penitent self distrust and he will make you desire to depart from those sins that you presently cleave.

And then if you will look upon Jesus here this morning the Lord will do for you as he did for Peter.

Remember on the resurrection morning what did he do? He took Peter apart and he spoke healing words of forgiveness and reconciliation.

Friends, Peter in spite of all his faithlessness, he could still fall at the feet of Jesus and say, "Lord, thou knowest all things. Thou knowest that I love thee."

And, child of God, if you have failed him miserably and if you feel the guilt as you perceive Christ looks to your eyes this morning, do not leave the house of God in despair, but come again to the Lord and acknowledge, "Lord, you know my heart and you know that I love you still."

Friends, you know the Lord's look upon Peter only took effect because Peter was looking to the Lord. That is notwithstanding his wandering he was still anxious about his Lord. And to you, therefore, I encourage this morning: Do not give up looking to Christ for if he look upon you and you be looking elsewhere you will miss. Look on this morning. See that the eyes of Christ and the gaze upon you will have a profound effect upon your soul.

I want to conclude this morning with one simple thought. And that is that this look was altogether the Lord and Peter. Nobody knew that the Lord looked upon Peter except Peter and his Lord. Likewise, perhaps, the Lord has looked upon you this morning in this service.

Your friends or family have no idea what goes on in your heart. You know the Lord is working in your heart. You might leave and none will ever know. The person beside you is completely ignorant of the fact that the Holy Spirit has been speaking pointedly to your soul. I ask you. Do you know anything of the secret love look of the Lord this morning?

May God give you grace to look back even to the blessing of your soul? Will you come to Christ this morning, unsaved soul? Come to a loving, pardoning Savior and let him deal with your sin the only way it can be dealt with.

Backslider, will you come this morning and get right with God. May our prayer together be, "May the Lord cause his face to shine upon us and may his eyes look upon us still."

May God bless his Word.

Let's all bow our heads and close our eyes. As we bring the meeting to a close it is understandable that as we sit under the preaching of the Word there are certain feelings that we have, certain impressions made. And yet you know as I know that as soon as you leave here so much is lost. I therefore encourage you to take the concluding moment as we close in prayer to think sincerely about what the Lord has brought to your attention this morning and if your heart is distant from him, friend, now is the time to get it right. If your soul is without Christ there is no better time to come than when you are conscious that Jesus Christ looks upon your present need.

Our Father, we do praise and thank you this morning for thy mercy. We thank thee, Lord, that thou lookest upon us. We want thee to make us very conscious even as we pray now that, Lord, thou art here in this place and that, oh God, thou art not as man who sees on the outward appearance, but, Lord, thou art able to see our hearts. We ask thee, therefore, that every individual in this room, myself included, will at this moment understand something of the piercing eyes of Jesus Christ looking upon us. Oh, God, open our eyes and our understanding to recognize that our Savior is the living God and he is powerful and he is mighty and, oh God, help us to see as we are conscious of thy nearness how hideous, how despicable is our constant rebellion against thee. Lord, let us see sin as it really is. Let us not go on playing fast and easy with that which is an abomination to thee. But, oh God, that we might be saved completely from our sin. Do that work upon our hearts this morning. Lord, let the impressions of the Word of God go deep. Lord, we fear that we are so over privileged by the constant hearing and the access to truth and yet, Lord, we grieve that so little heart religion is our portion at times. Lord, speak to our hearts. I pray thee this morning for those who are backslidden, those who are miserably out of touch and miserable in it. Lord, draw them unto yourself. Let them feel even as Peter felt as, Lord, you looked upon him and, oh God, for those who are without Christ, Lord, thou alone art able to speak. There is no amount of crowing that will ever save a soul, but oh God, if they will be conscious this morning of the living Christ looking upon them in love and compassion and mercy, Lord, thou art able to smash the hardest heart. Do it today for your name's sake. Do it, Lord, for the together. We might rejoice that we serve a powerful God in whom is all our salvation complete. Bless this Word to our hearts now. Keep us in the Spirit on the Lord's Day. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.