



WEEKLY SERMON

Volume No. 2022 Issue No. 19
May 22, 2022

Sunday May 22, 2022

Pastor David Miklas

Message: Portrait of Grace - #8

Phone: 717-625-2992

e-mail: pastormiklas@aol.com

Text: John 21:15-17

Much is being said today about “super patriots” and “right-wing extremists” and the kind of things they are saying. Let’s look at a few “super patriotic statements that may sound to some a little on the extreme side:

1. **"Is life so dear or peace so sweet as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery?" "I know not what course others may take, but as for me, give me liberty or give me death."** (Patrick Henry)
2. **"They that can give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety."** (Ben. Franklin)
3. **"The liberties of our country are worth defending at all hazards; and it is our duty to defend them against all attacks. We have received them as fair inheritance from our worthy ancestors (who) purchased them for us with toil and danger."** (Samuel Adams)
4. **"Swim or sink, live or die, survive or perish with my country was my unalterable determination."** (John Adams)
5. **"Let our object be our country, our whole country, and nothing but our country."** (Daniel Webster)
6. **"We, too, born to freedom, are willing to fight to maintain freedom. We, and all others who believe as deeply as we do, would rather die on our feet than live on our knees."** (Franklin Roosevelt)

Fortunately for America, there have always been men willing to speak up and sometimes take positions regarded by some as extreme. In Psalms 33:11-12 we read, **"The counsel of the LORD standeth forever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations. (12) Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD..."** In Proverbs 14:34 we read, **"Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people."** You know as well as I do liberals of our generation would like us to believe this nation was not founded upon Godly principles. But it is very evident from everything we can gather that this nation from its very inception was founded upon and planned to be a Christian nation by the providence of God Almighty. It is well to remember that the Bible has always occupied an important place in building our nation, and is part and parcel of our heritage. The threads of Scripture glisten everywhere in its social and legal fabric. America has been blessed because it was founded on biblical principles. Note these quotations from great Americas of the past:

George Washington, **"It is impossible to rightly govern without God and the Bible."**

Patrick Henry, **"It cannot be emphasized too strongly that this nation was founded, not by religionists, but by Christians; not on religions, but on the Gospel of Jesus Christ."**

Daniel Webster, **"If we abide by the principles taught in the Bible, our country will go on prospering. But if we and our prosperity neglect its instructions and authority, no man can tell how sudden a catastrophe may overwhelm us and bury all our glory in profound obscurity." "If religious books are not widely circulated among the masses in this country, I do not know what is going to become of us as a nation. If truth be not diffused, error will be. If God and His Word are not known and received, the devil and his works will gain the ascendancy... If the power of the Gospel is not felt throughout the length and breadth of the**

land, anarchy and misrule, degradation and misery, corruption and darkness will reign without mitigation and without end."

America has been blessed because it was founded on biblical principles. True freedom can never be enjoyed by people who refuse to fear God. Let's pray for our nation and recommit ourselves to living as God's people should. Let's heed these venerable voices of the past which underscore the truth of Psalm 33:12, "**Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD...**"

In His Amazing Grace - *Pastor David Niklas*

"Peter - The Grace to Grow in Grace"

INTRODUCTION: The list of the of the twelve **DISCIPLES** who became the **APOSTLES** are given in Matthew 10, Mark 3, Luke 6, and Acts 1. All four lists contain some marvelous similarities. Please notice again with me the list in Matthew 10:1-4,

“And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease. (2) Now the names of the twelve apostles are these; The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; (3) Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus; (4) Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him.”

Did you notice that the first Disciple who walks out of the pages of the Word of God and appears upon the stage of human history is the Apostle Peter?

Approximately 150 verses narrate the account of the salvation, call, ministry, personal life, failures and victories of this man, who **was not just one of the twelve disciples but the spokesman for the twelve** (whether they liked it or not). His name always heads the list of the twelve, though he was not the first disciple chosen.

Once he decided to follow Christ, there was no turning back. As time passed, he became all the more committed to the Master, a devoted and stubborn-minded disciple whose loyalty knew no bounds.

Peter was saved instantaneously, but it took three years for the Lord to make him like a stone, to make him a man of God. We need to remember it was Peter who later wrote about spiritual growth, for:

In I Peter 32:3 we read, **“As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may GROW thereby.”**

In II Peter 3:18 we read, **“But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ...”**

There is such a thing as instantaneous salvation, but there is no such thing as instant spiritually. Three years after Peter was saved, he stood like an immovable rock and preached about Jesus on the day of Pentecost.

In this lesson let me focus your attention on SEVEN areas Peter learned and later wrote about.

FIRST: Peter learned Submission. In Matthew 17:24-27 we read,

“And when they were come to Capernaum, they that received tribute money came to Peter, and said, Doth not your master pay tribute? (25) He saith, Yes. And when he was come into the house, Jesus prevented him, saying, What thinkest thou, Simon? of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers? (26) Peter saith unto him, Of strangers. Jesus saith unto him, Then are the children free. (27) Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for me and thee.”

Notice the Lord told Peter to go fishing; and the first fish he caught would contain a coin in its mouth with which they would pay their taxes.

Now, knowing Peter, you might assume that he wouldn't pay any attention to taxation. He would probably say, "Hey, we're in this Kingdom business. I don't have time to mess with taxes and to fool with this passing world."

Through this Jesus taught Peter to be submissive to the powers that are ordained of God. Peter learned his lesson of submission as he wrote in I Peter 2:13-18,

"Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; (14) Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. (15) For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: (16) As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. (17) Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king. (18) Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward."

SECOND: Peter learned Restraint. In John 18:10 we read,

"Then Simon Peter having a sword, drew it and smote the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus."

When the soldiers came to the garden of Gethsemane to capture Jesus, Peter grabbed a sword and decided that he would single-handedly fight off the soldiers, the high priests, and all their servants.

So, he took a sword and swung at the first person he came to. Peter was going for the guy's head, but he ducked and only lost his ear. The Lord reached over, gave the man a new ear, and told Peter in verse 11, **"...Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?"**

Here Jesus had to teach Peter restraint and he learned his lesson in I Peter 2:21-23,

"For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: (22) Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: (23) Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously:"

THIRD: Peter learned Humility. In Matthew 26:31-35 we read,

"Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad. (32) But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee. (33) Peter answered and said unto him, Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended. (34) Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. (35) Peter said unto him, Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee..."

Here we discover Peter's arrogance when he told Christ he would never forsake Him or deny Him, but he did. He learned his lesson, because he wrote these words in I Peter 5:5b: **"... for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble."**

FOURTH: Peter learned Sacrifice. After Jesus' resurrection He and Peter had a conversation that we read of in John 21:18-23. Jesus begins in verse 18 talking to Peter

"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. (19) This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me. (20) Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following; which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that

betrayeth thee? (21) Peter seeing him saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? (22) Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me. (23) Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die: yet Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die; but, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?"

Jesus told Peter he (Peter) was going to die as a martyr, and then Peter turned right around and basically said, "Well, what about John? Does he get off the hook?" The Lord then said to Peter, "None of your business. You follow Me!"

Peter learned his lesson of sacrifice so well that he wrote in I Pet. 4:14a, 16, 19a,

"If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God on this behalf Wherefore, let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to Him."

How did it end for Peter? The unanimous tradition of the early church tells us Peter was crucified as Christ predicted he would be.

But before he was crucified, he was forced to watch the crucifixion of his wife. It is said during his wife's crucifixion, he stood at the foot of her cross, continuously encouraging her with the words, "Remember the Lord, remember the Lord "

After she died, he himself was crucified, but he was crucified upside down at his own request because he said he was not worthy to die as his Lord.

FIFTH: Peter learned to really love one another. In John 13, the Lord was washing the disciples' feet, teaching them how to love as servants. But when He came to Peter in verses 6-9, Jesus was met with some resistance.

"Then cometh He to Simon Peter; and Peter saith unto Him, Lord, dost Thou wash my feet? Jesus answered, and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter. Peter saith unto Him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me. Simon Peter saith unto Him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head (i.e., 'Give me a bath!')."

Then in verse 34 the Lord said, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another."

It's evident that Peter learned his lesson on love. In I Peter 4:8 he wrote: "And above all things have fervent love among yourselves; for love shall cover the multitude of sins."

SIXTH: Peter learned Courage. In Acts 4 Peter and John were brought before the Sanhedrin and ordered in verse 18, "not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus."

Their courage is seen, however, in their reply of verse 19-20, "But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it is right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard."

One chapter later, in Acts 5, the Apostles were again brought before the Sanhedrin for not obeying their order to stop preaching. Again their courage is seen in verse 29 when they replied, "We ought to obey God rather than men."

SEVENTH: Peter earned Forgiveness. I believe the greatest lesson Peter learned was **FORGIVENESS**. Let's lay a little foundation to this point before we give you the story.

In Matthew 18:21, Peter came to Jesus and asked, "Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?" In verse 22 Jesus answered him, "I say not unto thee, until seven times: but, until seventy times seven." In other words forgiveness should be

unlimited.

Then the Lord proceeds to give a parable of a servant who owed his master 10,000 talents. Translated to our equivalent today, this would mean this servant owed 10 million dollars, an impossible sum to repay. But in verse 27 we read, **"The king representing God forgave him ALL OF IT."** Forgiveness resulted in **HOPE**.

Now here is the story of Peter starting in Matthew 16:21-27.

In Matthew 16:21 we read, **"From that time forth began Jesus to show unto His disciples, how He must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day."**

Jesus tells His disciples that He's going to suffer and die, but watch Peter's reaction in verse 22: **"Then Peter took Him, and began to rebuke Him."** Peter took the Lord, the Creator of the universe, and said, **"Come with me. I've got to straighten you out."**

This guy was unbelievable! Well, he took the Lord and began rebuking Him, saying, **"Be it far from Thee, Lord; this shall not be unto Thee."** In other words, **"As long as I'm in charge, nothing's going to happen to You. I'll promise You that."**

The Lord's reply to Peter is in verse 23:

"But He turned and said unto Peter, Get thee behind Me, Satan. Thou art an offense unto Me; for thou savorest not the things that are of God, but those that are of men."

In other words, **"Peter, you don't know the plan of God, you're only thinking from the human viewpoint."**

In verse 16, Peter's mouth had been used for God; but here in verse 22 it was used for Satan. He was doing exactly what Satan had done during Christ's temptation, trying to derail Him from going to the cross.

Turning to Matthew 26:31, the Lord gave a prophecy regarding the shepherd being smitten and the sheep scattered, **"Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad."**

This referred to His disciples leaving Him and running away. However, in verse 33, Peter speaks up and says, **"Though all men shall be offended because of Thee, yet will I never be offended."**

In other words, **"I'm not like all men. I'm a cut above the rest. They may all forsake You, but I'll never do that."**

Jesus said unto him in verse 34, **"... I say unto thee that this night, before the cock crows, thou shalt deny Me thrice."**

Peter said unto Jesus in verse 35, **"Though I should die with Thee, yet will I not deny Thee."**

However, that very night, Jesus' words turned to reality.

The loyal, strong-hearted, courageous Peter failed his Lord. Deliberately and openly he denied that he was one of the Twelve. Not once or twice but three times, back to back, he turned on the One who had loved him enough to warn him.

Coming to the end of Matthew 28:74-75 we read, **"Then began he to curse and to swear, saying, I know not the man. And immediately the cock crew. And Peter remembered the word of Jesus, which said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. AND HE WENT OUT, and WEPT BITTERLY."**

No longer loyal and strong, far from courageous and committed, the man was suddenly reduced to heaving sobs.

What guilt he bore! How ashamed he felt! Words cannot adequately portray his brokenness. Emotionally, he plunged to rock bottom, caught in the grip of hopelessness; the effect on Peter was shattering.

Every time he closed his eyes he could see the face of Jesus staring at him, as if asking, "**How could you, Peter? Why would you?**" With that look and those words Peter was haunted for days.

The Savior's subsequent death by crucifixion must have been like a nail driven into Peter's heart. The one thing he needed to carry him on was gone, gone forever, he thought - **HOPE.**

It was not until that glorious resurrection day, when we read not only of Jesus' miraculous, bodily resurrection from the dead but also those great words of grace spoken by the angel in Mark 16:7, "**But go your way, tell His disciples and Peter...**" You see those words, "**and Peter!**" Peter, there is **HOPE AGAIN.** I believe the angels words were from the Lord saying,

**Tell Peter I forgive him,
Tell Peter I love him, and
Tell Peter to stop weeping over his failure because there is HOPE.**

The significance of those two words cannot be overstated. Shortly thereafter Peter had gone fishing in disobedience to the Lord's call for him to preach, but the Lord didn't let him catch any fish.

Peter came to shore, where Jesus gave him an experience he would never forget He confronted his lack of love in John 21:15-17,

"So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. (16) He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. (17) He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep."

Then at the end of verse 19, Jesus said to Peter, "**Follow Me.**" What a breath of "**FRESH AIR of HOPE.**"

Every one of us hearing this message, including the one speaking, has experienced failure. It has left us broken and disappointed in ourselves.

And there are times when a flashback of those failures returns to haunt us. How sad it makes us when we recall those moments! We ought to thank God for the remarkable transformation made possible by forgiveness.

I believe Peter's life can be summed up in the last words he ever wrote. Second Peter 3:18 is his word to you:

"But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. To Him be glory both now and forever. Amen."

What a transformation took place in Peter's life. What a growth in grace that came about.

If God has spoken to your heart after reading the sermon, "**Peter – the Grace to Grow in Grace,**" right now talk to God about what He has spoken to you.

Do you have the assurance that one day you will go to heaven? If you have no assurance that you know Jesus Christ, then I trust you will decide to accept Him as your personal Savior. The Bible tells us in

Acts 16:31, **"...Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved..."**

Romans 10:13, **"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."**

This prayer is here for those who need to ask Jesus to be their personal Savior: **"I do want to go to Heaven. I know I am a sinner, and I do believe Jesus Christ died for me. I realize I cannot buy this great salvation, nor can I earn it. Knowing Jesus died on the cross and arose from the grave to pay my sin debt and to purchase my salvation, I do now trust Him as my Savior, and from this moment on I am completely depending on Him for my salvation."**

If you made the decision to accept Jesus Christ as your personal Savior, please let me know. Please send an e-mail to pastormiklas@aol.com and I will send you some literature that will help you in your Christian life.

The **"Weekly SERMON"** was sent as a ministry of Bible Baptist Ministry, 14 United Zion Circle, Lititz, PA 17543. Our Privacy policy ensures that your e-mail address will not be sold, or shared with any third party.

PLEASE TAKE NOTE OF THE FOLLOWING PERMISSION TO COPY: The "Weekly SERMON" is reproduced in several formats, therefore, in its original form, without any changes, the "Weekly SERMON" may be copied and re-transmitted by electronic mail, and copies may be printed for individual or ministry purposes, provided that such copying, re-transmission, printing, or other use is not for profit or other commercial purpose. Any copying, re-transmission, distribution, printing, or other use of the "Weekly SERMON" must set forth in full the heading that is given before each "Weekly SERMON." Any other request for use, please contact Bible Baptist Ministries at pastormiklas@aol.com or by phone at 717-625-2992.