

ARM Prison Outreach International

"Ministers' Minute" Volume 7 Number 1

Peter the Forgiven

John 12

Editor's Note: This "MM" is an email lesson, the 1st of 2008 and 73rd overall that ARM is sending monthly as an encouragement to preachers, chaplains, and Christians around the world. This message is the fifth lesson of a series I developed recently using John 12:1-11. The first four were sent August through November and are archived at the site listed below this paragraph. We sent links to three "MM" Christmas sermons in December, so this final message of the series is our first "MM" in 2008. It is my prayer that this message will encourage you and honor Christ. Use it as a devotional, edit it, share it, use it or components of it!

If you need a plain text version, or the Power Point slides to accompany this message, just reply to make your request. May God bless your labors!

-- Rod Farthing, ARM Prison Outreach Development Director rodfar@arm.org

ARM FAST FACT

ARM partners with DaySpring to send millions of Bible verse greeting cards to prisons.

More than **3.5 MILLION** cards were shipped IN THE FIRST TEN MONTHS OF 2007!

5,019,200 DaySpring cards were sent in 2006!

Peter the Forgiven

John 12

Our last installment ...[click here](#) ...showed how Judas illustrated "worldly sorrow" or despair. The last study detailed his life and his failures and promised that such a tragic end would be contrasted with a study of Peter and how he rose from the ashes of his failure to be re-instated and used in a mighty way by the Lord. The study of the two disciples and their contrasting approaches to their failures could be called:

Contrition vs. Despair -- 2 Cor 7:8-9

- **Godly sorrow leads to repentance**

- **Worldly sorrow leads to despair and death**

Judas the Traitor... "Worldly sorrow unto death.."

- **2 Cor 7:8-9**
- **8 For though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent, though I did repent: for I perceive that the same epistle hath made you sorry, though it were but for a season.**
- **9 Now I rejoyce, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing.**
- **10 For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.**

Simon Peter -- "Godly sorrow..repentance.. life"

- **Luke 22:60-62**
- **60 And Peter said, Man, I know not what thou sayest. And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew.**
- **61 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.**
- **62 And Peter went out, and wept bitterly.**

THE NEXT TIME PETER IS MENTIONED:

- **Mark 16:5 And entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment; and they were affrighted.**
- **6 And he saith unto them, Be not affrighted: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him.**
- **7 But go your way, tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him, as he said unto you.**

Why is Peter the only one NAMED in Mark 16:7?

Why is Peter in a lengthy discussion with Jesus in John 21?

Could it be Peter's repentance is being rewarded with re-instatement?

- **John 21:15-17**
- **15 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.**

Question 1: "Do you AGAPE me?" (unconditional)

Answer 1: "You know I'm your dear friend."

Question 2: "Do you AGAPE me?"

Answer 2: "You know I'm your dear friend."

Question 3: "Are you really my dear friend?"

Answer 3: "You know I'm your dear friend"

Simon Peter -- reinstatement and the fruit of Godly sorrow and repentance

- **Acts 1:15-16**
- **15 And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number of names together were about an hundred and twenty,)**
- **16 Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus.**
- **Acts 2:14-16**
- **14 But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words:**
- **15 For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day.**
- **16 But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel..**

- **Acts 2:36** Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.
- **37** Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?
- **38** Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Simon Peter -- not perfect, not without fault, though forgiven and reinstated

- **Gal 2:11-12**
- **11** But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed.
- **12** For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision.
- **13** And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation.
- **14** But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?

Simon Peter -- challenging Christians to spiritual maturity and faithfulness

- **2 Pet 3:11-12**
- **11** Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,
- **12** Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?
- **13** Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.
- **14** Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.
- **15** And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you;
- **16** As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in

which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.

- **17 Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness.**
- **18 But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.**

We will all fail -- we will all stumble.

When we do, WHAT THEN will we do?

There was a young civil engineer of western Kentucky who assisted his father in his business of railroad prospecting and surveying. As he traveled from place to place, he fell into the society of loose men and acquired intemperate habits, more than his father seemed to be aware of. He shrewdly managed to conceal his evil habits from his parents who were wonderful Christians, the father being the choir leader and the mother a soprano soloist. Once, while the young man was employed on a section of road forty miles from home, it became necessary to lay over from Thursday noon till Monday. His father would be detained till Saturday, reaching home in time for the choir rehearsal. The son, instead of going to his home, went to a bar to begin a spree. The bartender understood his case too well and kept him hidden in his own apartment.

When his father came home, he expected to find the boy there. Trouble began when the question, "Where is Harry?" informed the startled mother that he should have come earlier. During the Sunday evening service she was to sing a solo, and by special request --because she sang it so well-- her selection was to be, "Where Is My Wandering Boy?" It seemed impossible to her to sing that song under the circumstances. When on Sunday morning, a policeman found Harry, the certainty was no more comforting than the suspense had been. She was advised that he would be "all right tomorrow morning," and that she had better not see him until he sobered up. Toward Sunday night Harry began to come to himself.

His father had hired a man to stay with him and see to his recovery. When Harry learned that his mother had been told of his plight, the information cut him to the heart and helped to sober him. When the bells rang, he decided to go to church. He knew nothing of the evening program. He was still in his working clothes, but no reasoning could dissuade him. His attendant, after making him as presentable as possible, went with him to the service. Entering early by a side door, they found seats in a secluded corner, but not far from the pulpit and the organ. After the usual succession of prayer, anthem, and sermon, the time for the solo came. It was probably the first time in that church that a mother had ever sung out of her own soul's distress:

Oh, where is my wandering boy tonight,
The child of my love and care?

Every word was to her own heart a cruel stab. The congregation caught the feeling of the

song, but there was one heart as near to breaking as her own. She sang the last stanza,
Go for my wandering boy tonight,
Go search for him where you will,
But bring him to me with all his blight,
And tell him I love him still.
Oh, where is my wandering boy?

Just then a young man in a woolen shirt, corduroy trousers and jacket made his way down the aisle to the choir stairs with outstretched arms, and sobbing like a child, cried, "Here I am, Mother!" The mother ran down the steps and folded him in her arms. The astonished organist, quick to take in the meaning of the scene, pulled out all his stops and played, "Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow." The congregation joined in the great doxology, while the father, the preacher, and the friends of the returned prodigal stood by him with moist eyes and welcoming hands.

Will we take the "Judas" approach of despair which leads unto death? Or will we respond with Godly sorrow which works repentance unto salvation?"

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Check out our web sites: www.arm.org www.abarc.org www.raphahouse.org www.daughtersofruth.org

In 2006, ARM donated over 5 MILLION DaySpring Greeting cards to prisons!