

The Agony of Peter

Matt. 26:75

Introduction:

- A. Who is this weeping bitterly?
 - 1. The same Peter that saw the transfiguration (Matt. 17:1-5).
 - 2. The same Peter that drew his sword to defend Jesus (vv. 51-52)
 - 3. The same Peter had said he would die for Jesus (vv.:33-35).
- B. Why is Peter weeping bitterly?
 - 1. Remembered his Lord's words (v. 34)
 - 2. Realized what he had done (vv. 69-74)
- C. Peter made three *mistakes* that led him to this miserable state.

Discussion:

I. He Got Too Sure of Himself (vv. 33-35).

- A. Danger of over-confidence (Riding a bike, driving a car, operating machinery).
- B. Paul confident, but cautious (1 Cor. 9:26, 27)
- C. Paul's warning to the Corinthians – "Flee Idolatry" (1 Cor. 10:12-14)
 - 1. Warns of overestimating spiritual strength of self and others (8:1-7, 9:27; 10:1-13)
 - 2. Warns of underestimating power of influence on self and others.

II. He Got Too Far from Jesus (vv. 57-58).

- A. Too far to be clearly identified with his Lord.
 - 1. Half-hearted loyalty (Matt. 22:37)
 - 2. Half-hearted following (Rev. 3:15-17; Josh 24:15; 1 Kings 18:17,18, 21)
- B. Too far to draw strength from his Lord (cf. Jas. 4:8)
 - 1. Many put too much distance between self and church
 - 2. Many put too much distance between self and faithful.
- C. Too far to really serve His Lord.
 - 1. Many too far to really know His will – seldom study.
 - 2. Many too far to really worship and work.
 - 3. Many so close, yet so far (Luke 22:61).
- D. Too far to defend His Lord.
 - 1. Must defend (Phil 1:17; Jude 3).
 - 2. Must stand with defenders (2 Tim. 4:16).

III. He Got Too Close to Sinners (v. 69; Luke 22:55).

- A. He placed himself in a position conducive to denying His Lord (cf. 1 Cor. 15:33).
 - 1. Avoid places, people and positions where it would hard to confess Christ.
 - 2. Avoid unequal yoking with unbelievers (2 Cor. 6:14, 17).
- B. He cast his influence with enemies of Christ under pressure.
 - 1. The pressure of Persecution
 - 2. The pressure of Popularity.
 - 3. The pressure of Peace.
 - 4. The pressure of Conformity.
 - 5. The pressure of Ease
 - 6. The pressure of Materialism

Conclusion:

- A. If you are a Christian, Follow Jesus closely.
- B. If you re not a Christian, begin following Him today.