

Simon Peter

Part 1

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[00:00:00] I'd like to look this evening at the Lord's dealings with Simon Peter.

If we could turn firstly to Matthew chapter 4, where we find the first commandment recorded in the scriptures that the Lord ever gave to Peter, Matthew chapter 4, verse 18.

And Jesus walking by the Sea of Galilee saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishers. And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left their nets and followed him. In Luke's gospel we get a fuller account of this, more details in Luke chapter 5 and verse 10.

[00:01:06] But I wanted especially to read it from Matthew because in Matthew we get that command, Follow me. But in Luke chapter 5 and verse 10, sorry verse 4, Now when Jesus had left speaking, he said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught. And Simon answering said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing. Now nevertheless, at thy word I will let down the net. And when they had this done, they enclosed a great multitude of fishers, and they let break. And they beckoned unto their partners which were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came and filled both the ships, so that they began to sink. When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me, [00:02:04] for I am a sinful man, O Lord. For he was astonished, and all that were with him at the draught of the fishers which had been taken. And so was also James and John, the sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not, for henceforth thou shalt catch men. And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and followed him. Simon Peter saw, because of this miracle, the glory of the Lord Jesus as the Creator, the one who had authority over his creation. And when he saw that, realising who the Lord was, that he was indeed the very God himself, he fell down at his knees. And that suggests to me, it doesn't say he fell down at his feet, he fell down at his knees, that suggests to me that he was clinging on to him, which perhaps seems a bit paradoxical, because he said, Depart from me, [00:03:04] O Lord, for I am a sinful man. He realised, as the glory of the Lord came before him, that he was not worthy to be in his presence. He was a sinful man, and yet at the same time, he clung to the Lord. He did not want him to depart from him. He wanted to be with him, but he knew that he was not worthy, because of his sins. He judged himself then. He judged his sins, he repented, and he embraced the Lord. And the Lord says to him, Fear not. Simon's heart was full of fear, full of astonishment. But the Lord says to him, Fear not. And he gives him that commandment, Follow me. The first commandment ever given to Simon Peter. And in this little account, we see how Simon had indeed judged himself, judged his sins, and come to the Lord. [00:04:02] But as we follow Simon's life, we will find other lessons he must learn. Not only was

Simon to judge his sins, but also he was to judge the nature that produced those sins. He had to learn that there was no strength in himself to obey that commandment that the Lord had given him. If he was to follow the Lord, he must cast himself wholly upon the Lord, and he must lean upon the Lord's strength, and not on his own. Now if we can turn to Luke, chapter 22, and verse 31.

The Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat.

But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not, and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren. [00:05:08] And he said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison and to death. And he said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me. The Lord Jesus speaks to Simon. He speaks his name twice, Simon, Simon. The Lord doesn't waste words. Every word he speaks is for a purpose, and in speaking Simon's name twice, he surely is conveying that sense of urgency to him. He would have him listen to what he is to say. It is for his benefit. He needs warning. Behold, he says to Simon, listen, pay attention to what I am to tell you.

And he goes on to say, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat. [00:06:01] Satan hath desired to have you. This word you, it's the plural. The Lord Jesus was not only talking about Simon, he was talking about that whole little band of disciples that were his. Satan had set his eyes upon that little company, and he had desired to have them. He had had to ask God, just as he had to ask God in the days of Job. He'd had to, as it were, receive God's consent in this matter, but he had asked, he desired. That word means he'd asked excessively. It was something which he desperately wanted. He wanted to destroy that little company. Satan hath desired to have you. If ever anything is a delight to God, then Satan desires to spoil it, to mar it. He is the adversary, the enemy of God. He hates God, and if anything is precious to God, if he delights in anything, [00:07:06] then Satan will desire to spoil it. If there is any testimony in this earth for God, then Satan will have it as his main object to spoil it. In the Garden of Eden, after God had created the world and everything in it, he could say, it is very good, and in Eden he put his creature man, Adam and Eve. Eden means delight. It was God's delight. It was for him. He delighted in it. It was precious to his heart. It was a testimony to himself. And so Satan, quickly, he seeks to spoil that thing which God so set his heart upon. He comes in and he causes Adam to rebel against God. He deceives the woman. The woman turns to Adam, to the man, and Adam, he rebelliously disobeys God. And so the whole creation is spoilt through sin and death coming in. [00:08:07] And then, when the Lord Jesus comes, the father could say of him, this is my beloved son, in whom is all my delight. And in Mark's Gospel we read, immediately, the spirit would drive him into the wilderness that he might be tempted of the devil. Yes, Satan would spoil, would seek to spoil immediately that which was the father's delight. But of course, he found that all his temptations were in vain. He had met one who was stronger than he. He had met one who bound him hand and foot, and whom he was powerless to defeat.

But it says, too, in the Psalms, chapter 16 and verse 3, it speaks of God's goodness extending [00:09:01] to the saints on the earth, and to the excellent, in whom is all my delight. Yes, the people of God, the Lord Jesus, all his delight is in them. And it was so then, with that little company of his own, they were all his delight, and so Satan would desire to have them. But God is sovereign, and he will even take up Satan, and use him to accomplish his purposes. And it was God's object, in verse 31, that he may sift you as wheat.

There was the chaff in Peter's life, there was the flesh, that which was of the sinful nature that was

within him, that he had inherited from Adam, and God wanted that to be sifted, wanted that to be sifted, and got rid of. And there was the wheat, that which was of himself, [00:10:05] that which was of Christ, and God wanted that to remain, and to be the only thing in Peter's life. And he would take up Satan, Satan's desire to wreak such havoc in the life and testimony of Simon Peter, he would use it for his own purposes, to bring Simon through as gold as it were. And the Lord Jesus says, I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not. Yes, the Lord Jesus already, before this had happened, he had prayed for Simon Peter. This word, thee, is in the singular. They were all desire of Satan, but the Lord says especially to Simon, I have prayed for thee. It's not that he hadn't prayed for them all, of course he had, but he wants to convey [00:11:05] especially to Simon, who would go to such depths of wretchedness and despair, that he had prayed for him, that he had besought for him, that he had interceded for him, the one who had overcome Satan, he had prayed for Simon. The Lord Jesus, the one who intercedes for all his people, we read in Hebrews chapter 7, verse 25, Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. Simon Peter was one of those who had come to God by him. He was eternally saved, yes, his soul could never be lost, but the Lord Jesus would save him to the uttermost, he would keep him right unto the end, he would save him from every danger, from every enemy, [00:12:07] right until the end, he would keep Simon to the uttermost, and he was interceding for him, in order that his faith might not fail. His faith in him, Simon's faith in him, that which was the wheat, we might say, that which was of Christ, for he had given him that faith. It was not of Simon, it was a gift, we read, don't we, a gift of God. Simon had that faith in Christ, and the Lord had prayed that it might not fail. He also had faith in himself, Simon had faith in himself, that would fail, that was the chaff, that would be sifted away, and Simon would come forth as wheat. But Simon, he protests. Sorry, the Lord goes on to say, when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren. When Simon, as it were, was turned around, when he no longer trusted in himself, when he was [00:13:10] turned around and changed direction, as it were, converted, then the Lord says to him, gives him another command, strengthen thy brethren. He would be well able to do this, when he'd learnt of the need of trusting the Lord Jesus wholly, when he'd learnt of his own weakness in himself, then he would be well suited to strengthen his brethren, and this is what the Lord would have him to do. But Simon, at this time, he protests. Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison and to death. Yes, Simon felt that he was ready. In another gospel, he says, although all forsake thee, I will never forsake thee. But the Lord Jesus tells Simon, I tell thee, Peter, how Simon should have, [00:14:07] as it were, taken note of this. The one who told him, I tell thee, Peter, it wasn't another, it was the Son of God himself who was telling him these things. I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day before that thou shalt deny that thou knowest me. And in Mark's gospel, Peter vehemently denies this will happen again. Mark 14, verse 31.

He spake them all vehemently, if I should die with thee, I will not deny thee in any wise. Likewise also said they all. But before the end of the day is out, the Lord has told Simon that he would deny him three times. [00:15:01] And they came to a place which was named Gethsemane. And he saith to his disciples, sit ye here while I shall pray. And he taketh with him Peter and James and John, and began to be sore amazed and to be very heavy. And saith unto them, my soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death, tarry ye here and watch. And he went forward a little and fell on the ground and prayed that if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. And he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee, take away this cup from me. Nevertheless, not what I will, but what thou wilt. And he cometh and findeth them sleeping. And saith unto Peter, Simon, sleepest thou? Couldst not thou watch one hour? Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak. And again he went away and prayed, and spake the same words. And when he had returned, he found them asleep again, [00:16:05] for their eyes were heavy, neither wist they what to answer him.

And he cometh the third time and saith unto them, sleep on now and take your rest. The Lord Jesus now would go into Gethsemane's garden, and there he would have the cup that the Father would give to him, the awful death that he would die upon Calvary's cross before him. The sorrow of it would fill his soul. He could say, I am exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death. But he would have those three disciples come with him. And in Matthew's Gospel, he asked them to watch with me, it says. Watch with me. He would have some companions with him [00:17:02] at that time. He wanted their companionship in this hour of terrible sorrow. And he goes forward a little, it says in our Gospel, and he falls to the ground. In other Gospels it says he fell with his face to the ground. And he prays to his Father that if it's possible, the hour, the terrible hour of Calvary might pass from him. He said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee. Take away this cup from me. Nevertheless, not what I will, but what thou wilt. If there was any other way in which the Father's purposes could be accomplished, then the Father would have been able to grant his son that request. If it was possible that there was any other way in which sinners could be forgiven and brought to him, [00:18:04] if his love could be manifested in this world and salvation offered, then the Father would not have allowed his son to go that awful way of the cross. He would have spared him. All things are possible with thee, the son said to him. But it is not possible for God to deny himself. It is not possible for God to compromise his holy righteous nature. Sin must be judged.

God cannot pass over the guilty. Guilt must be dealt with. The Lord Jesus must die in order that he might in his own body bear our sins, that he might take away the guilt himself which was ours. He must die. He must go through that terrible hour of suffering. But his heart, although so heavily burdened with the awful shadow of Calvary, although that terrible [00:19:08] death would cause him such agony, his heart is still burdened with Peter. And he would go back and find them asleep. Remind us, doesn't it, of that verse in Psalm 69 where he says, where he says, I am full of heaviness and I looked for some to take pity but there were none and for comforters but I found none. Yes, the Lord Jesus would desire comforters. He was a man and he had the feelings of a man and how he would desire some to comfort him in that hour of trouble and he looked for comforters but he found none. There were none who could be with him or comfort him. He found them asleep. And he wakes up Simon and he says to Simon, sleepest thou?

[00:20:05] Coudest not thou watch one hour? He wakes up Simon not to, in order that Simon could watch with him. He woke up Simon in order that he could bring before him his weakness. Simon had said that he would forsake, that he would follow him to prison and to death. And the Lord says to him, Simon couldn't you even watch with me for one hour? How then could Simon go into death for him if he didn't even have the strength to do this? It would be impossible. And then he gives Simon, as it were, the key, the secret to strength, to be an overcomer. He says, watch ye and pray. Watch. This means watchfulness doesn't it? Against [00:21:02] the things that come in and spoil our communion with the Lord Jesus. The things that come in and spoil our lives, spoil our homes, spoil the assemblies.

The Lord Jesus commands his people to be watchful. To be watchful against danger and also to pray.

If we watch it means we're aware of the dangers around us, dangers to our Christian testimony, dangers to our walk with the Lord Jesus. If we pray it means that we're aware of the weakness that is within us, our dependence upon the Lord Jesus. We cannot do anything without him. We must pray. We must be before him in prayer always. On our own we must have that time of prayer with him. With our husbands and wives also we must pray [00:22:02] together. Families too, the children, there must

be that time of prayer. We must cast ourselves upon him daily in every sphere of our lives if we are to be overcomers, if we are to be able to stand in the day of temptation. Watch and pray lest ye enter into temptation. And then the Lord Jesus shows how he can divide between that which is of the spirit and that which is of the flesh. Simon had said, I am ready. The Lord Jesus says the spirit is ready but the flesh is weak. How much Simon desired to please his Lord. How much he desired to show his love for him.

That was the spirit. That was that which the Lord had quickened in Simon and there was that response from his spirit. But there was also the flesh, the chaff. The flesh the Lord Jesus could [00:23:07] say is weak, has no strength. There was no strength in Simon's flesh to do that which he desired. He couldn't do it and the Lord tells him here, he warned Simon. The Lord Jesus can discern the thoughts and the intents of the heart. He knows us through and through. He can search the heart and he can know the inward parts. He knows that which is of himself. He knows that which is of the flesh. How well he could do this in Simon Peter, how well he can do it in us also. If we are to walk faithfully before him we must bow to his judgments regarding us and we must be obedient as to them. And then he goes again and he returns.

[00:24:01] And verse 40, when he returned he found them asleep again for their eyes were heavy neither wist they what to answer him. If we could turn back to Luke now and take up the narrative from Luke's gospel. Luke chapter 22 and verse 47. And while he yet spake behold a multitude and he that was called Judas one of the twelve went before them and drew near unto Jesus to kiss him and Jesus said unto him Judas betray us now the son of man with a kiss. When they which were about which were about him saw what would follow they said unto him Lord shall we smite with the sword and one of them cut the servant of the one of them smote the servant of the high priest and cut off his right ear and Jesus answered and said suffer ye thus far and he touched his ear and healed him. [00:25:05] Verse 54 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 for the truth this fellow also was with him for he is a Galilean 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 [00:26:02] before the cock crew thou shalt deny me thrice and Peter went out and wept bitterly. The multitude come to take the Lord Jesus and the disciples ask him Lord shall we smite with the sword there's a little time you remember in the upper room where the Lord had said he who has a coat let him sell it and buy himself a sword and they had said master we have two swords and he said it is enough as if to infer as if to imply that they hadn't understood what he was saying but it seems they had taken those swords with them and now perhaps they think well this is what we've got to do we've got to smite now with the sword and they asked the Lord should we do it but Peter doesn't ask he doesn't wait for a reply Peter in that self-confidence feeling he knows what to do he smites with the sword without waiting for the Lord's answer [00:27:06] and in doing so he cuts off the servant's ear Malchus and the Lord says suffer ye thus far and he heals the servant's ear how Peter showed them that he did not know the mind of his master even now perhaps he was following a far-off spiritual as it were but it's often been said hasn't it that even when Peter shows through his mistakes that he doesn't fully appreciate the mind of the Lord that God in the word takes up those mistakes and he brings forth even more of the Lord's mind through Peter's mistake and so the Lord's purposes are accomplished even in those and we see here

how the Lord heals the servant's ear and that would have been the last sign that Israel ever received from the hands of their Messiah in his [00:28:05] public ministry the healing of an ear surely speaking of the grace in the heart of the Lord Jesus to Israel Isaiah the prophet could say that time would come when God judicially would close their ears their ears would not be allowed to hear anymore they stopped their ears up do you remember and fell upon Stephen stoning him and now God would close their ears and blind their eyes and they would not be able to come to him but the time would come when they would be healed again their ears would be open to their Messiah he would heal his servant Israel's ear and he leaves them with this final sign through Peter's mistake showing his heart of grace even towards that murderous multitude who even then desired his death and then we read Peter after all his [00:29:07] disciples have forsaken him and fled Peter seems to as it were remember perhaps his what he had said and he comes back and he follows afar off how easy it is to get into that position where we follow afar off it is to say almost well I'm strong enough to follow the Lord Jesus without needing to come before him for strength if I start the day without prayer without reading his word learning his mind then I have said in effect I'm strong enough to go through this day without him I'm following afar off we put ourselves in terrible danger when we do this do you remember how the Israelites there were those who grew weak [00:30:04] and feeble and they lagged behind and they became easy prey for the enemy the Amalekites who would creep up and kill the ones that were lagging behind those who followed afar off and Peter he became easy prey for Satan as we shall see perhaps he felt at his strongest at this time perhaps his resolve to follow his master even unto death was at its greatest he comes into the horn and he sits down with the servants around the fire and a certain maid beheld him as he sat by the fire the word fire in verse 55 it means simply it's the normal word used a bundle of kindling to burn but in verse 56 it means light and it would seem that Peter sat near the light [00:31:02] he didn't mind if anybody recognized him he felt that he was strong enough to go through it he didn't try and hide himself he had no qualms about his ability to go through with his Lord he felt that his strongest perhaps at that time but it was then that Satan could utterly defeat him and this little like this this maid perhaps she was even a very young woman she says to Peter or she doesn't even say to Peter but she says this man was also with him perhaps not even an accusation just a an innocent comment but Peter he was standing in his own strength and he fell terribly and he said woman I know you're not he denied the Lord Jesus the first time and [00:32:03] then a little later on another says to him there are also of them Peter says man I am not an hour later another says to him this fellow also was with him for he is a Galilean and now we read another account that Peter denies the Lord with those and curses it doesn't mean he used bad language it means he swore by an oath he set a curse upon himself just as they did in Acts that they would kill the Apostle Paul they said to know that a curse upon themselves they would not drink or eat until they had done it well Peter does the same here how terribly he fell he denied the Lord with those and curses and then we read the Lord turned the cock crew and the Lord turned and looked upon Peter the Lord Jesus just previously to this according to Mark's Gospel [00:33:04] which it's generally believed as chronological in his order he had been humiliated by his people he had been spat upon he had been buffeted he had been mocked we read in the Psalms reproach has broken my heart even now the heart of the Lord Jesus would have been broken but still he is burdened with Peter when he turns around and looks upon Peter the word means a long searching penetrating look because although the Lord loved Peter so much his love is a righteous love there was that in Peter that was sinful and the Lord's gaze was penetrating and searched his heart out [00:34:07] Peter when the Lord looked at him in that gaze his own heart was revealed to him and he realized that he had done that which he said he would never do he'd forsaken his Lord he had denied him and Peter went out and wept bitterly but even now when we might say Peter was at his most wretched this was the very point of Peter's revival of Peters turning again when he wept bitterly and this marks revival amongst the people of God when there is bitter weeping we read in 2nd [00:35:02] Corinthians I think it is godly

sorrow worketh repentance and Peter he has had his heart shown to him and he has judged himself as to his heart and it causes him weeping and bitter weeping and he goes outside and we don't read a Peter again we don't read a Peter at the cross we don't read a Peter again until the Lord's resurrection but we don't have to speculate to know how Peter must have felt how awful he must have felt he wouldn't go to the cross he wouldn't go near there there were others John was there the disciple who was so aware of the Lord's love for him he was there but Peter he was not there he must have spent bitter and wretched hours but the Lord Jesus [00:36:03] after he was risen again he has a message through the angel which we read in Mark 16 and verse 7 the angel says to the women at the tomb go your way tell his disciples and Peter that he well let's read verse 6 and he said unto them be not affrighted you seek Jesus of Nazareth which was crucified he is risen he is not here behold the place where they laid him but go your way and tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee there shall you see him as he said unto you the Lord Jesus has risen from the dead he is victorious over death sorrow is behind him the fruits of victory are before the glory he said didn't he I leave this world and go to [00:37:04] my father this was his joy wasn't it he was to return to his father he had conquered his enemies he even now was enjoying the fruits of victory he will be raised to the highest place higher than the heavens surely this could have been enough for him to fill his mind and heart at that time but no tell my disciples and Peter even now the Lord's heart was burdened with Peter he wanted Peter's restoration he wanted Peter to be comforted he wanted to speak to Peter and to bring him back he might wanted to restore the joy of his salvation to him so he says to the angel he gives him this message to bring this isn't the angel who said these things because angels a minute well he said them but they were not of himself for angels are the ministers of God the angel [00:38:06] would repeat word-for-word exactly what God had given him to say in another account the angel says after he's delivered the message there I have told you even as if he was relieved to discharge such a weighty responsibility and so when the angel says tell my disciples and Peter this is what the Lord had said and in first Corinthians chapter 15 we read that firstly he was seen of Cephas and then of the twelve so first of all the Lord Jesus sought out Peter and Peter was restored to him then a private interview the first one whom the Lord saw when he was risen from the dead how wonderful the one who had fallen most terribly the one who had denied him that is the one in [00:39:01] the Lord sought out first and restored him to himself and then in John chapter 21 we see the the joy in the heart of a restored believer John chapter 21 verse 4 that when the morning was now Jesus stood on the shore but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus then Jesus said unto them children have you any meat they answered him no and he said unto them cast the net on the right side of the ship and you shall find they cast therefore and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter it is the Lord now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord he got his fishers coat unto him for he was naked and did cast himself into the sea and the other disciples came in a little ship but they were not [00:40:03] far from the land but as it were 200 cubits dragging the net with fishes as soon then as they were come to land they saw a fire of coals there and fish laid their own bread Jesus saith unto them bring of the fish which you have now caught Simon Peter went up and drew the net to land full of great fishes and hundred and fifty and three for all there were so many yet was not the net broken verse 15 so when they had dined Jesus saith to Simon Peter Simon son of Jonas lovest thou me more than these he said unto him yea Lord thou knowest that I love thee he said unto him feed my lambs he saith to him again the second time Simon son of Jonas lovest thou me he said unto him yea Lord thou knowest that I love thee he saith unto him feed my sheep he said unto him the third time Simon son of Jonas lovest thou me Peter was grieved because he said unto him the [00:41:05] 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 do you remember when John outran Peter Peter then seemed to be slow afoot didn't he there's no such slowness now Peter cast himself into the sea to be with his Lord says the boat wasn't far from

the land he couldn't wait it wouldn't be very long before they would have got themselves to the land in the boat Peter couldn't wait that long he longed to be with his Lord once more and he cast himself into the sea and swam to the shore after that notable miracle very similar to the one that had first called Simon to bow before the Lord and confess his name and to admit that he was a sinner and after they have dined the Lord says to Simon [00:42:03] Peter Simon son of Jonas lovest thou me more than these when we read these few verses it's good to have a Bible dictionary because these words need looking into and it doesn't come across in the authorized as in the as in the Greek when the Lord says to Simon Simon son of Jonas lovest thou me more than these the word for love he uses means a constant and a strong love Simon do you love me with a constant and strong love more than these Simon had said hadn't he though all forsake thee I will never forsake thee he had said in an effect my love is strong and abiding I love thee more than anyone else and the Lord now challenges him Simon son of Jonas [00:43:05] lovest thou me more than these your disciples your fellow disciples the Lord wasn't restoring Peter again he'd already done that but Peter had said these boasts these proud boasts in public before his disciples and now the Lord would demonstrate to his disciples publicly that Peter was indeed fully restored not only restored but he will publicly give him that Commission of Shepherd from himself Simon answers Lord thou knowest that I love thee he didn't take up that word agapeo constant and deep love he uses another word filia filio which means affection Darby translates it as attached I am attached to thee and so Simon didn't make that boast and the Lord says to him feed my lambs he gives Peter that Commission feed my lambs the young of the flock my [00:44:09] lambs they belong to the Lord Jesus it's his flock and he's specially concerned about the young lambs in that flock and he wants Peter to feed them and then he goes on to say the second time Simon son of Jonas lovest thou me he doesn't say more than these he just asked Simon do you love me with that at all Simon son of Jonas do you love me with a deep constant love well Simon didn't even rise to this he says Lord thou knowest that I am attached to thee thou knowest that I have affection for thee and the Lord says to Peter feed my sheep or tend my sheep care for my sheep be a shepherd to the flock just as Paul could say to those elders Ephesus that they should tend to God's flock feed [00:45:12] the church which he has purchased with his own blood that's how precious the flock is to Christ and he would have his people fed and then he says the third time Simon son of Jonas lovest thou me now this time he takes up that same word that Peter had used filio art thou even attached to me and Simon he's grieved now because he's used that word filio now he said it the third time Simon's grieved and Simon says Lord thou knowest all things thou knowest that I love thee Jesus said unto him feed my sheep Simon now he won't even trust his own heart in this matter he says [00:46:04] thou knowest all things the Lord knew his heart he didn't he knew that he didn't anymore he couldn't boast anymore he would let the Lord himself be a judge of how much he loved him and he says thou knowest that I love thee so Peter now is well able to fulfill that commission which the Lord gave him when thou art converted strengthen thy brethren and little later on in this chapter we find that the last command that the Lord ever gave to Simon Peter ever recorded is the same as the first follow thou me so we see how the Lord Jesus who had begun that good work in Peter was able to finish it even on to the day of Jesus Christ I wonder if we could close by singing him number 426 it is not that I did choose thee for Lord now that could not be [00:47:14] this heart would still refuse thee but thou has chosen me thou from the sins that stain me has washed and set me free and to this end ordained me that I should live to thee number 426